

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF DETERMINANT FACTORS OF FOOD EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE AND OUTCOMES OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST SATISFACTION: EMPIRICAL STUDY ON MALAYSIAN STREET FOOD

Rishad Rafatul

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework to find out determinant factors of food emotional experience and outcomes of international tourist satisfaction about Malaysian street food. Literature in this study has noticed that, a lot of research has been done on the traditional food sector of Malaysia, compare to a very few on the street food sector especially to attract the foreign tourists and to find out their level of emotional attachment on point of product offering, health issue, atmosphere and service quality of Malaysian street food. Since no validate model has been developed so far, street food vendors are yet to be aware of how to provide quality services to the foreign tourists. Many researchers have found that the food is a major part of tourist attraction, so there may be a possibility of reducing the flow of international tourist in Malaysia near future.

Introduction

Food is the supreme elements in the tourism sector that acts as a sense of place attraction for travelers (Bessiere, 1998; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Ryu & Jang, 2006; Seo, Kim, Oh, & Yun, 2013; Luis & Panuwat, 2016; Simon & Wang, 2017; Chen & Huang, 2018) who seek for unusual or extraordinary food experience and different food culture that might not acquire at their home countries. The tourism industry of many developing countries continues to record a steady progress and contribute to nation's economy (Yap, C.S., Ahmad, R. and Zhu, P., 2018). A tourism destination may be admired because of the unique cuisines it serves for tourists. This is obviously being pragmatic in the European Countries such as France and Italy have their authentic food culture of pizza and pasta sensations (Henderson, 2009). Tourists usually get themselves involved in an aggressive searching and tasting the new sensation of food that found to be exciting and fun for their trip. Indeed, tourists also spend almost half of the expenditure on food and drinks while having their splendid and pleasant vacation. Proportion of tourists' allocation on food is high (Radhiah, Karim, Bakar, Nazirah, 2015), that contributed to 30% of tourism revenues. Rather than the fulfillment of satiety of the tourists at a destination, the food itself could magnetize them to perform a second visit, encourage them in sharing their best moments with family and friends or with somebody special in their life.

International Tourist in Malaysia

Number of tourist arrivals in Malaysia decreased to 2129013 in August of 2017 from 2263478 in July of 2017. International tourist arrivals in Malaysia averaged 1643767.38 from 1999 until 2017, reaching an all time high of 2806565 in December of 2013 and a record low of 459374 in April of 2003 ([https://tradingeconomics.com/malaysia/tourist arrivals](https://tradingeconomics.com/malaysia/tourist%20arrivals)). Global tourist arrivals to Malaysia for 2016 is registered a hike of 4.0% compared to the same period in 2015. Malaysia received 26.8 million tourists compared to 25.7 million tourists in 2015 (<http://holidayplace.co.uk/news/details/117632/malaysia-records-increase-in-tourist-arrivals-in-2016>).

Malaysia received a total of 25,948,459 international tourists in 2017 and recorded a 0.1% growth in tourist receipts, thus contributing RM 82.2 billion to the country's revenue. The average length of stay (ALOS) in 2017 for foreign tourists decreased to 5.7 nights from 5.9 nights in the previous year. Tourist arrivals dropped by 3%, in terms of numbers, Malaysia was the second most-visited South East Asian country after Thailand, which had 35.3 million tourists in 2017. The East Asia market showed a 6.3% growth, although other markets saw a decline, i.e. ASEAN markets dropped by -3.9%, Europe (-1.7%), Americas (-4.3%), Oceania (-5.4%) Central Asia (-6.4%), Africa (-7%), West Asia (-12.3%) and South Asia (-13.3%). ASEAN or the short haul market ruled with a 75.1% share of total tourist arrivals and brought a total of 19,478,575 tourists to Malaysia, the medium haul market share was 19.1% with 4,948,123 tourists, while the long haul market share was 5.9% with a total of 1,520,389 tourists.

For the top 10 markets, Singapore with 12,441,713 international tourist arrivals heads the list followed by Indonesia (2,796,570), China (2,281,666), Thailand (1,836,522), Brunei Darussalam (1,660,506), India (552,739), South Korea (484,528), Japan (392,777), Philippines (370,559), and Australia (351,232). For China, the market exceeded the target to this region with an increase of 7.45% to 2.28 million arrivals, while an increase of flight frequency by AirAsia X made Kuala Lumpur and also Kota Kinabalu choice destinations for the Koreans. Wars in Syria, Yemen and Qatar affected the Middle East markets, supplementary impacting Malaysia's tourism performance after Malaysia Airlines discontinued its routes to Dubai and Kuwait in 2016. Despite the deterioration in overall arrivals, Tourism Malaysia is optimistic that Malaysia's tourism performance will improve. The upsurge in the number of visa applications from India and China as well as forward flight bookings, are positive indicators. Improved visa facilities in China and India are also making it convenient for more travellers to visit Malaysia. Better connectivity from various key markets would also increase travel to Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia had announced during the ITB Berlin of its partnership with Condor Air to establish a thrice-weekly Frankfurt-Kuala Lumpur route beginning 5 November 2018 offering 960 weekly seats. The Tourism Malaysia unified Promotional Plan 2018 – 2020 has also been formulated and implemented to tackle existing challenges and improve Malaysia's tourism performance, the kick-off of Visit Malaysia 2020

campaign in various markets this year, targeting 36 million tourists and RM168 billion in tourist receipts by 2020, is also expected to revive Malaysia's position as a choice holiday destination(<https://www.tourism.gov.my/media/view/25-9-million-international-tourists-visited-malaysia-in-2017>).

Malaysia is an eminent food paradise in serving miscellaneous ranges of local and global cuisines; the contribution of Malaysian street food on cultural values is still imperfect. This can be explained by a majority of the international tourists which view Malaysia as a country with beautiful landscape, picturesque scenery and wonderful beaches but not for the exclusive offering of Malaysian Street Food.

Food culture in Malaysia

Malaysia is recognized as an overwhelming multi ethnic country, and it has demonstrated its fabulous culture and history through its culinary food. Malaysian Culinary Food along with the Malaysian Street Food exhibit three major unique ethnic's food tastes; Malay, Chinese and Indian. From Table 1, shows the food cultures and traditional preparation that was practiced by people from Malaysia according to their culture, beliefs and values. Malaysian people along with tourists come to visit Malaysia love to spend time by eating special dishes. However, there is an up-and-coming trend of new food culture in Malaysia which called as 'eating out' habit. This new food consumption practices are classified based on the food types, places to get for the food and several types of consumers (Ali & Abdullah, 2012). Thus, through social transformation of urbanization, it has increased up the value of Malaysian Culinary Food also Malaysian Street Food and give opportunity for international tourists to experience varieties of Malaysian dishes at everywhere during their vacation in Malaysia.

Table 1: Food culture practices of Malay, Chinese and Indian in Malaysia.

Criteria	Malay	Chinese	Indian
Basic principles of food intake	Influenced by Al-Quran concept of Halal and Haram heat, cold and wind. Eat when hungry Not eat (for a harmonious element in the body).	Influenced by Yinshih (food and beverages) -Fan-ts' ai Cereals - vegetables and meat The concept of five elements.	Influenced by Ayurveda –Ushna (hot food) -Tampu (cold food) - sama (neutral food). Eat two times a day -Tridosha-pitta, kappa, Vayu -The concept of five elements -taboo – Vegetarian (a harmonious element in the body).
Ingredients in food	Depending on the material in the food resources available in the environment. Fishermen, fish Peasant-agricultural products.	North more oily South-Szechwan and Hunan were used in chili powder Kiangsu and Chekiang-emphasize freshness. Cantonese-sweet.	North-milk South-rice West sweet East-grain -Cooking by caste.
Cooking techniques	Using the pot soil, pan, natural materials like bamboo, leaves, wood, shell, Palas leaves and banana leaves .	Using a wok, pot soil, and natural materials like bamboo, leaves, and wood.	Using the pot soil, pan and banana leaf.
Meal	Festive meals, marriages, births, shaving the crown, bertindik ceremony, the baby down the land, circumcision, death, gratitude.	New Year's celebrations, lanterns, dragon boats month, the day the oldest, marriage, birth, commemorate the spirit, death.	Religious ceremonies, celebrations, births, pierce, death.
Food and culture	Glutinous rice with yellow-Thanks giving betel leaves entertain guests Raw materials associated with men- Cooking food associated with females.	Cake basket-increasing status shark fish- more income cake roll-prosperous life Fruit orange-gold Ball in the sup consolidation in the family.	Milk or Ghee -light sources Candy-goodness.

Source: Omar, S.R., Karim, S.A., Bakar, A.Z.A. and Omar, S.N., 2015

Street Food

Street food is an essential industry in various countries, it provides families that otherwise would not have any source of income with a significant amount of revenue, with no tax payment and a very low investment of capital is an option worth considering for a great number of vendors. In countries like Malaysia ,Singapore, and Thailand street food is still considered as a touristic resource and authorities encourage the variety of offers because it brings color and life to the destination landscape (Henderson,

Yun, Poon, & Biwei, 2012; Jalis, Che, & Markwell, 2014; Ramli, Zahari, Halim, & Aris, 2016; Muhammad, Zahari, Shariff, & Abdullah, 2016). In Southeast Asia street food or hawking is considered as an important part of the social, cultural and economic association (Toh & Birchenough, 2000).

The street food sector offers ready-to-eat food and beverages prepared partially or entirely in public areas, it relies in fresh locally sourced ingredients that allow little or no storage time. In this way, local street food helps the consumers understanding the relationship between food and territory, also shortens the distance between producers and final consumers (Sengel, Karagoz, Cetin, Dincer, Ertugral, & Balık, 2015). Street food represents a mode of interacting with the swarm culture; it offers the opportunity to understand the local way of life, and a richer and more meaningful holiday experience. Eating out on the street is more convenient than eating inside a restaurant, street food is available at any time of the day and there is a broad range of variety to select from.

As famous chefs Thompson and Carter (2009) said in Malaysia "It's all about the food" a walk around the streets of big cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang can confirm this statement. Food plays a central role in society, sharing food precedes most of the business dealings, and treating or inviting friends and family to dine out is signal of social achievements (Walker & Yasmeen, 1996). This trend goes from locals to the visitors, several studies have found, food is one of the most important motivators for tourists to visit Malaysia (Lertputtarak, 2012; Yiamjanya & Wongleedee, 2014; Kururatchaikul, 2014), this does not come as a revelation, Malaysian Street Foods are so unique, that is considered one of the best cuisines of the world (CNN, 2015).

Normally, street foods are made with ingredients sourced from local markets and the recipes differ from hawker to hawker. Because of this, tourists who are familiar with street food from Kuala Lumpur or Bangkok could be less common with street food from Penang or Phuket. Differences in the local culture and geography across South-East Asia make street food unique in every region. These differences could therefore be a motivation for tourists that are familiar with Malaysian Street Food street food revisits Malaysia, and experience food of different regions (Kururatchaikul, 2014; Privitera & Nesci, 2015; Simon & Wang, 2017; Choe & Kim, 2018).

Some Familiar Malaysian Street Foods are-Assam Laksa (Rice Noodles in Fishy Soup), Rojak (Fruit and Vegetable Salad), Roti Canai (Flatbread), Chendul/Cendol (Cold Dessert Soup), Apom Balik (Stuffed Pancake), Batu Maung Satay (Grilled Meat on Skewers), Koay Chiap (Duck and Noodle Soup), Chee Cheong Fun (Rice-Noodle Rolls), Café Drinks: Nescafé and Milo (Coffee and Chocolate Malted Beverage), Teh Tarik (Pulled Tea), Koay Teow Th'ng (Sweet Noodle Soup with Meat and Fish Balls), Lok Lok (Hot Pot), Ice Kacang (Corn-Bean Frozen Dessert), Durians, Nasi Lemak (Rice Cooked in Coconut Milk), Char Kuey Teow (Stir-Fried Noodles), Hokkien Mee (Egg and Rice Noodles in Spicy Soup), Wonton (Wan Tan) Mee (Noodle Soup with Dumplings), Bak Kua Bread (Dried Pork Subs), Otak Otak (Fish Cakes), Economy Bee Hoon (Rice Noodles in Black Sauce) and Mock Duck, Kuih Kosui (Glutinous Rice and Coconut Dessert), Mee Goreng (Soft Noodles Served with Lettuce), Economic Rice (Self-Serve Take-Out Buffet), Roast Chicken Rice, Char Hor Fun, Char Koay Kak (Noodle dishes), Koay Teow Th'ng (Egg and Rice Noodles in Meaty Soup).

Source: <https://www.buzzfeed.com/luckypeach/malaysian-street-food-guide>

Nasi Lemak, Rendang and Air Kelapa Muda (young coconut water) claimed as a traditional Malay food and beverage, Chapattis, Puree, Teh Tarik (pulled tea) and Lassi as Indian, Char Kway Teow (flat rice noodle), Chicken Rice, Chincau and Len Chi Kang (varieties condiments beverages served either hot or cold with palm sugar syrup) as Chinese and many others has no longer belong to one single ethnic group, but are well accepted as Malaysian food and beverages. This is well verified by many ethnic restaurants offering such combinations of food and beverages and this unique combination in turn has created significant array of Malaysian gastronomy products. Interestingly, the Indian Muslims (who are called Mamak) whose food preparation and cooking style is popular among all the ethnic races in Malaysia are often the central point of 'inter-racial' dining. They serve a variety of Malaysian cuisines which may still harbour traces of their Indian heritage in popular dishes like mee goreng Mamak, pasembor, curries, roti canai, murtabak, sarmosa, lassi, teh tarik and many more (Jalis et al., 2007). Lee (1988) this limelight is very much due to the political stability and close inter-cultural relations among the ethnic groups, along with the government roles. Food related activities and events representing each ethnic group are also part of Malaysian gastronomy products. Most of these are resultant either from religious or from cultural events such as Hari Raya, Chinese New Year, Thaipusam and Deepavali. Hari Raya meant celebration day for Muslim throughout the world especially the Malays in Malaysia. Variety of Malays traditional foods such as ketupat (rice or glutinous rice wrapped in leave), leman (glutinous rice cooked in bamboo tubes), serunding (desiccated meat or chicken or fish fried with chilli), rendang, cakes, sweets, biscuits and various delicacies are served on the day of Hari Raya, also available in street food hawkers. Chinese New Year is a Chinese religious or cultural event. Foods name as nian gao (sticky rice pudding cake), fish vegetables, oyster, abalone, fish balls (yu-wan) and meat balls (jou-wan), duck or chicken are served during the festive celebration. Deepavali which is also known as the festival of lights for Indians, a wide variety of traditional spicy foods are served such as chicken tandoori, prawn sambal, fish head curry, thosai, chapatti, idlis, naans etc. A attractive spread of sweets such as halwa and laddu are also served during this festival. In fact, there are many other festivals celebrated by other ethnic groups predominantly in Borneo Island such as Hari Gawai, Hari Menuai, Hari Keamatan. Despite every ethnic group celebrates their owned religious festivals, each ethnic group open their doors and welcome their neighbors and friend regardless of race and serve up them the best of their own ethnic dishes.

Other good places to see the excitement of the Malaysian culinary tradition are in the fare offered in open air night markets popularly known locally as pasar malam and hawkers stalls. Although the several of shopping facilities have already been built up all over the country, the night market and hawkers food streets stalls are the most popular Malaysians food culture events

selling various kinds of local foods and beverages. Malaysians have long turned to the night market or pasar malam for their grocery and local foods, where hawkers food streets stalls are totally selling local foods and beverages and famous among the Malaysian Chinese. A common attraction in these places is getting the opportunity to watch the uniqueness of traditional skills practiced by the hawkers to prepare foods from closer. Malaysia is rich with traditional manner of eating which has continuously been inherited and being practiced by one generation to another. The most popular method of eating is to pile on the rice on to a plate with other side dishes heaped on top and tuck in heartily using the fingers of the right hand among the Malays and Indian but the Chinese eat their food by using chopsticks (Syed Amir, 1991; Hutton, 2000; Jalis et al., 2007). Looking at the uniqueness of food, beverages and food cultures, the government, through the Ministry of Tourism and other related agencies has started to spend a great deal of money promoting these tourism products abroad especially among the western world which make up the largest proportion of total tourists' arrival annually (Motour, 2007). On the other hand, despite of those marketing effort, there is no evident or reports on the acceptance of international tourists especially the western tourists toward Malaysian gastronomy products ever documented. In other words, the extent of western tourists' involvement with the food and beverage consumption in this country and the extent of their experience of food and beverages related activities such as food culture have not yet been widely researched (Jalis et al., 2007). In countries, such as Malaysia or Singapore, street food has been evolved into a micro industry in which the government sets standards and provides education for vendors to regulate the food handling procedure. These measures have proved to be effective in improving the quality of the offered food and the image tourists have towards those countries' street food (Toh & Birchenough, 2000; Henderson, Yun, Poon, & Biwei, 2012; Proietti, Frazzoli, & Mantovani, 2014). Responding to the issue, this study seeks to empirically investigate the emotional attachments of the western tourists towards the Malaysian street foods as it can be useful in promoting these products to be one of the main attractions in the Malaysian tourism industry.

Problem Statement

A lot of research has been done on the traditional food sector of Malaysia, compare to a very few on the street food sector especially to attract the foreign tourists and to find out their level of emotional attachment on point of product offering, health issue, atmosphere and service quality of Malaysian street food. Since no validate model has been developed so far, street food vendors are yet to be aware of how to provide quality services to the foreign tourists. Many researches has found that the food is a major part of tourist attraction, so there may be a possibility of reducing the flow of international tourist (Radhiah & Nazirah, 2015; Karim et. Al. 2015; Luis & Panuwat, 2016; Simon & Wang, 2017; Chen & Huang, 2018) in Malaysia near future.

Research Questions

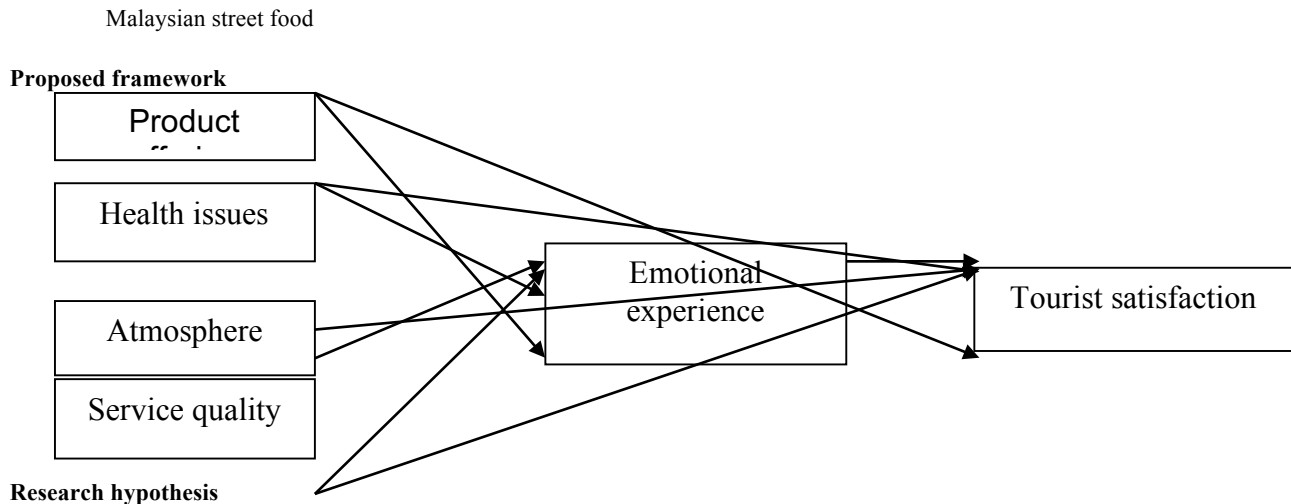
Based on problem statement the following research questions have been developed

1. What are the relationships between product offering dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food?
2. What are the relationships between health issue dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food?
3. What are the relationships between atmospheric dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food?
4. What are the relationships between the service quality dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food?
5. What are the relationships between food emotional experience and satisfaction of international tourists on Malaysian street food?

Research Objectives

Based on the research questions the following research objectives have been developed

1. To determine the relationships between product offering dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food.
2. To discover the relationships between health issue dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food.
3. To examine the relationships between atmospheric dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food.
4. To identify the relationships between service quality dimensions and emotional experience of international tourists on Malaysian street food.
5. To investigate the relationships between food emotional experience and satisfaction of international tourists on



Based on the research questions, research objectives and framework following research hypothesis has been developed

H1: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-product offering and international tourist's satisfaction by emotional experience.

H2: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-health issues and international tourist's satisfaction by emotional experience.

H3: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-atmosphere and international tourist's satisfaction by emotional experience.

H4: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food- service quality and international tourist's satisfaction by emotional experience.

H5: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-product offering and international tourist's satisfaction.

H6: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-health issues and international tourist's satisfaction.

H7: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food-atmosphere and international tourist's satisfaction.

H8: There is a significant linkage between Malaysian street food- service quality and international tourist's satisfaction

H9: There is a significant linkage between international tourist's emotional experience and international tourist's satisfaction on Malaysian street food.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction from a tourism perspective can be described as the quantity to which the tourists' performance criterion is being discharged by the destination (Correia, Moital, Costa & Peres, 2008). The quality of international tourists' dining experiences, specifically the taste of the food, sensory aspects of the food, and diverse quality and performance of the food event, is fundamental to creating positive attitudes (Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Kim & Eves, 2012; Jacey & Sam, 2018). Studies demonstrate that there are several components that confer to the dining experience. One of them is atmospherics. Atmospherics can be regarded as one of the important essentials of dining experience. The atmosphere can have an consequence on one's emotions and expectations concerning service and food quality (Baker et al., 1994; Reimer & Kuehn, 2005; Wall & Berry, 2007). According to Ha and Jang (2010), the so-called level of atmospherics can increase or decrease the outcome of perceived quality on satisfaction and affirmative post consumption behaviors, atmospherics may perhaps comprise a moderating role in between quality perception and consumer behaviors. The magnitude of service quality as well as food quality also have been highlighted from the previous studies as the tourists' sensitivity of quality covers a substantial impact on tourists' satisfaction which will pilot towards an affirmative post consumption behavior, including loyalty (Olsen, 2002; Martinez and Martinez, 2010). In the expressions of service quality, research illustrates that a high quality employee service will effect in a higher tourists satisfaction which will lead to higher levels of affirmative post consumption behavior such as revisiting, positive word of mouth or recommending the restaurant to others (Oliver, 1999; Cronin et al., 2000; Chow et al., 2007). Besides service quality, the same pertains to food quality as well. Product quality has been regarded as a main building block of tourists' dining experiences which will impose on the tourists' satisfaction which subsequently determines the post behaviors (Kivela et al., 2000; Namkung and Jang, 2007). Emotional value also affects international tourists' evaluations of hospitality and tourism products (Park, 2004; Gursoy et al., 2006; Ha and Jang, 2010; Lee et al., 2010; Hyunet al., 2011; Choe & Kim, 2018). Tourists who perceive themselves as receiving emotional value, such as pleasure, enjoyment, excitement or relaxation, after eating ethnic food are satisfied and willing to revisit an ethnic restaurant (Ha & Jang, 2010). Tourists consume food for both energy and emotional pleasure, when they choose to consume local food, which is probably different from their ordinary diet, they often expect to obtain positive emotional benefits. Tourist satisfaction has been the focal point of a number of studies (Correia, Moital, Costa & Peres, 2008). According to Day (1984), tourist satisfaction can be characterized as a post acquires evaluative opinion with reference to the purchase decision.

Conclusion

The study will focus on analyzing international travelers' emotional experience and their satisfaction on Malaysian Street Food and those factors which influence their emotional attachment on Malaysian Street Food. Since very few studies have been reported in this particular area all over the world, the theoretical contribution of this study will enrich the body of knowledge in food tourism, Malaysia. As such, this study will hunt to characterize the profile of traveler's emotional attachment in culinary tourism and add to the existing knowledge by improving the understanding of travelers' behavior which includes International tourists' food emotional experience in Malaysian street food. The managerial contribution of the study will support and assist the street food hawkers to attract more tourists to their shops and also the hospitality and tourism managers in planning a comprehensive strategic marketing plan focuses on targeting the culinary tourism market. In addition, this very study will promote Malaysia to the international tourists as a heaven of street foods.

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