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THE GAME ON 2022:

**THE FUTURE IS
BRIGHT**

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THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT**

**FACUTLY OF HOSPIATLITY, TOURISM AND WELLNESS,
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA KELANTAN**

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The Impact of Memorable Tourism Experience on Behavioral Intention: A Case Study of Dark Tourism Destination - Kellie's Castle, Perak

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence tourists' behavioural intentions in dark tourism in the state of Perak. Very little research has been done to investigate the relationship between MTEs and behavioural intention, particularly in the context of Dark tourism. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between involvement, novelty, refreshment, meaningfulness and behavioural intention in dark tourism. The researcher collected data using a purposive sampling technique from 375 tourists who visited the famous dark tourism destination in Perak which is Kellie Castle. According to the findings, involvement, novelty, meaningfulness and refreshment all had a positive effect on behavioural intention to visit Malaysia. The findings of this study help the tourism industry create attractive activities and packages suitable for entertaining visitors at dark tourism sites and entice them to visit dark tourism sites in the near future.

Keywords: behavioural intentions, involvement, novelty, meaningfulness, refreshment.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is one of the countries that is struggling to compete with other dark tourism sectors throughout the world (Ismail et al., 2010). Although Malaysia offers numerous wonderful dark tourism locations, none of them is well-known outside of Malaysia; only locals are aware of the dark places (Braithwaite et al., 2014). Furthermore, due to a lack of support and cooperation from government bodies, public agencies, tourism organisations, and tourism operators, the potential growth of these locations cannot be realised (Bhuiyan et al., 2013). Similarly, specials, packages, and tours are frequently difficult to find online. For example, a study conducted by researchers discovered that there are no packages available for dark tourism in Malaysia, causing the dark tourism sector to grow at a slower rate than other tourism themes. Furthermore, a lack of experience causes this dark tourism business to struggle to flourish, although having a tremendous potential to develop.

This indicates that staging and offering a unique experience are necessary. However, according to McCormick et al. (2012), not all tourism experiences are memorable, making it extremely difficult to stage a Memorable Tourism experience (MTE) for visitors. Difficulties in the evaluation of the constituents of these experiences also occurred due to the fact that there was a significant mismatch between the different experiences and components between the visitors (Moutinho, 1987). The results of this research have also been supported by a statement issued by Jeong et al. (2007), which stated that the difficulties in the study of MTE are due to the difference in dimensions between experiences and memories that make it challenging to implement this matter. Meanwhile, according to Beasley (2015), misunderstanding or having the wrong intention is one of the contributors to the failure of the implementation of MTE, where each person involved in this matter gives different suggestions and opinions. Some claim that it is ethical to visit to gain a deeper understanding or pay respect to the victims.

Despite all the issues above, little research has been done to investigate the relationship between MTEs and behavioural intention, particularly in the context of dark tourism. This is because

most of MTE's studies are conducted outside of dark tourism, which has complicated the process of obtaining data in developing this sector. Furthermore, these differences in writing in the dark tourism sector have led to other dimensions that may impact different contexts (Sthapit and Coudounaris, 2018). According to Dwyer & Kim (2003), MTE is very subjective and varied as it depends on the type of attraction. Hence, this study is designed to investigate which memorable tourism experience (MTE) elements will significantly impact visitors' behavioural intentions, particularly in dark tourism attractions. This study examined the impact of a MTE on behavioural intention. More specifically, this research examines the relationship between involvement, novelty, meaningfulness, and refreshment with regard to behavioural intention to visit dark tourist destinations.

There are four objectives of this research:

1. To examine the relationship between involvement and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie's Castle, Perak.
2. To examine the relationship between novelty and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie's Castle, Perak.
3. To examine the relationship between meaningfulness and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie's Castle, Perak.
4. To examine the relationship between refreshment and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie's Castle, Perak.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Practical perspective

From a practical standpoint, this study will assist tourism players and marketers in better understanding the many difficulties of experiential tourism and dark tourism. Furthermore, the organiser can use this scale as an alternative to measuring satisfaction performance in terms of their competence throughout the event, which will aid in understanding the desires and needs of dark tourism visitors. This discovery also will assist the tourism industry in developing a variety of activities and packages ideal for engaging guests in addition to sightseeing around dark tourist spots.

Academic perspectives

From an academic perspective, this study provides a noble contribution to a memorable tourism experience area, and dark tourism study as it provides a notable insight that extends the current research setting. Additionally, this study will help guide future research improvements, especially on subjects related to dark tourism and adventure. Besides that, this study will enable researchers to draw a significant conclusion about the results of theories, hypotheses, and research inquiries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Involvement

According to Goldsmith and Emmert (1991), involvement is a customer's level of relevance attributed to an action, object, or activity, as well as the passion and interest it generates. Involvement can alternatively be described as the degree to which visitors are interested in a workout and their subjective responses induced by the exercise (Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003). In tourism, research evidence suggests that increasing tourist involvement improves the overall visitor experience and may result in a higher degree of MTE (Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi & Hall, 2021; Chen & Rahman, 2017; Hall, Seyfi, & Rasoolimanesh, 2021). According to Chen and Rahman (2017), different motivations for travelling will result in varying degrees of tourist

involvement. Similarly, participation and awareness of a destination also will result in a higher rate of MTE.

Novelty

According to Ma (2013), a novelty in tourism is "the degree to which an experience differs from an individual's anticipation." Novelty is regarded to be integral to the sense of pleasure through the sensations of flow, concentration, and creativity (Filep et al., 2019). Mitas and Bastiaansel (2018) claimed in their statement that unexpectedness, delight, surprise, thrill, and enjoyment are all feelings associated with novelty in tourism and travel. Feelings are very important in conveying unforgettable vacation experiences (MTEs). The previous study has shown a positive relationship between novelty and behavioural intention in the setting of experience (Dedeoglu et al., 2018). Furthermore, novelty influences both short-term and long-term behavioural decisions (Mitas & Bastiaansel, 2018). According to Vitters et al. (2017), tourists who do things that aren't particularly novel are more likely to help others comprehend, but they are less likely to return to the location. Tourists who participate in an analytical method describing high-novelty activities, on the other hand, are more likely to recommend and evaluate the site.

Meaningfulness

According to Jamal et al. (2017), one way people obtain meaning through tourism is through meaningfulness. Furthermore, this meaningfulness might be identified as a critical element that occurs as a result of comprehending the event and has a long-term impact (Sutherland et al., 2011). This study looks into how a remarkable tourism experience influences travellers' behaviour and intentions. According to the findings of this study, various critical elements influence the efficiency of the factor meaningfulness on behavioural intention to visit. The fundamental elements in the link between meaningfulness and behaviour are satisfaction and a passionate attitude. Tourists will encounter important sensations during their stay, which will lead to feelings of delight and excitement, influencing their behaviour and inclination to return, according to Ali et al. (2016). Positive emotions are connected with future behaviours and constitute the second component of the relationship between behavioural and meaningfulness intention. According to Barnes et al. (2016), enjoyment makes people feel good, which gives a visit significance and motivates them to improve their behaviour in the future.

Refreshment

Refreshment, which comprises escape from one's stressful and day-to-day routine, is one of the most powerful motivators for tourist experiences. The most important feature that distinguishes travel or tourism experiences from everyday life is refreshment (Cohen, 1979; Kim, 2014). Tourism, for example, is defined by Cohen (1979, p. 181) as "essentially a temporary reversal of typical activity—it is a no-work, no-care, no-thrift condition." Scientific evidence supports the value of refreshment in travel and tourist experiences, as well as its positive impact on visitors' travel memories. (Morgan and Xu, 2009; Kim, 2010). As a result, structures and orderings that are potentially liberating and powerful, such as travel, tours, and events, can be used to conduct tourism instead of everyday systems like rigid school and work time schedules (Franklin as cited in Coles & Hall 2008). Bowen and Clarke (2009) claim that a person's perception of "free" time is crucial to their tourist experience. It's meant to help travellers keep a more stable mood by letting them collect happy memories and get rid of psychological problems they might face in their everyday lives (Uysal et al., 2012).

Behavioural Intention

According to Wayne (2019), "behavioural intention" refers to the driving factors that influence a specific behaviour; the stronger the desire to complete the activity, the more likely it will be accomplished. Some researchers have proven that the impact of destination pictures on behavioural intentions is the inclination to continue doing a specific behaviour in the future

(Afshardoost and Eshaghi, 2020). Four independent aspects influence behavioural intention in night time tourism, according to the hypothesis: engagement, meaningfulness, refreshment, and novelty will impact memorable tourism experiences. Other categories of visitors discovered in the research include the morbidly curious and adrenaline junkies (Schrier, T, Lewis, H., and Xu, S.,2021). Tourists may travel to dark tourism places in order to build emotional bonds with celebrities or to observe the reality behind media portrayals (Lewis et al., 2021). Travellers frequently form emotional bonds with their destinations (Duncan, 2017). Furthermore, tourist incentives such as enthusiasm, relaxation, and curiosity have been proven to have a direct impact on their behaviour intentions (Lewis et al., 2021).

Research Hypothesis

The following research hypothesis is based on a conceptual framework; independent variables, namely involvement, meaningfulness, refreshment and novelty, were determined and dependent variables, i.e. behavioural intention.

H1: There is a positive relationship between involvement and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie’s Castle, Perak.

H2: There is a positive relationship between meaningfulness and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie’s Castle, Perak.

H3: There is a positive relationship between refreshment and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie’s Castle, Perak.

H4: There is a positive relationship between novelty and behavioural intention in dark tourism at Kellie’s Castle, Perak.

5. Research Framework

A study framework has been presented to examine the link to discover the influence of memorable tourist experiences on behavioural intention in Dark Tourism -based tourism. The dependent variable is the factor influencing behavioural choice on Dark Tourism. The proposed independent variable consists of involvement, meaningfulness, refreshment, and novelty.

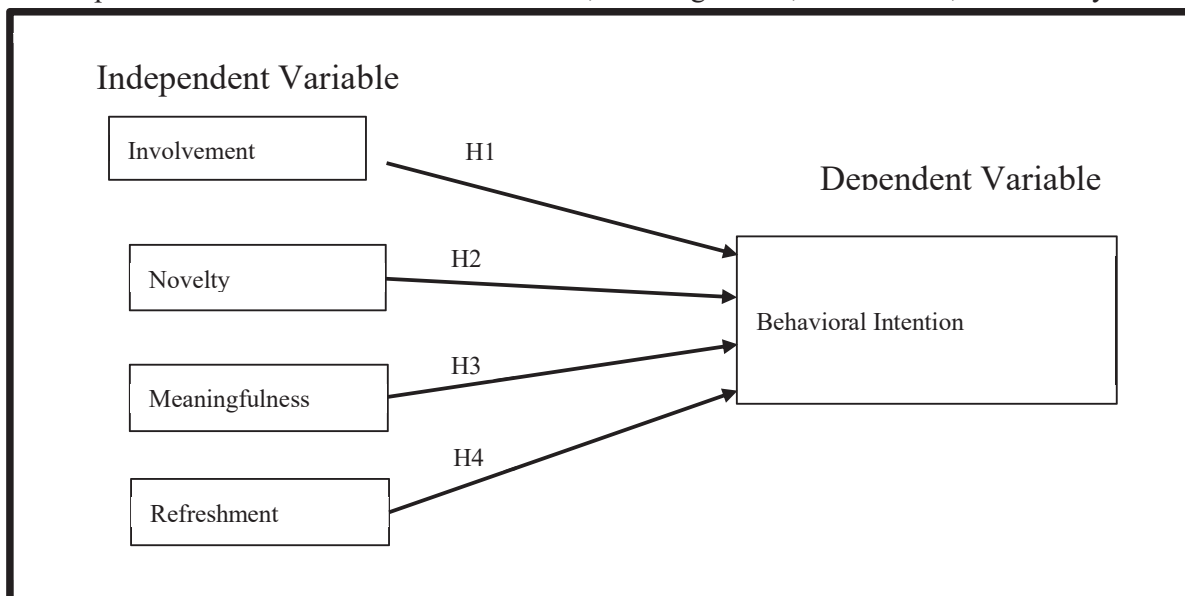


Figure 1: a conceptual framework of the dependent variable influences behavioural choice on Dark Tourism adapted from Kim, Ritchie and McCorick (2012)

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Research design is essentially an analysis strategy that describes the researchers' techniques to complete their research objectives or analyse the hypotheses presented for their research. According to Nazir (in Nasution, 2004), the research design is a unified, detailed, and specific strategy for acquiring, considering, and interpreting data. The researchers used a quantitative research design to gather the information needed to do this research. Respondents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that can be answered through the Google Form that has been provided. Using the questionnaire method is easy to answer and saves time.

Data Collection

A self-administered Google form questionnaire was utilised to gather data. According to Sekaran (2003), self-administered questionnaires are a practical data collection approach, provided the researcher understands precisely what is wanted and how to quantify the desired variables. This survey engaged Malaysians who have been to the dark tourism destination we have chosen: Kellie Castle, Perak. A set of questionnaires was distributed targeted to respondents who had visited Kellie Castle, Perak. The questionnaire will be given out on the internet and on social media platforms.

In comparison to a possible respondent elsewhere globally, the researchers feel that the targeted respondent at this event is more inclined to engage in this study. Additionally, the respondents were informed and educated about the purpose of the research. After completion, the researchers will personally return the surveys. To safeguard the respondents' identities, their surnames were omitted.

Sampling

In this study, researchers will choose to do purposive sampling, also known as selective, subjective, and judgmental sampling. It is a sampling approach in which the researcher selects participants from the population based on their assessment (Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A., 2019). According to Saunders et al. (2019), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach in which "the sample components are chosen by the researcher's judgement." Researchers often feel that by using excellent judgement, they get to observe a representative sample, thus saving time and money. The researcher chose approximately 375 tourists who visited the famous dark tourism destination Perak which is Kellie Castle. The sample was chosen as the researchers believed that the samples would be able to provide the right information to the researchers. Furthermore, the quantity is deemed adequate because similar studies used a similar number of respondents.

Data Analysis

To conduct this study, the researchers used statistical data analysis for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Bala et al., 2011). The implementation of this system is used because it provides data analysis for descriptive and bivariate statistics and numerical outcome prediction to identify groups (Jyoti et al., 2016). The results will be presented using frequencies and percentages (Ho and Robert 2013). In addition, the researcher collects data for the following data analysis of this research: descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and reliability analysis.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: The Overall Mean Score on Each Variable and Dimension

Section	Dimension	N	M	SD
Part 1	Involvement	375	4.0453	0.70825
Part 2	Novelty	375	3.9259	0.84013
Part 3	Meaningfulness	375	3.8844	0.86249
Part 4	Refreshment	375	3.9355	0.85016

Source: Fieldwork study (2022)

As a result of descriptive analysis, this segment research explains the mean score obtained. The mean and standard deviation of all variables and sub-variables were calculated using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). The overall mean (M) and the standard deviation (SD) for each variable and measurement are shown in the table below.

According to the research, it showed that independent variables verified a moderate mean score (M = 3.8844, SD = 0.86249). Altogether, the dimension variables also scored a moderate mean score where meaningfulness was 3.8844 (SD = 0.86249), novelty was 3.9259 (SD = 0.84013), and refreshment was 3.9355 (SD = 0.85016). Besides, the dependent variable verified a middle mean score (M = 4.0475, SD = 0.80492), where the sub variable named involvement gained 4.0453 (SD = 0.70825).

Reliability Test

The reliability analysis was conducted in this analysis to determine Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables. The values are as follows: involvement (0.863), novelty (0.893), meaningfulness (0.920), refreshment (0.919) and behavior intention (0.898). All the reliability was above the 0.86 average, usually considered very good (Matkar, 2012).

Demographic Profile

The online platform had assigned a total of 375 sets of questionnaires. Table 2 shows the summarized demographic results of the respondent's profile. About 38.9% of the respondent were male, and another 61.1% were female. According to the data, Malay respondents had the greatest value of 204 respondents, or 54.4 per cent, while India had the lowest value of 23 respondents (6.1%). While Chinese had the second-highest number with a total of 78 respondents (20.8%), others came in third with a value of 70 respondents (18.7%).

Based on the above data, it can be concluded that Muslim respondents recorded the highest number, with a respondent value of 229 people, or equivalent to 63.9%, while other religious respondents recorded the lowest number, with only 8 respondents (2.1%). In addition, this data also showed that Christian respondents recorded the second-highest value with 63 respondents

(16.8%), while Hindus and Buddhists recorded a total of 18 respondents (4.8%) and 46 study participants (12.8%), respectively.

According to the data acquired using a Google Form survey for the Marital Status area, singles have the biggest number with 262 respondents, corresponding to 69.9 per cent, while married and others have 104 (27.7 per cent) and 9 (2.4 per cent) respondents, respectively.

The findings of table 2 show that the majority of respondents in this study have a degree, with a total of 243 people, or 64.8%. In addition, diploma recorded the second-highest value with 69 respondents (18.4%), followed by secondary in third place with 28 respondents, leading to a value of 7.5%, while primary recorded the fourth-lowest value with a reading of 8 respondents (2.1%), and PhD. was the lowest position with only 6 respondents, or equivalent to 1.6%.

Based on the above data, it can be concluded that Muslim respondents have recorded the highest number, with a respondent value of 229 people, or equivalent to 63.9%, while other religious respondents recorded the lowest number, with only 8 respondents (2.1%). In addition, this data has also shown that Christian respondents recorded the second-highest value with 63 respondents (16.8%), while Hindus and Buddhists recorded a total of 18 respondents (4.8%) and 46 study participants (12.8%) respectively.

Based on table 2, it shows the average monthly income for the group "Below RM 1000" recorded the highest number of respondents with a record of 216 people (57.6%). RM2001-RM3000 was ranked second with 53 respondents or 14.1%, followed by the income group of RM1001-RM2000 with 38 people (10.1%), while RM3001-RM4000 was in fourth place with 37 respondents or with a percentage value of 9.9%, and the lowest was RM4001 and above with only 31 respondents (8.3%).

Table 2: Respondent Demographics profile

Respondent profile	Classification	Frequenc y N=375	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	146	38.9%
	Female	229	61.1%
Age	Less than 20 years old	29	7.7%
	21-30 years old	225	60%
	31-40 years old	45	12%
	41-50 years old	55	14.7%
	51 years old and above	21	5.6%
Race	Malay	204	54.4%
	Chinese	78	20.8%
	Indian	23	6.1%
	Other	70	18.7%
Marital Status	Married	104	27.7%
	Single	262	69.9%

	Other	9	2.4%
Respondent's Religion	Islam	229	63.9%
	Christian	63	16.8%
	Hindu	18	4.8%
	Buddhist	46	12.8%
	Other	8	2.1%
Education	Primary	8	2.1%
	Secondary	28	7.5%
	Diploma	69	18.4%
	Bachelor of Degree	243	64.8%
	Master of Degree	21	5.6%
	PHD	6	1.6%
Income (RM)	Less than RM1000	216	57.6%
	RM1001-RM2000	38	10.1%
	RM2001-RM3000	53	14.1%
	RM3001-RM4000	37	9.9%
	RM4001 and above	31	8.3%

Source: Fieldwork study (2022)

Hypothesis Testing

There are four (4) possibilities provided. The first hypothesis establishes a favourable association between involvement and behavioural intention. The second hypothesis establishes the existence of a positive link between novelty and behavioural intention. The third hypothesis establishes the existence of a positive link between meaningfulness and behavioural intent. Finally, the fourth hypothesis investigates the link between refreshment and behavioural intention.

Table 3: Hypothesis testing data

Hypothesis	Result	Findings of Data Analysis
H1: There is a positive relationship between involvement and behavioural intention.	$r = 0.706$, $p = 1.000$ Very high positive	H1: Accepted
H2: There is a positive relationship between novelty behavioural intention.	$r = 0.707$, $p = 1.000$ Very high positive	H2: Accepted
H3: There is a positive relationship between meaningfulness and behavioural intention.	$r = 0.791$, $p = 1.000$ Very high positive	H3: Accepted
H4: There is a positive relationship between refreshment and behavioural intention.	$r = 0.786$, $p = 1.000$ Very high positive	H4: Accepted

Source: Fieldwork study (2022)

The above table serves to summarise the findings of this study. Hypotheses that have been tested for this study will be further elaborated as follow:

The first hypothesis (H1) claimed that involvement participation has a strong positive correlation with behavioural intention. The education recorded value of the Spearman Correlation Coefficient, which is $r = 0.709$, $p = 1.000$, according to the findings provided in Table __. As a result, the finding supports hypothesis 1 (H1), which states that participation is positively related to behavioural intention.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) also argued that novelty has a strong positive association with behavioural intention. The entertainment recorded a Spearman Correlation Coefficient of $r = 0.707$, $p = 1.000$, according to the findings provided in Table __. As a result, the data support hypothesis 2 (H2), which states that novelty has a positive relationship with behavioural intention.

Meaningfulness, according to Hypothesis 3 (H3), has a very strong positive association with behavioural intention. The data revealed that meaningfulness is documented in the Spearman Correlation Coefficient, $r = 0.791$, $p = 1.000$, as shown in table __. As a result, the data support hypothesis 3 (H3), which states that meaningfulness is positively related to behavioural intention.

Refreshment, according to Hypothesis 4 (H4), has a very strong positive link with behavioural intention. The findings revealed that refreshment is recorded in Spearman Correlation Coefficient, $r = 0.786$, $p = 1.000$, as shown in table __. As a result, the finding supports hypothesis 4 (H4), which states that refreshment is positively related to behavioural intention.

DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result above, some empirical factors that determine the impact of MTE on behavioural intention to visit dark tourism sites in Perak have been determined. According to the findings, involvement, meaningfulness, refreshment, and novelty all had a positive effect on behavioural intention to visit dark tourism sites in Perak. Based on the study by Tung & Ritchie (2011), offering a memorable experience will facilitate the development of dark tourism destinations and enhance M.T.E.s among tourists.

For future researchers, the researcher could emphasise other research settings because enlarging the size of the study to several areas can facilitate the data collection process because of data findings would not just focus on one area of data discovery only.

The next suggestion that the researcher would like to propose is to look at other MTE variables such as hedonism, local culture and knowledge. Looking at other variables as well will definitely provide great insight into the current study. Furthermore, knowing and comprehending the notion of MTE will make it easier for tourism practitioners to plan and construct the types of MTE that may be delivered to visitors. Furthermore, further research can assist in speeding up the process of improving Malaysia's dark tourism business.

Moreover, more methodological work is required. It is possible to use qualitative methods to assess the impact of perceived health risks on international tourists' intentions to visit Malaysia. In-depth research in this area may yield unexpected results that may help to improve present studies and provide great insight.

Finally, future research should conduct a comparison study. Although methodologically difficult, conducting multiple comparison studies to measure the impact of MTE on behavioural intention will provide great insight to tourism players in the dark tourism industry. This is due to the fact that understanding this field will assist tourism players in developing the right experience program that can entice travellers to visit again the destination in future.

CONCLUSION

The link between four independent factors, namely engagement, novelty, meaningfulness, and refreshment, and the dependent variable, behavioural intention in dark tourism, was investigated using a framework from Kim, Ritchie and McCorick (2012). The results show the extent to which the independent variable impacts the dependent variable.

The overall objectives of this research have been answered, and a responsible synthesis of knowledge has been provided. Almost all respondents stated that their visit to Kellie's Castle provided them with an unforgettable tourist experience based on engagement, novelty, meaningfulness, and refreshment. They were ecstatic to have had the opportunity to visit the dark tourist spot and hope to do so again. They also agreed that going to Kellie's Castle, a gloomy tourist attraction, could give them a taste of the experiences there while also pleasing their minds.

The findings of this study are believed to provide great help to the tourism industry, creates attractive activities and packages suitable for entertaining visitors at dark tourism sites and enticing them to visit dark tourism sites in the near future research.

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