



E-PROCEEDING HOTWEC 6.0

THE GAME ON 2022:

THE FUTURE IS  
BRIGHT

FHPK, UMK

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

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# Tourist Perception Towards Local Food in George Town, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research is to examine tourist perception toward local food in Georgetown, Pulau Pinang. Additionally, the objectives of this research are to examine the connection between tourist experience and tourist impression and the correlation between the presumed quality of food and tourist perception. A total of 384 questionnaires have been distributed to tourists that have traveled for local food in Georgetown, Pulau Pinang. This study used quantitative approaches through convenient sampling. Data have been collected through an online survey. This study shows that the two factors which are satisfaction, perception, and perceived quality are the main factors influencing tourist perception toward local food at Georgetown, Pulau Pinang. Based on the data analysis and findings, the most significant factor is the perceived quality of local food, which achieved the highest mean score of 4.5484.*

**Keywords:** *Tourist, Local Food, Perception, Satisfaction, Perceived Quality*

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## INTRODUCTION

Local food consumption has become a common trend in a growing number of tourist places. Tourist demand for regional foods has expanded significantly in recent years (Henderson, 2009). "Local food" has a wide range of definitions. Some researchers describe local food in terms of marketing channels, while Hand and Martinez (2010) measured local food from farm gate to consumer. In other words, "local food" refers to products sold directly to consumers as well as to grocery stores and restaurants.

Similarly, academic debates regarding the importance of regional cuisine in tourism have taken root since the turn of the previous decade (Kim & Eves, 2012). Tourists and other consumers, in general, have a variety of reasons for requesting indigenous foods. Authenticity, environmental preservation, social and cultural promotion, product safety and quality (in terms of flavour, scent, and freshness), souvenirs, and economic support for the local economy are just a few of the many factors to consider.

This study consists of two objectives:

To identify the relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist perception.

To determine the relationship between the perceived quality of food and tourist perception.

## Significance of the Study

### *Local Food*

Food is produced, processed, and retailed in a defined geographical area in a local food system. The word 'local' is always experienced and understood in relation to larger geographical scales, such as regional, international, or global, even if where its local area ends and another scaling begins is subjective, depending on context (people density, availability, and rural or urbanised

location) and purpose ((Bessièrè, 1998; Chang et al., 2010; Henderson, 2009, Henderson, 2009, Henderson, 2009, Henderson, The simplest scope utilised to translate the origin of local food is the meaning of local food. When explaining the origin of the product, consumers will have a personal understanding of where it is produced and will be able to compare local and regional phrases (Markuszczyńska et al., 2012).

### ***Perception***

Perception, according to Bruner, includes two important characteristics: categorical and inferential. As a result, it can be thought of as a form of problem-solving in which part of the input comes from the senses and part from desires, expectations, and beliefs, with the output being the category of the item being experienced. Perception is the processing of external information by the sensor systems, such as visual or aural information. It is divided into two stages: early perception, which consists of encapsulated sensory processing modules, and late perception, which consists of encapsulated sensory processing modules (Raftopoulos, 2015b; Pylyshyn, 1999).

### ***Satisfaction***

As one of the most important destination performance criteria and a critical differentiator, (Wang, 2016), satisfaction is a primary emphasis of marketers (Bowen and Clarke, 2002). Furthermore, one of the most crucial requirements for a destination's competitive edge is tourist satisfaction (Ritchie and Crouch, 2000; Bieger, 1998). According to previous tourist satisfaction research (Bernini and Cagnone, 2012; Chi and Qu, 2008; Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Yu and Goulden, 2006), high customer happiness leads to consumer loyalty.

### ***Perceived Quality***

Overall excellence or superiority can be used to define quality in general. A customer's view of a product's overall perfection could be described as perceived quality (Zeithaml 1988). As a statement of belief or attribute performance, perceived quality is defined and quantified (Olsen 2002, citing Churchill and Surprenant, 1982).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Tourist Satisfaction of Local Food**

Tourist satisfaction is a mindset as well as an emotional experience in the purchasing process (Oliver, 1981). Fornell argued that satisfaction is the whole perspective of customers after consuming and may represent how much customers like their consumption process. According to these studies, customer satisfaction is defined as the gap between a customer's pre-purchase expectations and their post-purchase perceptions (Tse and Wilton, 1988).

Customer satisfaction is a major consideration for all businesses (Mason and Paggiaro, 2012). Numerous research has been conducted in the travel literature to study the role of tourist satisfaction. Tourist satisfaction is regarded as a critical component for a destination's distinct advantage, superior reputation, and effective promotion, as it influences destination selection, appreciation of tourism offerings, revisit intention, development of long-term relationships, and enhancement of destination image (Chen & Chen, 2010).

### **Perceived Quality of Local Food**

Perceived quality, referring to Steenkamp (1990), is meant as different based on value assessments in terms of usage capacity on conscious or unconscious consumer perceptions of these quality signals, together with related characteristics of high-quality service, regarding the individual's particular situation variables and situation. Quality has also been defined as a

measure of use expectations, durability, and characteristics that meet the needs of a user (or consumers) over a period of time in terms of user behaviour (Injac, 1998).

The word perceived quality is employed in this research study to refer to tourist quality factors. This is based on the tourists' perceptions, satisfaction, and objectives. According to (Steenkamp, 1990). Perceived quality is defined differently by Oude Ophuis and Van Trijp (1995). Quality can be measured by referring to predetermined benchmarks. A quality quadrant is proposed by Oude Ophuis and Van Trijp, 1995).

### Tourist Perception of Local Food

The perception theory (Oliver, 1977) investigates people's cognitive behaviour and the impact of positive experiences (Brown, Venkatesh, Kuruzovich, Massey, 2008). It also includes the expectations of satisfied customers who want to try the local cuisine (Chimbanrai and Wongsaroj, 2015). It is critical to conduct research on tourists' perceptions of a destination's image as a preferred choice for travel. Munien, (2019) investigates tourist profiles and discovers that tourist profiles such as gender, age, and educational level play important roles in improving tourist destination planning and management. According to a study conducted by Farsani (2019), tourists enjoy discovering new destinations, so it is critical to investigate their perceptions and satisfaction with a destination. According to a research on mines as tourist attractions, tourists would prefer to stay in geo-accommodation and go on geo-tours.

### Research Hypotheses

In this study, the following two hypotheses are indicated based on the research objectives:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>        There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived quality of local food and tourists' purchase intention.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>        There is a significant positive relationship between tourist satisfaction of local food and tourist perception.

### Research Framework

To explore the relationship between the research variables, a research framework is created. The dependent variable of the study is tourist perception of local food. While the independent variable is tourist satisfaction of local food and perceived quality of local food.

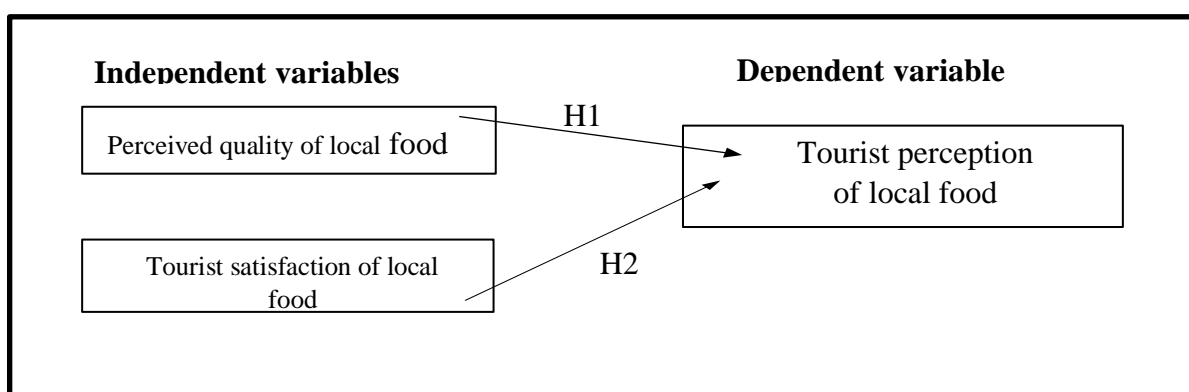


Figure 1: Research Framework on the Tourist Perception Towards Local Food.

Source: Tourist preference in selection of local food: perception and behaviour embedded model.

## METHODOLOGY

## Research Design

This study is conducted using a quantitative method via statistics' large-scale survey research to collect information by distributing a set of questionnaires through Google Forms. The objective of the research design is to ensure the validity of the study. To meet the research objective, information about the tourist perception on local food in Georgetown, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia has to be gathered.

## Data Collection

The initial stage of this study entailed gathering primary data using Google Forms, which are distributed to 384 participants. The respondents are also chosen at random to answer questions related to tourist perception on local food in George Town, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia.

## Sampling Method

The sampling approach employed in this study is the probability sampling methodology, specifically simple random sampling. The researchers utilised Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) equation to determine the sample size for this study to achieve a reliable and valid sample. This equation's formula is as follows:

$$S = \frac{x^2 N p (1 - p)}{e^2 (N - 1) + X^2 p (1 - p)}$$

n = sample size

N = population size

e = the degree of accuracy expressed as proportion (0.05)

$x^2$  = chi-square of degree of freedom 1 and confidence 95% (3.841)

p = proportion of population (if unknown, 0.5)

## Data Analysis

This study uses three types of data analyses: frequency analysis, descriptive analysis, and reliability analysis. The data have been analysed with SPSS to illustrate the links between the dependent variable and the independent variables as a series of statistical processes approximated by regression analysis.

## FINDING

### Result of Frequency Analysis

**Table 1: Frequency Analysis**

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	173	45.1
Female	211	54.9
<b>Race</b>		
Malay	314	81.8
Chinese	46	12.0
India	21	5.5
Others	3	0.8
<b>Age</b>		
20 and below	42	10.9
21-30	293	76.3
31-40	45	11.7
41 and above	4	1.0

<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	297	77.3
Married	87	22.7
<b>Employed Status</b>		
Student	215	56.0
Employed	145	37.8
Self-employed	17	4.4
Unemployed	7	1.8
<b>Income Level</b>		
RM1000 and below	216	56.3
RM1100-RM2000	161	41.9
RM2100-RM3000	3	0.8
RM3100 and above	4	1.0

Table 2 shows the frequency analysis of respondents. Out of 384 respondents, the majority of the respondents are females, which accounted for 54.9% of the total sample. Meanwhile, in terms of race, the majority are Malay at 81.8%, followed by Chinese at 12.0%, Indian at 5.5%, and Other at 0.8%. In terms of the respondents' age, 10.9% of them are aged 20 years old and below, 76.3% are aged 21 to 30 years old, 11.7% are aged 31 to 40 years old, and 1.0% are aged 41 years old, and above. For marital status of respondents, the majority are single which is 77.3%, and married 22.7%. As for the employment status, out of 384 respondents, 56.0% of the respondents are students, 37.8% are employed, 4.4% are self-employed, and 1.8% of them are unemployed. In terms of the income level, the highest percentage of respondents have an income of RM 1000 and below (56.3%), followed by RM 1100 to RM2000 income group at 41.9%, and RM2100 to RM3000, 0.8% for respondents earning RM3100 and above, the percentage is 1.0%

### **Result of Descriptive Analysis**

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Tourist Satisfaction	I am satisfied with all overall food experience in Penang.	4.50	0.662
	Local food in Penang is reasonable price.	4.40	0.762
	Eating local food is a enjoyable experience.	4.52	0.685
	I felt that I had got what I want to eat in Penang.	4.49	0.719
	The travel experience in Penang exceeded my expectation.	4.42	0.739
Perceived Quality	Do you think food is important for your health?	4.61	0.624
	Do you think the quality is an important criterion when buying local food?	4.62	0.606
	Is the received food palatable?	4.46	0.732



	Do you think it's important for you to buy high-quality food?	4.56	0.667
	Do you think the local food provided to you is sufficient?	4.49	0.693
Tourist Perception	The different types of local food at Penang are important to me when choosing it.	4.55	0.668
	When traveling, I think it is important to try local food at the destination.	4.59	0.631
	I think food is an important motivator for traveling.	4.50	0.701
	I think eating local food are most memorable experience when traveling.	4.60	0.663
	I am very happy when try local food in Penang.	4.55	0.620

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation for ten statements under two independent variables and five statements under the dependent variable which is based on a survey that involved 384 respondents. The highest mean value for tourist satisfaction is achieved by item 3 which is 4.52 where respondents agree that eating local food is an enjoyable experience. The lowest mean value is for item 2 which scores 4.40 where the respondents slightly agree that local food in Penang is reasonably priced. Next, for perceived quality, item 2 scores the highest mean value, which is 4.62, where the respondents agree that quality is an important criterion when consuming local food. The lowest mean is for item 3, with the mean value of 4.46, respondents agree that the received food is palatable. For tourist perception, item 4 scores the highest mean value, which is 4.60, where the respondents agree that eating local food is the most memorable experience. The lowest mean is for item 3 which is 4.50, where the respondents somewhat agree that food is an important motivator for traveling.

### Result of Reliability Analysis

The table 4 shows the result of the Reliability Analysis.

**Table 3: Reliability Analysis**

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Tourist Satisfaction	5	0.855
Perceived Quality	5	0.774
Tourist Perception	5	0.842

Table 4 shows the reliability analysis for the independent and dependent variables. Five questions have been asked to assess tourist satisfaction with local food in Georgetown, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. Cronbach's Alpha for this section's question is 0.855, which is very good. Next, there are five questions in measuring the perceived quality of local food. The result of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for this section is 0.774 which indicates good relationship. Furthermost, in measuring the tourist perception of local food, five questions are used. The Cronbach's Alpha result for this section's question is 0.842 which resulted as very good.

### Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis

The Table 5 below shows the Pearson Correlation Analysis.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Hypothesis	P-Value	Result (Supported/Not Supported)
H1. There is a significant positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and tourist perception.	0.000	Supported
H2. There is a significant positive relationship between perceived quality of local food and tourist perception.	0.000	Supported

Table 5 shows the Pearson correlation analysis, the significant value, and the total number of cases (384). The p-value is 0.000, which is less than the 0.01 level of significance. A moderate positive association between personal and tourism consumer behaviour is found with a correlation value of .775\*\*. Next is the Pearson correlation coefficient, the significant value, and the total number of cases (384). The p-value is 0.000, which is less than the 0.01 level of significance. A moderate positive association between social and tourism consumer behaviour is found with a correlation value of .717\*\*.

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Discussions are aimed at solving questions and addressing hypotheses as mentioned in the first chapter of this study. In general, this study has extensively researched the tourist perception towards local food in George Town, Pulau Pinang. This study has limitations that present challenges to the researcher while conducting this study. There are some limitations, among which is time. Time constraints are a rather challenging limitation in completing this study. The next limitation is the respondents. Respondents for this study are tourists who have been to Penang. To get 384 tourists who have visited Penang as research respondents is quite challenging. Besides, for data collection in this study, the researcher has employed an online survey. The researcher is not able to verify whether the information is provided by valid respondents while utilising online surveys. Based on the findings of the study, the current study would provide several recommendations for future researchers to apply in future studies.

This study suggests for more research to be done on foreign tourists who travel to Pulau Pinang, Malaysia, because the current study only focuses on local tourists in Malaysia, to see if there are any similarities or differences in the findings. Next, the interview approach or some open-ended questions for the respondent can be used, and the respondents may not be required to complete the scaling questionnaire online. Researchers can acquire a high response rate using the interview method. As a result, this method can help to avoid misunderstandings and create better study findings. Lastly, in this study, only two variables have been tested. Future researchers can recommend other variables for discovering new findings.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has accomplished discovering tourist perceptions towards local food in George Town, Pulau Pinang. Two independent variables, namely tourist satisfaction and perceived quality have been chosen to examine their relationships with the dependent variable, which is tourist perception of local food. A total of 384 respondents from the age of 20 years

old and above and those who have been to Pulau Pinang have been selected to examine tourists' perceptions.

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