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**ASEAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN ASEAN HERITAGE TOURISM:
A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM STUDY**

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This thesis titled “**ASEAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN ASEAN HERITAGE TOURISM: A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM STUDY**” is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Management and Development Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of ASEAN Studies.

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Dedication

“And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Abstract

The youth's point of view on heritage tourism is the starting point for promoting heritage protection and urges one another to be responsible and address the environmental issues. Significantly, their participation and involvement can strengthen heritage protection (Devianto et al., 2019)

This study understands the view of ASEAN Youth participation in ASEAN Heritage Tourism using qualitative study through Symbolic Interactionism framework. Symbolic Interactionism is a sociological perspective that focuses on how individuals use signs or symbols to create shared meaning between themselves and others. The researcher conducted interviews with 6 ASEAN youths coming from Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia because the main focus is the youth's experience in their respective ASEAN countries using semi-structured data where results were transcribed and coded for emerging themes. Three research questions guided this study: 1. What does heritage tourism mean to ASEAN youth; 2. What are the ASEAN youth's involvement and participation in heritage tourism; 3. What framework for heritage tourism in ASEAN can be proposed that is inclusive of youth's involvement?

For the youths visiting heritage sites is a means for "traveling", "knowing history" with a form of "appreciating architecture" and "educating oneself". The youths participated as active volunteers, advocates and aware of the impact of the ASEAN movement on society, regional development, and for future generations. This provides a balanced view of the youth's contribution and participation to ASEAN heritage tourism and contributes to ASEANOLOGY in the use of sociological frameworks and methodology like Symbolic Interactionism.

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CHAPTER I

RATIONALE

The Tourism Industry

Rapid economic growth in the tourism industry has been witnessed over the years. In 1950, there were only 25 million worldwide visitor arrivals, and yet, 68 years later, this number has grown to 1.4 billion foreign visitors annually, which is about a 56-fold gain (UNWTO, 2020). However, the uncertainties surrounding Brexit, the demise of Thomas Cook, geopolitical unrest, social unrest, and the global economic slowdown are all factors in the slower growth in 2019 (Kyrylov et al., 2020). The number of tourists arriving globally only climbed by 4% to 1.5 billion in 2019, which is the smallest growth since 2016 (UNWTO, 2020). Despite such drawbacks, the ASEAN region saw 133 million visitors in 2019, a 7% rise from the previous year, with 36.70% coming from within the ASEAN region. The increase in internal travel has reached 120 million, coinciding with the expansion in arrivals (Masigan, 2020). In fact, the Philippines saw more significant arrivals (8.26 million) than tourists' in 2019 (Mindanao Times, 2020).

Given the growth of the number of tourists, it was noted that focusing on cultural and heritage tourism as a tourism product in greater detail leads to people's lifestyles in the region, history, art, culinary, educational system, architecture, architectural, religious, and other cultural components that aid them in their everyday activities (Astudillo & Acurio, 2021). A tourist activity that is driven by culture is referred to as cultural tourism within the ASEAN region (Adams, 2008). While heritage tourism is described as travel associated with natural, cultural (tangible and intangible), and

cultural landscape resources (Alexandrakis et al., 2019). The ASEAN defines cultural heritage tourism as travel aimed at experiencing local customs, arts, knowledge, and heritage while respecting the host community and its surrounding environment (tangible and intangible, including natural resources (ASEAN Org, 2004).

Furthermore, ASEAN has emphasized three key messages in their definition; 1) Cultural heritage tourism serves communities' needs as well as those of tourists, both for economic and socio-cultural as well as for reasons of heritage; 2) Both the environment and the lives of communities are respected through cultural and heritage tourism to enhance cultural heritage tourism, and the cultural landscape has become a crucial aspect that should be considered in all policies; 3) The significance of honoring both material and immaterial resources in all decisions (ASEAN Org, 2004). In accordance with that, UNWTO (2020) took heed of the admonition that all regions should responsibly manage the increase of tourists in the ASEAN region in 2019 to seize tourism's greatest potential to offer to communities worldwide. In addition, they anticipated that from 2020 to 2021, the tourism industry would grow by about 3-4%. They believe it will perform better than the highest record of tourist arrival so far.

Unfortunately, when the WHO declared the new coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in March 2020, it resulted in a 73% decrease in foreign visitor arrivals, which was about 394 million worldwide. A few of the major industries that were affected by the tourism sector include domestic and international air transportation, accommodation services, food services, drinking places, automotive rental and travel agencies (Gössling et al., 2020). Although tourism was seen as the most vulnerable industry at the onset of the outbreak, in July 2022, international tourism has shown substantial growth, with visitors worldwide exceeding 57% compared to pre-pandemic.

This means that the number of foreign visitors almost tripled (+172%) from January

through July 2022 and may be attributed to the strong pent-up demand of people for foreign travel, as reflected in the steady recovery (UNTWO, 2022).

While the present timeline is predicated on moving forward to the recovery of the tourism industry, unsustainable patterns of people's consumption and production are still a threat and contribute to the climate change crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. Particularly, the state of the economy is still the biggest obstacle to the growth of international travel due to rising inflation in oil prices and the cost of travel and lodging since it has placed pressure on consumer purchasing power and savings (UNWTO, 2022). Furthermore, as the Philippines still lacks a roadmap for heritage tourism, given the difficulties involved in searching for the authenticity of culture and the essence of being a Filipino, the Department of Tourism acknowledges that it would be difficult for the populace to continue to preserve and conserve cultural heritage even before the pandemic (Talavera, 2019).

Consequently, the Governor of Sultan Kudarat stated that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) must take action to address the terrible consequences of the climate crisis during a meeting of ASEAN leaders and young leaders from the region. The governor stated that the disastrous impacts of Tropical Storm "Paeng," following the pandemic, which ravaged Mindanao, should serve as a wake-up call for the area. The government urged ASEAN officials to focus on bridging the digital gap between youth, children, and community members, particularly in light of the present global digitalization (Bajo, 2022). Hence, ASEAN officials are calling the youths to volunteer for continuous years as they also recognize the outstanding capabilities and the role of volunteerism among youths (ASEAN Org, 2004; ASEAN Org, 2022).

Currently, ASEAN organizations are contributing to the region's youth network and mainstreaming their needs and voices in ASEAN community-building initiatives, such as continuing to launch the ASEAN University Network (AUN) youth platform. That is hosting several events that foster and maintain relationships amongst ASEAN undergraduate students on issues like the environment and culture to student leadership (ASEAN Org, 2022). Conversely, it is no doubt that numerous researchers have become more aware of the need for young civic engagement as they have always believed that youths' participation has a role in improving society. If youths were given a chance to govern, they may develop into capable citizens, engaged participants, and potent leaders of social change (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006; Checkoway, 2012; Alexandrakis et al., 2019; Khin, 2021)

Cultural Heritage Tourism

Tourism development is seen as a foundation for cultural heritage regeneration. Moreover, it also has to be understood that tourism is a service industry because it depends on the quality of its human resources as much as its natural and cultural assets (Alampay, 2005). Historic structures, archaeological sites, and monuments, as well as their collections and intangible elements, are examples of cultural heritage assets. These remnants of the past give local communities a feeling of place, identity, and aesthetic well-being. Hence, cultural heritage tourism enhances the quality of life for locals and visitors by protecting cultural assets. Consequently, the local economy is boosted by cultural tourism, generating jobs and new business prospects. Tourism incorporating heritage and culture boosts the regional economy (Lusetyowati, 2015).

According to the UNWTO (2020), during the next five years, cultural tourism will continue to be a significant sector. It was noted that as the variety of cultural phenomena consumed by visitors grew, so did the number of stakeholders involved in this market, with local communities emerging as a crucial factor in the long-term sustainability of cultural experiences. This is so because cultural heritage tourism consists in engaging in activities including arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries, and living cultures with their different ways of life, value systems, beliefs, and traditions that relate to a variety of distinctive materials, which all enhance one's intellectual, spiritual, and emotional aspects of society (UNWTO, 2022).

Tourist destinations in the Philippines, especially those for cultural tourism, are found mostly in the region of the province (Anthony et al., 2016). Consequently, on a local level, it is asserted that socio-cultural changes are a natural byproduct of cultural tourism, which has altered locals' perceptions of their own identities and cultural outputs. It makes the case that, if promoted, tourism may help those areas create new economic prospects. Residents may have developed expertise in branding their own authenticity, impersonating natives, and using and manipulating traditional symbols for financial advantage or to advance their cultural status (Koodsela et al., 2019; Craps, 2021). So, cultural heritage sites benefit society in both market and non-market ways, and it could eventually result in tourism bringing in new cash sources and luring entrepreneurship at the local level (Adams, 2008). Such benefits make it possible for the government to take action to preserve, promote, and safeguard cultural heritage assets against climate change and natural disasters (Craps, 2021; García & Vandesande. 2021).

Under the Philippine Registry of Cultural Property, the repository of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, a majority of these cultural tourism destinations are classified as National Cultural Treasures, Important Cultural Property, National Historical Shrines, National Historical Landmarks, National Historical Monuments, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Presumed Important Cultural Property, and Local Important Cultural Properties. The repository also includes Philippine World Heritage Sites, baroque churches in the country, historic town of Vigan, Rice Terraces in the Cordillera, Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary, Puerto Rico Princessa Subterranean River National Park, and the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park. They are located in the provinces (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 2009).

In addition, in the case of the Makiling Forest Reserve, the national government awarded the transfer and then acquired jurisdiction of the MFR (which was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources) to the University of the Philippines Los Baños Laguna with the condition that the land would be conserved and preserved as a National Park (Vergara et al., 2019). It was also added that for cultural tourism in the country to improve, a review of the existing policies is needed, and interconnections strengthened among LGUs, provincial DOT, NCIP, and NCCA for consolidated planning and implementation of development strategies for cultural tourism (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, 2009; Alejandria-Gonzalez, 2016).

Unfortunately, according to Gössling et al. (2020), the new coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak resulted in a 73% decrease in foreign visitor arrivals, which was about 394 million in 2020. Due to such loss, the tourism and hospitality industry had no choice but to fight for survival by reducing the number of workers (Asia, 2021). So when a transmissible virus infection recurs, it significantly reduces mobility and global

tourism because the pandemic can spread fast among international visitors and air travelers; it has increased worldwide public health and economic concerns. Hence, travel and tourism have undoubtedly been among the most vulnerable and disrupted industries (Xiang et al., 2021; Abbas et al., 2021; Kyrylov et al., 2021).

Predominantly, even before the pandemic, there were many challenges involved with the tourism industry, particularly in preserving cultural and heritage resources (Shackley, 2001). In fact, historical assets have always been and will continue to be vulnerable to environmental interactions, often known as weathering processes (Alexandrakis et al., 2019). Climate change is another potential danger since it accelerates the projected decay rates or causes the emergence of new decay events. This is the case because, by altering the structure or composition of the affected materials, climate changes may exacerbate the physical, chemical, and biological mechanisms causing degradation. Climate change may also affect the frequency and severity of dangerous events like floods, landslides, and droughts, which will unavoidably bring dangers and risks to preserving cultural heritage assets (Sesana et al., 2021).

Tourism is truly a reliable source of income for fellow ASEAN countries. However, the lack of coordination among government agencies is a serious matter because tourism is a sector that requires multiple government departments to work hand in hand (ASEAN, 2022; Wong et al., 2010). Notably, politicians and municipal administrators, especially in UNESCO sites, face a huge problem when reinterpreting cultural heritage (CH) in the context of local people's perceived cultural values and expectations. This is because these sites have ingrained universal cultural values (Henrietta, 2008; Wong et al., 2011).

Without a thorough understanding of the values and needs of the local communities, especially among the youth, it was found that it is challenging to produce the cultural, economic, social, and environmental impacts that institutions anticipate from investments in cultural heritage, which should support the sustainable development and regeneration of the city (Del Baldo & Demartini, 2021). Hence, it is vital to understand the point of view of youths on heritage tourism.

Heritage Tourism in ASEAN

ASEAN countries heavily depend on the tourism sector because of its benefits in sustaining regional peace and stability while accelerating the region's economic, social, and cultural development (Yousuf & Lai, 2013; Asia, 2021). According to a study by Alexandrakis et al. (2019), a more sensitive and effective strategy to link cultural heritage and tourism is needed by putting an integrative perspective front and center. This new concept of heritage, in which monuments and landscapes are active factors in creating a sense of history, is valued not only from a scientific and academic standpoint but also by public tourists. The capacity to carry out such activities directly relates to assisting decision-makers and increasing public awareness of a more comprehensive approach to historic preservation (Timothy, 2018).

Five nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand—formed ASEAN, which was formally created on August 8th, 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand. Currently, ten nations comprise ASEAN, including Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia (ASEAN Org, 2018). The merger of the 10 states serves as undeniable proof that ASEAN is composed of a diverse range of racial groups, ethnicities, languages, and religious beliefs. This exemplifies how ASEAN, as an organization, truly combines diversity. ASEAN is more than just a block or

geographical territory made up of numerous countries; it is also a network, a way of life, a commercial system, and a path for human contact (ASEAN Org, 1999; ASEAN Org, 2021).

Consequently, ASEAN has made an effort to lead initiatives to promote community involvement inside ASEAN countries themselves in order to foster socio-cultural cooperation. Sports tournaments, displays of art, commerce, and tourism are only a few examples of cross-country activities that have been widely practiced and are continually expanding (Pearce & Wu, 2016). As a result, there is always the chance to exchange cultures with one another in different cross-country events. Conversely, ASEAN aims to forge a shared identity via its diversity. However, ironically, one of the challenges to developing a shared identity is diversity because ASEAN is significantly more diverse than the European Union. Hence, good compatibility is necessary for unification as diversity increasingly serves as a source of strength for ASEAN (ASEAN Org, 1999; ASEAN Org 2004; ASEAN Org, 2021; ASEAN Org, 2022).

In order to create an ASEAN identity, it has been believed that ASEAN youth play a significant role (Devianto et al., 2018). The young people in ASEAN are highly talented individuals and have recently expressed interest in the region's socio-cultural realm. The ASEAN youth frequently bring humanitarian missions to the target nation in addition to their travels. Numerous groups conducted youth exchange programs or volunteer opportunities under travelers' agenda. So, youths from ASEAN nations can undoubtedly learn about the various ASEAN cultures in a regional location (ASEAN Org 2004; ASEAN Org, 2022).

ASEAN Youths

Young people make up a substantial section of the population, over 1.2 billion of them in the world today. The highest youth population is found in Southeast Asia, where there are currently 213 million of them, and 220 million are projected to reside in by 2038 (Borneo bulletin, 2020; Asia, 2021). However, although ASEAN youth make up a sizable portion of the population and are numerous, they still confront multiple difficulties. Because youth voices are typically ignored or not even taken into consideration by the decision-making group in the respective ASEAN country, they are neglected, especially at the grassroots level where the following areas are concerned are not addressed properly such as quality of education, youth employment, quality healthcare, human rights, and environmental sustainability which can affect the lives of the ASEAN youths and their future and even their daily lives. They are the future of tomorrow (Bobby, 2016).

Youths in the various ASEAN countries still have a limited platform to express themselves, engage in discussion, and exchange experiences, ideas, and best practices (Khoo-Lattimore & Yang, 2018). However, since the youth are the driving force behind regional economic growth, pioneers of social change, and the area's future leaders, thanks to their entrepreneurial, digital, and critical thinking abilities, the protection of the welfare of young people and the advancement of their views on issues are given top priority (Ali et al., 2018). While there is no universally accepted definition of youth, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 35. In comparison, the Youth in Nation-Building Act ("REPUBLIC ACT 8044") of the Philippines defines youth as the important period in a person's growth and development from the start of adolescence towards the peak of

mature, self-reliant, and responsible adulthood, which comprises the significant segment of the population from the age of 15 to 30 (National Youth Commission, 2019).

Despite the challenges they encounter, there is widespread agreement that young people are playing bigger roles in society's growth. They have been crucial in bringing urgent issues to the forefront of international discourse, and the UN has recognized their significance in advancing international plans for sustainable development. ASEAN acknowledges the importance of the youth sector in building a resilient, dynamic, and inclusive regional community based on the progress of youth development index (Devianto et al., 2018).

The youth, who are politically engaged and actively involved in society, have been given several forums to discuss their own ideas and causes and advance intercultural understanding at the local level. The ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF), Ship for Southeast Asia, and Japanese Youth Program are three examples of these youth platforms (SSEAYP). These regional youth platforms highlight the youth's function as the state's soft power forerunner. The youth can affect governmental policies, advance national interests at the ASEAN level, support national programs, sway public opinion, and shape the country's image through these exchanges. The modern idea of young diplomacy is bred by the chance to speak and act on behalf of the nation and, to some measure, influence high-level decision-makers in ASEAN (ASEAN Org, 2022; ASEAN Org, 2004; Devianto et al., 2018).

Youth diplomacy enables the ASEAN Community's future leaders to define its principles while they are still creating that vision. The youth may raise knowledge of ASEAN, explain national perspectives, and encourage discussion on the most difficult

subjects. Along with assisting in shattering cultural stereotypes, it also ensures that the younger generation's perspective is heard in larger ASEAN discussions and decision-making. Thus, young engagement in interpersonal relations ensures a welcoming environment that encourages ASEAN youth programs (ASEAN Org, 2022).

Additionally, the Philippine youth ambassadors are now one of the main factors behind the country's growing volunteerism and understanding of ASEAN. In their individual areas, they address urgent needs and societal issues. Participants in the SSEAYP Philippines, for example, are obligated to perform at least three years of community service after finishing the program. They attract more people—including their international counterparts—to join their advocacy efforts in the Philippines thanks to their increased networks. They expose Filipino communities to ASEAN culture and civilization through songs, dances, lectures, and tales of their travels in Southeast Asia and Japan, among other things. Equally crucially, they pique the interest of foreign nationals to travel to the Philippines through cultural performances and displays while they are at sea (ASEAN Org, 2021; ASEAN Org, 2022).

The involvement of Filipino youth in ASEAN shows how dedicated the Philippine government is to fostering regional cohesion and employing soft power to further its own goals. The ASEAN Summit meeting between Philippine youth delegates and leaders through the AYF highlights the youth of the Philippines' active role in shaping policy and making decisions (ASEAN Org, 2021). The younger Filipinos' participation in ASEAN demonstrates their talent to identify problems and develop solutions based on their own experiences. More opportunities for the Filipino youth's socio-cultural participation in ASEAN are created by this chance to serve as youth ambassadors and policymakers (ASEAN Org, 2022; UNICEF, 2017).

Consequently, the Philippine government builds a solid foundation for robust bilateral

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and multilateral relations with its neighbors through established people-to-people interactions. It also aims to urge youth to volunteer and address the gap of their participation in the digital platform (Alejandria-Gonzalez, 2016; Bajo, 2022).

Youth Involvement in Cultural Heritage Tourism

Young people could work as curators, office staff, maintenance workers, writers and artists in the services industry that supports cultural destinations. They could also work in small and medium-sized businesses involved in the production of cultural tourism goods, among other potential areas of involvement (Batista, 2020). However, the Regional Development Plans for 2017 to 2022, directed by the National Economic Development Authority, have made it clear that there are no actual plans for youth involvement in cultural heritage tourism at the local government unit (LGU) level (PDP, 2021). Furthermore, it mentioned how many employees in the tourism sector lack essential training even though it is recognized that working in cultural tourism contributes to individual economic progress (PDP, 2021; Dwyer et al., 2000).

Additionally, there is little concrete evidence to support the idea that young people are participating in the nation's heritage tourism. They were only assumed to be actively involved based on PSA data, whether directly or indirectly employed, serving as volunteers, or running their own businesses (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019). The researcher, who is studying ASEAN degree, opted to conduct the study because the researcher believes that the youth's point of view on heritage tourism is the starting point for promoting heritage protection and urges one another to be responsible and address the environmental issues. Significantly, their participation and involvement can strengthen heritage protection (Devianto et al., 2019). In these

conditions, this research will offer a greater knowledge of cultural tourism from the perspective of the ASEAN youth because the conduct of the study may contribute to enhancing the spread of heritage values and empowering the communities. Hence, the study aimed at understanding the youth's view on ASEAN heritage tourism.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies on Cultural Tourism involving Youth

In a study conducted by Boukas (2022) claimed that cultural tourism targeting the young people is a way to satisfy the need. As a result, youths are important consumers of culture. Study states that the youth are satisfied with the basic attributes of the site such as monuments, landscape, and accumulated experience. But less satisfied with man-made interventions such as facilities, amenities, and operational features. It is well mentioned that youth visitors of Delphi have different backgrounds than the tourists of Greece in general. The core assets in developing cultural tourism in Greece including the sites and monuments are existent and satisfy the youth travelers. However, the study suggests that tourism-policy makers need to recognize youths as a vital segment with great potential regarding cultural tourism and to concentrate on markets that respond positively to cultural heritage destinations.

On the other hand, according to Boukas (2022) this study explores the travel experiences of youth tourists in cultural heritage destinations, focusing on how their perceptions and motivation affect their travel behavior. Although several studies have been conducted to examine the travel experience of youth tourists, the literature that focuses on youth visitors' motivation and perceptions towards cultural heritage and cultural destinations is limited. However, youth cultural travel is of great significance and youth tourists constitute an important segment for cultural destinations. The study

demonstrates that, despite the obvious presence of youth people in cultural heritage destinations, not all youth cultural tourists are similar.

Youth Engagement and Participatory in the Preservation and Promotion of Heritage Tourism in ASEAN

The development of the ASEAN community largely depends on young people, who are digital natives and use social media and other online communication tools to keep up with local and international news. Their capacity for intercultural communication improves connections and understanding across boundaries. They are brimming with suggestions for how they might actively volunteer and advocate to engage in ASEAN's regional procedures (ASEAN Org, 2021). Humanitarian assistance provided to Myanmar following Cyclone Nargis in 2008 was the first chance for youth volunteers organized by ASEAN. Many young people who wanted to donate their time and effort to aid the disaster-stricken communities wrote to the former ASEAN Secretary-General (ReliefWeb, 2009). In ASEAN, young people speak out on climate change at a global level and, at times, have combative viewpoints toward a common position, such as in 2015, the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Program helped Cambodia's Krakor Floating Village by voicing out the climate change (ASEAN Org, 2021; UNICEF, 2017).

The young volunteers' travel to and stays in the various villages of the delta region of Myanmar were organized by the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force. Then, in 2011, ASEAN youth volunteers traveled to Japan's Tohoku region, which had taken the brunt of the earthquake and tsunami that year, as part of the ASEAN Caravan of Goodwill, which included survivors of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. In 2013, the ASEAN Youth Volunteers Programme (AYVP) was established, giving young

volunteers a special place to connect and gain knowledge. The AYVP unites young people around regional issues like poverty, disaster risk reduction, social entrepreneurship, environment, and climate change through its permanent secretariat at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Marwan et al., 2017; Alavi, 2014; ASEAN Org, 2004; JAIF, 2021).

In fact, a study by Muhammad (2018) reveals that the ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF) helps in increasing youth capacity in raising awareness, and that serves as a channel between the young people community, ASEAN and its member nations. They connect to hold one another responsible for achieving ASEAN objectives. Indeed, one of the initiatives by ASEAN, the AYF, has accomplished several noteworthy feats despite the low resources and the constricting municipal space that limit their efficacy. However, in a study by Marwan et al. (2017), the youths knew little about ASEAN and the ASEAN Community, therefore suggesting that a concentrated effort should be made to spread the word of the ASEAN Community to the ASEAN public, such as planning for intra-ASEAN exchange programs to foster friendships and ensure eventual steps toward a more comprehensive integration.

While there is, in all states, a ministry or department that coordinates tourism-pertinent matters, other government bodies such as international trade, forestry and national parks, the youths also play a part in tourism development. Researchers believe that if youths were given a chance to govern, they may develop into capable citizens, engaged participants, and potent leaders of social change (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006; Checkoway, 2012; Alexandrakis et al., 2019; Khin, 2021). Significantly, their participation and involvement can strengthen heritage protection (Devianto et al., 2019). According to Menkshi et al. (2021), getting young people—especially students—involved in the upkeep of historical sites, museums, and libraries,

training programs for culture, leading tours for tourists, and participating in local heritage projects increases not only their awareness of heritage values but also helps to preserve and promote them. Based on the survey, young people who have participated in initiatives and cultural activities aimed at preserving and promoting heritage values have higher levels of awareness than those who have not. Hence, it is crucial to emphasize the role of youth in heritage organizations so that national and local governments should play in supporting initiatives that involve more young people in heritage activities and projects in light of the willingness demonstrated by young people.

Consequently, as part of the ASEAN community-building strategy, various ASEAN organizations are connecting youngsters in the area and mainstreaming their needs and concerns (ASEAN Org, 2022). ASEAN has actively collaborated in the arts and culture throughout the past five decades, fostering a culture of peace and a sense of unity. Through a wide range of cultural and artistic initiatives, including the ASEAN Contemporary Dance Festival and the Oral History Workshop, ASEAN has improved its understanding and appreciation of the region's richly diverse yet interconnected cultural heritage, fostering intercultural exchanges as well as a sense of community and camaraderie among its citizens (Jafari et al., 2021). By connecting youths to larger regional networks and possibilities, these initiatives offer further assistance for youths' mobility within and among ASEAN nations. This will connect communities across national borders that have resisted earlier assumptions about the possibility of Southeast Asia being fragmented (Nelles & Ferrand, 2021).

In this time of cultural pessimism, it is crucial for ASEAN to continue to celebrate and promote the shared values of cultural plurality in the region and foster a united front in the fight against extremism, intolerance, and disregard for human life, as well

as social unrest and mistrust. As a result, since its inception, ASEAN has focused its attention and efforts on preserving and reviving traditional performing arts. As part of its ongoing commitment to putting people first, celebrating the region's distinctive cultural diversity, and preserving valued customs and legacy for future generations, ASEAN will continue to deliver cutting-edge cultural initiatives (ASEAN Org, 2022; Mattone & Frullo, 2022; Aji et al., 2022).

In order to promote collaboration, awareness, and development in the fields of culture, the arts, and information in the area, the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) was established in 1978. The performing, visual, and fine arts, including theater, dancing, music, and singing, are all covered under the ASEAN Foundation's Arts and Culture Program. Additionally, the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA), an organization under the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), has devoted its efforts to promoting the study, preservation, and application of the shared performing arts heritage of the region (ASEAN Org, 2018). However, the Regional Development Plans for 2017 to 2022, directed by the National Economic Development Authority, have made it clear that there are no actual plans for youth involvement or cultural heritage tourism at the local government unit (LGU) level (PDP, 2021).

On the other hand, the study by Khin (2021) argues that because of social norms and cultural acceptance, can encourage or discourage teenage engagement. It also stated that young people do require assistance from important local organizations or reputable agents to help them begin engagement in terms of organizing groups and to provide training and coaching to open up new opportunities and boost young people's efforts. The problem is, according to Wong et al. (2011), despite the enormous economic impact that tourism provides in the region,

intergovernmental tourism cooperation among ASEAN nations has received little attention in the literature.

In light of that, a study by Cernicova-Buca et al. (2022) claimed that when the population's attitude is a source of sustainability for the city, a direct connection between a peaceful urban environment and the population's positive attitude towards their own city is evident. It is influenced by locations and assets as well as how they are arranged in metropolitan areas, as well as the kind of social interactions that these spaces foster. As a result, youth participation in urban development has enormous potential. However, work on this issue can only be supported by engagement and ongoing interest. Hence, they recommended that young people should be involved in the development of urban areas (as volunteers or brand ambassadors) with the intention of improving and reorganizing the environment. Consequently, the present study was vital to conduct in understanding the point of view of youths on heritage tourism.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Symbolic Interactionism

The symbolic interaction is a sociological tradition that traces its lineage to the Pragmatists- John Dewey and George Herbert Mead, particularly - and to sociologists of the “Chicago School” - Robert E. Park, Herbert Blumer, Everett C. Hughes. This perspective emerged from the sociological analysis of Mead, and it was Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) who took Mead’s ideas and developed them into a more systematic sociological approach. Blumer coined the term symbolic interactionism in 1937, keeping this sociological perspective alive through the early 1950s at Chicago, and then in California where he was a professor at the University of California in Berkeley. While Cohen (Turner, 2000, p. 87) argues that Blumer selectively interpreted Mead’s analysis, from Mead he emphasized the importance of social interaction, significant symbols, meaning, communication, taking on the view of the other, and the self as process. These became the basis for later symbolic interaction approaches. Symbolic Interactionism is an empirical research tradition as much or more than a theoretical position and its strength derives in large part from the enormous body of research that embodies and gives meaning to its abstract propositions. (Becker & McCall, 2009, pp. 1-4)

As a social theoretical framework, Symbolic Interactionism begins with the premise that social interaction in everyday life is what creates each social reality. As actors in connection to social groups, individuals make symbolic and shared meanings via face-to-face, meaningful and repeated acts of contact and interactions. So, this

theoretical perspective on how people and society interact is known as Symbolic Interactionism. Only when meaningful communication or symbols are exchanged between participants can human behavior and interaction be understood. Importantly, Symbolic Interactionism does not deny the unique; it is directly concerned with how distinctive meanings are adapted and interpreted through social practice (Del Casino, & Thien, 2009, pp. 132-137).

Symbolic Interactionism and its methodological approach are frequently seen as a general theoretical and methodological framework for all sociological fields of study and types of research issues. Methodologically, Symbolic Interactions are generally investigated through various qualitative approaches, such as ethnography or participant observation. Geographers' interest in symbolic interactionism developed in parallel to their growing interest in humanistic philosophies, as well as cultural and social theory. Post-positivist geographies, in particular, have been influenced by social interactionist approaches, which continue to investigate the complex relationships between individuals and societies, peoples and places. More generally, geography's interest in symbolic interactions stems from the larger concern with symbolic social practices, particularly as the 'symbolic' informs understandings of and meanings found in various social spaces. (Del Casino, & Thien, 2009, pp. 132-137). In order to comprehend the numerous diverse settings or connections in which individuals interact, academics have used Symbolic Interactionism (Polk, 2017; Salvini, 2022).

Symbolic Interactionism is a method for examining how individuals and groups behave that has roots in the social psychology works of George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, and other educators (Shepherd, 1970).

Symbol and interaction are the two ideas that make up the term Symbolic Interactionism. Any social object (such as a tangible object, a gesture, or a word) that stands in for or symbolizes another thing is referred to as a symbol. The importance of interpersonal communication in conveying symbolic meaning is highlighted via interaction among people, while culture develops through communication. The concepts, items, and behaviors that make up daily life are what interactionists define as culture (Shepherd, 1970; Polk, 2017).

Through Symbolic Interaction, humans construct, share, oppose, modify, or reject numerous facets of the social world. It is also considered as one of its greatest strengths and generally uses research methods that will allow extended observation and/or substantive interviews to provide depth rather than breadth. Symbolic interactionists generally gather and evaluate qualitative data using qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews or participant observation, because they seek to understand the symbolic worlds in which research subjects live from people's experiences in naturalistic situations as opposed to relying on quantitatively generated data that were obtained through representative survey research and analyzed using statistics (Salvini, 2022).

In order to investigate the phenomenon of youth's involvement and participation in heritage tourism, the study is anchored on a Symbolic Interactionism framework. According to this stance, the study made the underlying assumption that human and societal behaviors could be better understood by looking at a variety of indicators, including social interaction, human thinking, the definition of the situation, the present, and the active nature of the human being related to the behaviors under study.

Research Question

This study aims to understand the youth's perspective on heritage tourism that explains their participation and involvement or action.

Specifically, the researcher focuses on answering these questions:

1. What does heritage tourism mean to ASEAN youth?
2. What are the ASEAN youth's involvement and participation in heritage tourism?
3. What framework for heritage tourism in ASEAN can be proposed that is inclusive of youth's involvement?

Research Objective

The primary aim of the study is to understand the youth's view on ASEAN heritage tourism. Specifically, it is to address the following objectives:

1. To understand the ASEAN youth's perspective on heritage tourism.
2. To identify the involvement and participation of the ASEAN youth in heritage tourism.
3. To propose a framework for heritage tourism in ASEAN inclusive of youth's involvement.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

This qualitative study employed the phenomenological research design because it focuses on the similar features of lived experience within a particular group. According to Tomaszewski et al. (2020), the fundamental goal of this research design is to understand the nature of the particular phenomenon. The gathered data of phrases form clusters of meaning and themes grouped to address the research questions. The researcher utilized the approach by using open-ended interview questions to document the participants' experiences and perspectives on how youths' involvement and participation are crucial in heritage protection and development.

For Vogt (2005), the phenomenological design is appropriate to use when the qualitative research method is utilized, as the use of this method is to describe lived experiences and explain the characteristics of respondents. Furthermore, this design method has been identified as one of the best types of research study for which studies that aim to describe and ascertain the phenomenon of the study through interviews. This was also known as one of the best designs for studies that aim to develop an intervention program. An intervention program implies the utilization of different methods that will improve the situation and provide various activities. Hence, the phenomenological design is best used to understand the ASEAN youth's point of view on heritage tourism.

In the study, the phenomenological research design is also preferable because it helps the researcher determine the participants' lived experiences and allows them to express themselves without any distortion and misrepresentation (Tuffour, 2017).

Participants

In recruiting eligible participants, in the present study, ASEAN youths were subjected to interview questions where they provided in-depth information that researchers squeezed out to expound useful details in understanding the variables present and the phenomena that they are experiencing. The rationale for choosing this approach is based on the criteria that the researcher was seeking: knowledge about the ASEAN youth's understanding of heritage tourism, which the participants would provide by virtue of their experience.

Specifically, a total of 6 participated in the study. The number of respondents to be asked for discussion is a crucial factor. However, it is widely agreed that between six and eight people are adequate because, in comparison to quantitative research methods, qualitative research methods frequently use a smaller sample size. As a result, qualitative research methods are commonly used to acquire an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon that is often focused on the how and why of a certain issue, process, scenario, subculture, scene, or set of social interactions (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Given that justification, the study only recruited six participants.

At the onset, the researcher worked in conjunction with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and Mount Makiling Forest Reserve in choosing participants based on their level of experience in heritage tourism as well as their qualifications. Unfortunately, after months of exchanging emails with the office of the ASEAN Centre

for Biodiversity, they were informed that they do not have information on their youth networks that are working specifically on ASEAN Heritage Parks. However, Mount Makiling Forest Reserve was able to provide one (1) potential participant who participated in the study. Other potential participants were sourced by the researcher manually through LinkedIn and personal networks. Each participant was described and selected based on the following criteria.

The first participant coded under P1 is an ASEAN youth based in Singapore who has been volunteering at the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve as a conservation guide for five years as active involvement in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve until the present and is also a co-founder of a youth-led biodiversity organization.

The second participant coded under P2 is an ASEAN youth based in the Philippines who have been volunteering at Mount Makiling Forest Reserve as an educator for nature tourism for five years and still have involvement up until the present. The participant also is a co-founder of a youth-led environmental conservation organization.

The third participant coded under P3 is an ASEAN youth based in Indonesia, who has been one of the participants for ASEAN Youth Biodiversity Leaders 2019 at the same time, a Chapter Youth Coordinator Indonesia for Global Youth Biodiversity Network and also was a research consultant intern for ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and currently working as a Program Officer at United In Diversity Indonesia

The fourth participant coded under P4 is an ASEAN youth based in the Philippines who is a content writer by profession and has been traveling around the Philippines and to other ASEAN countries since 2012. The participant has been to different heritage sites around ASEAN countries.

The fifth participant coded under P5 is an ASEAN youth born in Malaysia but currently working and based in Taiwan. The participant has previous work experiences related to tourism in the field of leisure farms and cruises, and also has been traveling around ASEAN countries and even has visited several heritage sites since 2011.

The sixth participant coded under P6 is an ASEAN youth based in the Philippines who is a senior project assistant by profession and has been traveling around the Philippines and as well to other ASEAN countries since 2017.

The consent from each participant was taken seriously, and appropriate permission was ensured for the usage of their given data. Confidentiality of the responses was maintained strictly to ensure the privacy of their data. The disclosure of participant identity was based on their permission. Participation was completely voluntary. Beyond that fact, usage of any secondary data from any source will be acknowledged with appropriate reference. Hence, the ethical aspect of the research will be followed very strictly in this research until the study is finished.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher utilized a semi-structured interview to collect data as a research instrument. Six (6) interview questions with follow-up questions as a guide were formulated, as shown illustrated below or shown in Appendix B. This method is an effective data collection method that allows researchers to collect qualitative and open-ended data from the participants. This allowed the researchers to explore the participant's feelings, beliefs, and experiences about the certain topic that is being studied while dwelling deeply on their personal sentiments. All these specific interview

questions were matched to answer the three research questions. Participants were asked the following interview questions to get the necessary data.

The questions included in the interview were the following: 1) What do you think about heritage tourism? 2) Why do you think it is important to participate in heritage tourism? 3) What has been your involvement in the [particular] Heritage Tourism? And How long have you been involved in the [particular] Heritage Tourism? 4) How did you get involved with the [particular] Heritage Tourism? 5) Why did you get involved with the [particular] Heritage Tourism? 6) What does your involvement in the [particular] Heritage Tourism do to you as a citizen of your country?

Additionally, the guide's follow-up questions were formulated as illustrated: 1) Can you kindly share your personal story about your trip to this [particular] ASEAN Heritage site, whether within the Philippines or outside the country? And why did you choose to visit this place among all the other places? 2) How long have you traveled around ASEAN countries and visited heritage sites? Kindly also specify from what year and what are places you've visited? Among the countries you've visited, which one is the most memorable and gives you the feeling that you would like to go back again in the future? 3) How did you have an idea about a heritage site? 4) How will you describe your experience in the heritage site you've visited? 5) As a citizen of your country, how do you think your travel to heritage sites around ASEAN can influence and contribute to future generations?

The interview was conducted online via the Zoom platform. The researcher has chosen this platform mainly because of its accessibility and convenience since it has the function to auto-record the whole interview duration and the audio-only version,

which would be a lot easier in the process of transcribing the data. Also, the privacy level of the participants is ensured since all calls are encrypted.

Interviews were conducted based on questions listed in the Interview Guide (see Appendix B). This is an online interview conducted via Zoom and recorded in a quiet, neutral location where the participants were not in danger, and there was no intimidation or coercion. The interview schedule and guide were semi-structured since some of the participants were not from the researcher's network.

The researcher initially sent out email requests with attached formal letters to the potential participants seeking their assistance if they were willing to participate in an online interview for a study. Afterwards, once the potential participant accepted the request, the guide questions were sent to the potential participants ahead of time to allow them to go through and have an idea.

The individual interview took almost each of their time for 1 hour. Although there was a guide, participants were allowed the freedom to talk about their experiences in a way in which they were comfortable, as this is a personal interview that is carried out with one participant at a time. Since the questions listed are not only limited to "what" participants think but also "why" they think so. It also allows the researcher to dive in-depth and further probe questions based on their responses. The researcher also understands the participants' motivation and feelings, allowing them to explore further the understanding and experience of the participants.

To analyze the data elicited from the participants, a coding method and thematic analysis were employed. The researcher analyzed the gathered data by using thematic analysis as the researcher sought to identify the patterns or themes in the data collected from the respondents' lived experience of participating in ASEAN

heritage tourism. This is to organize interview data into a limited number of themes and address the research questions. Questions were then selected from the interviews that illuminated the themes and concepts (Vogt, 2005). Common themes will be generated and supported by the verbatim accounts of the responses to capture the participants' meaning and perception, which is the main goal of this study. Additionally, the researcher used such analysis to strengthen the plausibility of the participant's responses. This establishes transparency and enables the readers to review the findings elicited from the respondents (Sutton & Austin, 2015). After the data was collected, the data were transcribed and categorized in terms of research questions and emergent themes. In transcribing the interview, the participants were given code names to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the results.

The coding method and thematic analysis were employed to generate themes that address the research questions. In that way, the researcher was able to gather more in-depth insights into the problem or generate new ideas for the research.

Table 1

ASEAN Youth's View of Heritage Tourism: Traveling

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P6 (Philippines)	I believe that through traveling, you get first-hand experience and knowledge on how a country works and their culture. It helps us to understand and embrace the differences we all have.	- through traveling - first-hand experience and knowledge - culture - helps us to understand and embrace the differences - connect and learn through experiences	Travel	Traveling
P3 (Indonesia)	I always want to go around the national parks in Indonesia because we have so many so much national parks you know each national park has their own uniqueness	- many different parks available in the country - personal understanding or perception about the parks	- Exposure - increase the awareness of citizens about nature	Traveling increases exposure and awareness of youths about nature
P5 (Malaysia)	I have been to Penang Heritage site in Malaysia. The reason why I chose Penang is because there was a place which was full of Malaysian Chinese culture. Secondly, Penang Heritage Site was retaining the historic building and the city government invited many of the artists to join the transformation project, in which the artist can choose the area he/she wanted to design and it gives a new life for the building. It's fascinating and attractive for me. So, I would like to see how it's the combination of history and creativity, and it gives a new definition of travel.	- Heritage site in Malaysia - mixed culture - buildings with history - fascinating and attractive - creative history - new definition of travel	- Buildings with history - Fascinating and attractive - Creative - New definition of travel	New definition of traveling is through fascinating and attractive sites that incorporate creativity and history
P4 (Philippines)	I did not travel to ASEAN countries until 2012 even though before hindi talaga ako mahilig mag travel. It's something that just happened. Hindi ko siya iniisip gawin dati. May mga kilala ako mga backpackers bata pa lang sila gusto na nila mag travel. I never thought of it na I will be doing this now before kahit noong college. Even some of my friends did not think I would be doing this. My point of interest sa pag visit ng heritage sites is because of feeling ng nostalgia and centuries ago na usually yung mga temples. English Translate: I did not travel to ASEAN countries until 2012 even though before I'm not really interested in travel. it's something that just happened. Never thought of doing it before. I have friends who are backpackers at a young age who already want to travel. I never thought of doing this now even during college. Even some of my friends did not think I would be doing this. My point of interest in visiting heritage sites	- point of interest - it's something that just happened - never thought of	- nostalgia - feeling - centuries - temples	Traveling behavior changes depending on your feeling interest, nostalgia

	is because of the feeling of nostalgia and temples are also already aging centuries.			
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Table 2

ASEAN Youth's View of Heritage Tourism: Knowing History

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P5 (Malaysia)	When I visited the heritage site, I felt like studying history, witnessing the past and understanding the stories of the country. I felt touched when I listened to the story in the historical building, and I felt appreciated when I saw the amazing views. Without the strive of retaining, discovering and maintaining the heritage site, we are not able to witness all of it.	• Understanding the past • Witnessing the past • Understanding stories • Studying history • Discovering • Maintaining Sites • Stories • Witness	• education • Witnessing • Past • stories • deeper understanding • appreciation	Knowing History
P6 (Philippines)	As I understood it, heritage tourism is where you visit a country to learn and understand its history, its way of life, and its culture through visiting certain areas and sites which reflect their own and unique identity. It is like knowing a bit of background of one person and understanding how it connects to their actions today and in the case of government, how their heritage has influenced or related to the policies being enacted	• History • Way of life • Culture • Reflect • Unique identity • Background • connection	• Unique identity • Way of life and culture of history • Learning and understanding	Knowing History

Table 3

ASEAN Youth's View of Heritage Tourism: Appreciating Architecture

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P5(Malaysia)	From my point of view, heritage sites can be classified in two categories, historic buildings and amazing natural scenery. The historic buildings have its own unique design and it has been retained for more than a decade. The story of the structure, background and the incident that happened in the past will become the story that is able to deliver to the society. The amazing natural scenery, a place without any civilization development, retaining the natural view, flora & fauna, the ecology and the professional able to discover the story to deliver to the society. I felt amazed when I visited the heritage site, no matter the building in Penang, or the magnificent view in Halong bay.	• Historic building • Amazing scenery • Structure • Background • Incident • Story • Discover • Developments	• Structure • Historic Buildings • Story, Incidents, Background • Discovery	Appreciating Architecture
P6 (Philippines)	In my personal experience, it was very humbling to think that I set foot in one of the vital areas during the Spanish times in the Philippines. By visiting Vigan, I cannot help but to compare how the architecture changed over time and how their people were still able to preserve Calle Crisologo as to what it is before up to now.	• Vital areas • Spanish times • Time • People • Preserve • Personal connection • Architecture • Structure	• Structure • Personal connection • Architecture	Appreciating Architecture

Table 4

ASEAN Youth's View of Heritage Tourism: Educating Oneself

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P2 (Philippines)	Our goal is to promote nature education and nature activity at the same time. We provide eco tour hindi lang siya eco tour na puro lakad so yung eco walk na yun may lecture siyang kasama. We actually highlighted some of the unique features of ASEAN Heritage Park, kung paano siya naging ASEAN kung paano siya na involve or na recognize as ASEAN Heritage Park. [English Translate] Our goal is to promote nature education and nature activity at the same time. We provide an eco-tour not only purely walking, it involves lectures. We actually highlighted some of the unique features of ASEAN Heritage Park, how it became part of ASEAN involvement and how it was recognized as ASEAN Heritage Park.	• increase the awareness of park visitors • informing the public, the importance of wildlife or forest • informing the public, the about AHP	• The role to inform, advocate and increase the awareness of park visitors	Educating Oneself
P5 (Malaysia)	I think we are not only studying the history, and stories while visiting the heritage sites. We also have to observe how they are able to preserve, and protect their heritage site. So that the heritage site can be retained and it is also able to become a good image of the country. We must learn from the past and also know how to protect and promote the world.	• observe how they are able to preserve, protect their heritage site. • heritage site can be retained • able to become a good image of the country. • learn from the past • know how to protect and promote the world.	• observations • preserve • protect • learning from the past • protect and promote retaining	Educating Oneself

Table 5

ASEAN Youth's Involvement and Participation in Heritage Tourism: Volunteerism

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P1 (Singapore)	So, for myself I have been volunteering for the National Parks Board which is the local statutory board in charge of the nature conservation center and I was a volunteer since 2014 and I volunteered myself at both of these AHP.	personal decision to volunteer	- personal - decision - volunteer	Volunteerism
P3 (Indonesia)	We often have rehabilitation project or anything else especially me like helping the national park staffs to doing their monitoring coral reefs. Because you know just like I mentioned before in my campus we have like an organization campus organizational faculty based which is called marine conservation club	- volunteer works are one of the factors - educational or extracurricular activities play a big role	- volunteer - educational - extracurricular activities - role	Volunteerism
P2 (Philippines)	I would mention to say na siguro sa mga educator's ako talaga yung isa sa mga pinaka active wala ako ina absenan na special events so kapag may volunteerism work na clean up, mag provide ka ng eco tour ganyan so talagang go na go ako dyan so yun. [English Translate]: I started volunteering in February 2015, until now I still have involvement in Makiling. I would mention among the educators, I'm one of the most active. I will always be present in all special events like if there is volunteer work for clean-up, guided eco tour, I'm always ready and make myself available.	- passionate and active - the love for nature was developed during the years of volunteering	- passionate - active - love for nature - developed - years - volunteer	Volunteerism

Table 6

ASEAN Youth's Involvement and Participation in Heritage Tourism: Advocacies

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P1 (Singapore)	I started this group called the Singapore Youth Voice for Biodiversity and like we sort of help to advocate for biodiversity issues in Singapore so to give biodiversity a voice through the group you know like I help to guide the younger members into like what is the best way to approach biodiversity issues in Singapore. Essentially yeah it's really irreplaceable and even if I don't volunteer with the government. You know there are so many other ways I can help or contribute to the protection and conservation of the forest.	- volunteer is not only limited to partnership with government but there are a lot of different ways - do not lose the passion for advocacies and activism for parks - active youth organizations are involved to raise or increase the awareness of the public	The role to inform, advocate and increase the awareness of park visitors	Advocacies
P2 (Philippines)	Siguro in the middle of involvement ko doon ako kasi personally I have my own advocacy which is sustainable eco-tourism so siguro doon siguro isa na rin yun para makapag raise ako ng awareness specially sa students. Kasi most of the time naman ang mga bisita namin doon ay students so yung mga learning activities na cino-conduct namin sa loob somehow with my own perspective I was able to raise awareness when it comes to sustainable tourism so yun. [English Translate] In the middle of my involvement I personally have my own advocacy which is sustainable eco-tourism so considering that factor I was able to raise the awareness especially to the students Because most of the time our visitors our students so the learning activities being conducted is somehow related to my own perspective where I am able to raise awareness when it comes to sustainable tourism.	- active youth organizations are involved to raise or increase the awareness of the public especially to the younger generations - the love for nature was developed during the years of volunteering	- Active youth organizations - Raise or increase awareness of the public - younger generations	Advocacies

Table 7

ASEAN Youth's Involvement and Participation in Heritage Tourism: Passion

Participant	Transcript	Initial Codes	Categorical Codes	Thematic Codes
P1 (Singapore)	I felt that it's a great opportunity to extend my horizon because I'm studying in Singapore. Help me network with my other friends in southeast Asia as well and learn more about their challenges. I think for me more importantly what I would like to learn is about what are the challenges, what are the solutions that my other peers in southeast Asia experience. You know when conserving nature that was my main focus it was really to understand and apply this lesson in Singapore as well which I have so all this was really key in developing like my actions for conservation. There are so many passionate not just youth but I think a lot passionate scientist, politicians and even some business people and it's like a ecosystem	• broaden the connections with other ASEAN countries • deepen the understanding through engagement and experience • application of learnings from the program • Being passionate with what your doing is not only limited to the youth but to various occupations as well	• A universal goal can be reached with help of different stakeholders not only limited to the youth sector • Experiences allows you to learn and apply and at the same time broaden your connections and exposure with other ASEAN countries	Passion
P3 (Indonesia)	I was like majoring in biology conservation which we have to learn about the marine biology, and then I have the interest in marine biology like so we often have research or even like diving course, anything at all or basic activity in the national park. But maybe I have some of the idea that the AHP itself should be known, especially the system of it like what did the national parks get from the AHP, what's the difference between they are only national parks and have the title of AHP so you know.	• personal interest • learning related to the course taken in college which is Marine Biology • increase public awareness	• Experiences allows you to learn and apply and at the same time broaden your connections and exposure with other ASEAN countries	Passion
P2 (Philippines)	It has become my guiding principle, seeing my passion allows me to continually volunteer in Makiling.	• guiding principles • drive/ passion	• being passionate with what you're doing is not only limited to the area where you are involved but it as well can transform your everyday life	Passion

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study, and it addresses the first and second research questions with each corresponding category and theme. It also shows the symbolic interaction framework based on the findings of the study, which addressed the third research question. Through thematic analysis, the researcher arrived at different themes regarding the youth's view on ASEAN heritage tourism. As shown below, the youth's responses to the questionnaires were grouped to correspond to the research questions and then categorized for major themes and patterns. Thus, code names are utilized to secure the identity of the six (6) participants.

ASEAN Youth's Perspective of Heritage Tourism

The first part indicates the generated theme about the view and experiences of ASEAN youth in heritage tourism, which is divided into four patterns: traveling, knowing history, appreciating architecture and educating oneself.

Traveling

The participants view heritage tourism as a way of traveling to other countries because of their motives to visit, explore, and study places in ASEAN regions. They recognize that traveling allows them to explore and broaden their knowledge of a country's culture, biodiversity, and institutional arrangement, which aids in understanding and embracing various differences from one another. This was illustrated based on the following statements:

“I really feel that all this stems from my love for nature, and like ever since young like my family will bring me to the zoos, to the park, and all that, and I’m a very curious person, so like you know when I see something like a bird or plant a stick or something like I would always ask like how do you get here, why is it like that and you know all this questions.” – Participant 1 (Singapore)

“I always want to go around the national parks in Indonesia because they have so many national parks in Indonesia, and each national park has its own uniqueness.” –Participant 3 (Indonesia)

“I did not travel to ASEAN countries until 2012 even though before hindi talaga ako mahilig mag travel. It’s something that just happened. Hindi ko siya iniisip gawin dati. May mga kilala ako mga backpackers bata pa lang sila gusto na nila mag travel. I never thought of it na I will be doing this now before kahit noong college. Even some of my friends did not think I would be doing this. My point of interest sa pag visit ng heritage sites is because of feeling ng nostalgia and centuries ago na usually yung mga temples.” – Participant 4 (Philippines)

[English Translate] “I did not travel to ASEAN countries until 2012 even though before I’m not really interested in travel. it’s something that just happened. Never thought of doing it before. I have friends who are backpackers at a young age who already want to travel. I never thought of doing this now even during college. Even some of my friends did not think I would be doing this. My point of interest in visiting heritage sites is because of the feeling of nostalgia and temples are also already aging centuries.” – Participant 4 (Philippines)

“I have been to Penang Heritage site in Malaysia. The reason why I chose

Penang is because there was a place which was full of Malaysian Chinese culture. Secondly, Penang Heritage Site was retaining the historic building and the city government invited many of the artists to join the transformation project, in which the artist can choose the area he/she wanted to design and it gives a new life for the building. It's fascinating and attractive for me. So, I would like to see how it's the combination of history and creativity, and it gives a new definition of travel".

Participant 5 (Malaysia)

"Through traveling, you get first-hand experience and knowledge on how a country works and its culture. It helps us to understand and embrace the differences we all have." -Participant 6 (Philippines)

Findings signify that through traveling, participants were able to learn insights about the places they have visited, gain new knowledge of others' country history, and experience their culture. They are driven to learn and travel to unknown places to satiate their curiosity and open themselves to embrace the difference. In general, the young volunteers' travel to and stays in the various villages of the region in other countries such as Myanmar were organized by the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force to connect and gain knowledge. One of the programs by ASEAN is the "AYVP", which aims to unite young people around to tackle regional issues like poverty, disaster risk reduction, social entrepreneurship, environment, and climate change through its permanent secretariat at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Marwan et al., 2017; Alavi, 2014; ASEAN Org, 2004; JAIF, 2021).

According to Nelles and Ferrand (2021), connecting youths to larger regional networks and possibilities opens opportunities and offers further assistance for youths' mobility within and among ASEAN nations. These initiatives will connect communities

across national borders that have resisted earlier assumptions about the possibility of Southeast Asia being fragmented. Hence, consequently, as part of the ASEAN community-building strategy, various ASEAN organizations are connecting youngsters in the area and mainstreaming their needs and concerns (ASEAN Org, 2022).

It is apparent that ASEAN has actively collaborated in the arts and culture throughout the past five decades, fostering a culture of peace and a sense of unity. Up to date, it can be seen in the participant's statement that ASEAN has improved its understanding and appreciation because they organized events where young volunteers are successfully able to learn and embrace the difference from one's own nation to another region. It is very crucial to experience the region's richly diverse yet interconnected cultural heritage, fostering intercultural exchanges as well as a sense of community and camaraderie among its citizens (Jafari et al., 2021). Equally crucially, they pique the interest of foreign nationals to travel to that place such as the Philippines, through cultural performances and displays while they are at sea (ASEAN Org, 2021; ASEAN Org, 2022).

Knowing History

The participants view heritage tourism as a sort of journey they take to learn about history while getting a taste of the cultures in ASEAN regions. Heritage they visited is also related to the policies enacted by the government. This was reflected in the participants' statements below:

“When I visited the heritage site, I felt like studying history, witnessing the past and understanding the stories of the country. I felt touched when I listened to the story in the historical building, and I felt appreciated when I saw the amazing views.

Without the strive of retaining, discovering and maintaining the heritage site, we are not able to witness all of it.” - Participant 5 (Malaysia)

“As I understood it, heritage tourism is where you visit a country to learn and understand its history, its way of life, and its culture through visiting certain areas and sites which reflect their own and unique identity. It is like knowing a bit of background of one person and understanding how it connects to their actions today and in the case of government, how their heritage has influenced or related to the policies being enacted.” – Participant 6 (Philippines)

Findings signify that there is indeed a strong connection between tourism and culture, as the demand of youth participants for satiating nostalgia when experiencing and witnessing historical places leads to the conversion of cultural heritage into a commodity in the tourism industry. According to a study by Alexandrakis et al. (2019), a more attentive and efficient strategy is required to combine cultural heritage with tourism by prioritizing an integrative perspective. This innovative view of heritage, in which buildings and natural settings play a part in forging a sense of history, is highly regarded by both the general people and scholars alike. The capacity to engage in such activities is directly related to supporting decision-makers and raising public awareness of a more all-encompassing strategy for historic preservation (Timothy, 2018).

However, according to Del Baldo and Demartini (2021), without a thorough understanding of the values and needs of the local communities, it is challenging for governments to produce the cultural, economic, social, and environmental impacts that institutions anticipate from investments in cultural heritage, which should support the sustainable development and regeneration of the city. Consequently, participant 6

voiced that in the case of the government, how their heritage has influenced or related to the enacted policies can be reflected upon witnessing the place. This may be attributed to the belief that heritage sites benefit society (in both market and non-market ways), which makes it possible for the government to take action to preserve, promote, and safeguard cultural heritage assets against climate change and natural disasters (Craps, 2021; García & Vandesande. 2021; Adams, 2008).

Indeed, the lack of coordination among government agencies is a serious matter because tourism is a sector that requires multiple government departments to work hand in hand (ASEAN, 2022; Wong et al., 2010). Despite each state having a ministry or department that oversees issues related to tourism, youth are also involved in the industry through organizations such as international trade, forestry, and national parks. Researchers believe that if youths were given the opportunity to lead, they could become capable citizens, engaged participants, and powerful social change agents (Checkoway & Gutierrez, 2006; Checkoway, 2012; Alexandrakis et al., 2019; Khin, 2021).

Appreciating Architecture

The pattern of “appreciating architecture” comes from the participants who mentioned that the historic buildings they have visited in other countries have their own unique designs, which have been retained for more than a decade. So the story of the structure, background, and incident that happened in the past will become the story that can be delivered to society.

“Ang mga striking difference is most of the heritage sites here in the Philippines are churches, or yung Spanish colonial architecture ganyan. Siguro yung rice terraces sa Banaue, muslim towns or heritage sites dito sa Pilipinas mayroon din pero tayo kasi

yung Christian influence sa ASEAN everywhere else in the region is Buddhist yung mga heritage sites nila ay Buddhist, Hindu, or Hindu influence mga ganun so yung ang mga differences although may similarity kasi parehas tayong agrarian society before so may mga rice terraces din. Yun nga main difference is most of the heritage sites here are Spanish colonial churches. Other places its temples, mosques mga ganun klaseng heritage sites". – Participant 4 (Philippines)

[English Translate] "The difference is most of the heritage sites found here in the Philippines are churches, or during the Spanish colonial architecture. We also have rice terraces in Banaue, Muslim town or heritage sites in the Philippines but we are the so called Christian influence in ASEAN because everywhere else the religion is Buddhist, other heritages sites are Buddhist, Hindu or Hindu influence so these are the differences although there are similarities as well such as the agrarian society. Some of the main differences are heritage sites here in the Philippines are Spanish colonial churches, while in other ASEAN countries are temples, mosques." -Participant 4 (Philippines)

"From my point of view, heritage sites can be classified in two categories, historic buildings of architecture and amazing natural scenery. I felt amazed when I visited the heritage site, no matter the building in Penang, or the magnificent view in Halong bay." Participant 5 (Malaysia)

"In my personal experience, it was very humbling to think that I set foot in one of the vital areas during the Spanish times in the Philippines. By visiting Vigan, I cannot help but to compare how the architecture changed over time and how their people was still able to preserve Calle Crisologo as to what it is before up to now." - Participant 6 (Philippines)

Findings signify that through architecture, people can compare the distinct

differences and similarities of the historical sites among regions in nations, which reflects the cultures and diversity and fosters a shared identity. This is because cultural heritage tourism consists in engaging in activities including arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries, and living cultures with their different ways of life, value systems, beliefs, and traditions that relate to a variety of distinctive materials, which all enhance one's intellectual, spiritual, and emotional aspects of society (UNWTO, 2022). Historic structures, archaeological sites, and monuments, as well as collections and intangible elements, are remnants of the past that gives local communities a feeling of place, identity, and aesthetic well-being. Hence, cultural heritage tourism enhances the quality of life for locals and visitors by protecting cultural assets. Consequently, the local economy is boosted by cultural tourism, generating jobs and new business prospects. Tourism incorporating heritage and culture boosts the regional economy (Lusetyowati, 2015).

According to a study by Alexandrakis et al. (2019), a more sensitive and effective strategy to link cultural heritage and tourism is needed by putting an integrative perspective front and center. This new concept of heritage, in which monuments and landscapes are active factors in creating a sense of history, is valued not only from a scientific and academic standpoint but also by public tourists. The capacity to carry out such activities directly relates to assisting decision-makers and increasing public awareness of a more comprehensive approach to historic preservation (Timothy, 2018). And, since the youth are the driving force behind regional economic growth, pioneers of social change, and the area's future leaders, thanks to their entrepreneurial, digital, and critical thinking abilities, the protection of the welfare of young people and the advancement of their views on issues are given top priority (Ali et al., 2018). So the development of the ASEAN community largely

depends on young people, who are digital natives and use social media and other online communication tools for intercultural communication, which improves connections and understanding across boundaries (ASEAN Org, 2021).

In this time of cultural pessimism, it is crucial for ASEAN to continue to celebrate and promote the shared values of cultural plurality in the region and foster a united front in the fight against extremism, intolerance, and disregard for human life, as well as social unrest and mistrust. This is important for building a shared identity, as part of its ongoing commitment to putting people first, celebrating the region's distinctive cultural diversity, and preserving valued customs and legacy for future generations (ASEAN Org, 2022; Mattone & Frullo, 2022; Aji et al., 2022). Hence, ASEAN will continue to deliver cutting-edge cultural initiatives to celebrate and promote the shared values of cultural plurality in the region across nations.

Educating Oneself

As shown in the following statements of participants below, findings imply that some participants are not aware of the essence of ASEAN and experienced culture shock, while other participants learn the ASEAN from school and networks. Participants believe that heritage tourism promotes education because it allows people to not only open their minds and learn the history of other regions but also to observe how they can preserve, and protect their heritage site so that their heritage site can be retained.

"I mean AHP has a lot of potentials, for example it is not really recognized I don't know. In Singapore AHP it seems like just a label for nature reserves, so I don't know if there is a better way to promote the name itself and as well to really highlight the process of wanting to help to protect these nature reserves. When I go to Bukit

Timah to volunteer it's so sad to see the AHP Certificate just pasted behind the security guard office. It's not even in the museum or anything. So, I think there could be a better way." - Participant 1 (Singapore)

"Personally, I don't have any experience with the AHP system. Since like I said before the AHP system or even the AHP names is not really known here and mentioned by our ministry as well so I'm sure that there are lot of people especially young people that doesn't know about what is AHP itself but we are familiar with the national parks and in fact there is one of the AHP parks in Jakarta which is the Kepulauan Seribu National Park basically it's quite near you know like in the area and I was like majoring in biology conservation which we have to learn about the marine biology, and then I have the interest in marine biology like so we often have research or even like diving course, anything at all or basic activity in the national park." - Participant 3 (Indonesia)

"Our goal is to promote nature education and nature activity at the same time. We provide eco tour hindi lang siya eco tour na puro lakad so yung eco walk na yun may lecture siyang kasama. We actually highlighted some of the unique features of ASEAN Heritage Park, kung paano siya naging ASEAN kung paano siya na involve or na recognize as ASEAN Heritage Park." - Participant 2 (Philippines)

[English Translate] "Our goal is to promote nature education and nature activity at the same time. We provide an eco-tour not only purely walking, it involves lectures. We actually highlighted some of the unique features of ASEAN Heritage Park, how it became part of ASEAN involvement and how it was recognized as ASEAN Heritage Park." - Participant 2 (Philippines)

"I think we are not only studying the history, and stories while visiting the

heritage sites. We also have to observe how they are able to preserve, and protect their heritage site. So that the heritage site can be retained and it is also able to become a good image of the country. We must learn from the past and also know how to protect and promote the world.” - Participant 5 (Malaysia)

“Like everyone else, I learned about heritage sites in school and how UNESCO has been active in identifying places around the world as a heritage site”. – Participant 6 (Philippines)

Findings signify that heritage tourism promotes education on how to preserve heritage sites and through preserving it, future generations can experience the culture and learn from the past. Although participant 2 is not that knowledgeable about ASEAN and participant 1 is dissatisfied with Singapore AHP due to lack of promotion, participants 3, 5, and 6 are aware of ASEAN aims, collaboration, and how crucial it is to learn how to preserve cultural assets and heritage sites for other people to learn it. Because youth voices are typically ignored or not even taken into consideration by the decision-making group in the respective ASEAN country, they are neglected, especially at the grassroots level where the following areas are concerned are not addressed properly such as quality of education, youth employment, quality healthcare, human rights, and environmental sustainability which can affect the lives of the ASEAN youths and their future and even their daily lives. However, they are the future of tomorrow (Bobby, 2016). Additionally, it is important for youth to learn about ASEAN and listen to their ideas on how things can be improved and how heritage sites and cultural assets can be preserved.

However, in a study by Marwan et al. (2017), the youths knew little about ASEAN and the ASEAN Community, therefore suggesting that a concentrated effort should be made to spread the word of the ASEAN Community to the ASEAN public,

such as planning for intra-ASEAN exchange programs to foster friendships and ensure eventual steps toward a more comprehensive integration. Although youths in the various ASEAN countries still have a limited platform to express themselves, engage in discussion, and exchange experiences, ideas, and best practices (Khoo-Lattimore & Yang, 2018), they are highly talented individuals and have recently expressed interest in the region's socio-cultural realm. The ASEAN youth frequently bring humanitarian missions to the target nation in addition to their travels. Numerous groups conducted youth exchange programs or volunteer opportunities under travelers' agenda. So, youths from ASEAN nations can undoubtedly learn about the various ASEAN cultures in a regional location (ASEAN Org 2004; ASEAN Org, 2022). As a result, it has been believed that ASEAN youth play a significant role to create an ASEAN identity (Devianto et al., 2018).

Conversely, ASEAN aims to forge a shared identity via its diversity because ASEAN is more than just a block or geographical territory made up of numerous countries; it is also a network, a way of life, a commercial system, and a path for human contact (ASEAN Org, 1999; ASEAN Org, 2021). So there is always the chance to exchange cultures with one another in different cross-country events. Sports tournaments, displays of art, commerce, and tourism are only a few examples of cross-country activities that have been widely practiced and are continually expanding (Pearce & Wu, 2016). Consequently, on a local level, it is asserted that socio-cultural changes are a natural byproduct of cultural tourism, which has altered locals' perceptions of their own identities and cultural outputs. It makes the case that, if promoted, tourism may help those areas create new economic prospects. Residents may have developed expertise in branding their own authenticity, impersonating

natives, and using and manipulating traditional symbols for financial advantage or to advance their cultural status (Koodsela et al., 2019; Craps, 2021).

ASEAN Youth's involvement and Participation in Heritage Tourism

The second part indicates the generated theme about the involvement and participation of ASEAN youth in heritage tourism, which is divided into three patterns: volunteerism, advocacies, and passion.

Volunteerism

Participants' involvement and participation clustered a pattern of "volunteerism", as they volunteered in ASEAN Heritage Parks, activities, and programs for quite some time. Throughout the years of their volunteer, they were able to establish their respective groups. This can be reflected in the following statements:

"So, for myself I have been volunteering for the National Parks Board which is the local statutory board in charge of the nature conservation center and I was a volunteer since 2014 and I volunteered myself at both of these AHP." - Participant 1 (Singapore)

"I started volunteering February 2015 until now I still have involvement in Makiling. "I would mention to say na siguro sa mga educators, ako talaga yung isa sa mga pinaka active, wala ako ina absenan na special events so kapag may volunteerism work na clean up, mag propovide ka ng eco-tour ganyan, so talagang go na go ako dyan so yun." – Participant 2 (Philippines)

[English Translate] "I started volunteering in February 2015, until now I still

have involvement in Makiling. I would mention among the educators, I'm one of the most active, I will always be present in all special events like if there is volunteer work for clean-up, guided eco tour, I'm always ready and make myself available.” –

Participant 2 (Philippines)

“We often have rehabilitation projects or anything else especially like helping the national park staff to do their monitoring of coral reefs. Because you know, just like I mentioned before in my campus, we have an organization campus or organizational faculty based which is called marine conservation club.” – Participant 3 (Indonesia)

Findings signify that participant are active volunteers and aware of their roles as a youth in the ASEAN movement. According to Menkshi et al. (2021), getting young people—especially students—involved in the upkeep of historical sites, museums, and libraries, training programs for culture, leading tours for tourists, and participating in local heritage projects increases not only their awareness of heritage values but also helps to preserve and promote them. As a result, youth participation in the urban and local development of regions has enormous potential. However, work on this issue can only be supported by engagement and ongoing interest. Hence, young people getting involved in the development as volunteers or brand ambassadors with the intention of improving and reorganizing the environment is crucial.

Significantly, youths' participation and involvement can strengthen heritage protection (Devianto et al., 2019). However, the Regional Development Plans for 2017 to 2022, directed by the National Economic Development Authority, have made it clear that there are no actual plans for youth involvement or cultural heritage tourism at the local government unit (LGU) level (PDP, 2021). Sadly, despite youth's intention to

volunteer, the government may not be able to provide a chance for them to do so and that can discourage youths. As according to Khin (2021), teens can experience disengagement because of social norms and cultural acceptance, so young people do require assistance from important local organizations or reputable agents to help them begin engagement in terms of organizing groups and to provide training and coaching to open up new opportunities and boost young people's efforts. It is crucial to emphasize the role of youth in heritage organizations so that national and local governments should play in supporting initiatives that involve more young people in heritage activities and projects in light of the willingness demonstrated by young people.

Despite the challenges, a study by Muhammad (2018) reveals that the ASEAN Youth Forum (AYF) helps in increasing youth capacity in raising awareness and that serves as a channel between the young people community, ASEAN, and its member nations. They connect to hold one another responsible for achieving ASEAN objectives, so one of the initiatives by ASEAN, the AYF, has accomplished several noteworthy feats despite the low resources and the constricting municipal space that limit their efficacy. Thus, there is a case where many young people who wanted to donate their time and effort to aid the disaster-stricken communities wrote to the former ASEAN Secretary-General (ReliefWeb, 2009). The act of “volunteerism” of youths helps the nation. As such, in ASEAN, young people speak out on climate change at a global level and, at times, have combative viewpoints toward a common position, such as in 2015, the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Program helped Cambodia's Krakor Floating Village by voicing out the climate change (ASEAN Org, 2021; UNICEF, 2017). They are brimming with suggestions for how they might actively volunteer and advocate to engage in ASEAN's regional procedures (ASEAN Org, 2021).

Advocacies

In the following statements below by participants, it can be seen that they are active in getting involved and participating in the ASEAN movement as they advocate it in their lives and some even started an organization to advocate the importance of preserving cultural assets and heritage sites for a generation.

“I started this group called the Singapore Youth Voice for Biodiversity and like we sort of help to advocate for biodiversity issues in Singapore, so to give biodiversity a voice through the group you know like I help to guide the younger members into like what is the best way to approach biodiversity issues in Singapore. Essentially yeah it's really irreplaceable and even if I don't volunteer with the government. you know there are so many other ways I can help or contribute to the protection and conservation of the forest.” - Participant 1 (Singapore)

“In the middle of my involvement I personally have my own advocacy which is sustainable eco-tourism so considering that factor I was able to raise the awareness especially to the students.” - Participant 2 (Philippines)

Ako kasi personally I have my own advocacy which is sustainable eco-tourism so siguro doon siguro isa na rin yun para makapag raise ako ng awareness specially sa students. Kasi most of the time naman ang mga bisita namin doon ay students so yung mga learning activities na cino-conduct namin sa loob somehow with my own perspective I was able to raise awareness when it comes to sustainable tourism.” – Participant 2 (Philippines)

[English Translate] “I personally have my own advocacy which is sustainable eco-tourism, through this I was able to raise awareness to the students. Because most of the time our visitors are students, the learning activities we are conducting

somehow with my own perspective I was able to raise awareness when it comes to sustainable tourism.” – Participant 2 (Philippines)

Findings signify that youths' advocacies is a voice that can raise awareness of youths and call for more volunteers to join the movement for a cause. According to Devianto et al. (2018), youth involvement has been crucial in bringing urgent issues to the forefront of international discourse, and the UN has recognized their significance in advancing international plans for sustainable development. ASEAN acknowledges the importance of the youth sector in building a resilient, dynamic, and inclusive regional community based on the progress of the youth development index, and regional youth platforms highlight the youth's function as the state's soft power forerunner (Devianto et al., 2018). Hence, the youth can affect governmental policies, advance national interests at the ASEAN level, support national programs, sway public opinion, and shape the country's image through these exchanges (ASEAN Org, 2004).

The modern idea of young diplomacy is bred by the chance to speak and act on behalf of the nation and, to some measure, influence high-level decision-makers in ASEAN (ASEAN Org, 2022; ASEAN Org, 2004; Devianto et al., 2018). Notably, youth engagement in interpersonal relations ensures a welcoming environment that encourages ASEAN youth programs (ASEAN Org, 2022). Also, the ASEAN Summit meeting between Philippine youth delegates and leaders through the AYF highlights the youth of the Philippines' active role in shaping policy and making decisions (ASEAN Org, 2021). Even the younger Filipinos' participation in ASEAN demonstrates their talent to identify problems and develop solutions based on their own experiences. As a result, more opportunities for the Filipino youth's socio-cultural participation in

ASEAN are created by this chance to serve as youth ambassadors and policymakers (ASEAN Org, 2022; UNICEF, 2017).

In fact, the Philippine youth ambassadors are now one of the main factors behind the country's growing volunteerism and understanding of ASEAN. Their advocacies address urgent needs and societal issues. Participants in the SSEAYP Philippines, for example, are obligated to perform at least three years of community service after finishing the program. They attract more people—including their international counterparts—to join their advocacy efforts in the Philippines thanks to their increased networks. They expose Filipino communities to ASEAN culture and civilization through songs, dances, lectures, and tales of their travels in Southeast Asia and Japan, among other things (ASEAN Org, 2021; ASEAN Org, 2022). Consequently, the Philippine government builds a solid foundation for robust bilateral and multilateral relations with its neighbors through established people-to-people interactions, which aims to urge youth to volunteer and to advocate participation even in the digital platform (Alejandria-Gonzalez, 2016; Bajo, 2022).

Passion

Through interviewees, it is eminent that passion or interest is a crucial factor for youths to participate and lead youths in ASEAN. Through volunteering days, participants' interest got even more fueled with passion which resulted in them contributing to the movement and some even became a co-founder of a youth organization. This can be reflected in the participants' statements below.

“I felt that it’s a great opportunity to extend my horizon because I’m studying in Singapore, so I feel that like applying for the ASEAN Centre the AYLP program, it could help me network with my other friends in southeast Asia as well and learn more

about their challenges. I think for me, more importantly what I would like to learn is about what are the challenges or what are solutions that my other peers in southeast Asia experience, you know when conserving nature that was my main focus, it was really to understand and apply this lesson in Singapore as well, which I have so all this was really key in developing like my actions for conservation. There are so many experts, like wow, a lot of people, not just youth, but I think a lot of passionate scientists, politicians and even some business people, and it's like an ecosystem.” – Participant 1 (Singapore)

“I was like majoring in biology conservation which we have to learn about the marine biology, and then I have passion in marine biology, so we often have research or even like diving course, anything at all or basic activity in the national park. But maybe I have some of the idea that the AHP itself should be known, especially the system of it like what did the national parks got from the AHP, what's the difference between they are only national parks and have the title of AHP”. – Participant 3 (Indonesia)

“Ano na siya parang naging guiding principle mo na din, parang masaya kasi eh yung passion mo nandoon so kaya patuloy pa din ang aking volunteerism sa Makiling.” – Participant 2 (Philippines)

[English Translate] “It has become my guiding principle, seeing my passion allows me to continually volunteer in Makiling.” – Participant 2 (Philippines)

“So parang to what extent, yung you can go that far sa mga exploring stage? Pero ako kasi I can pay for myself; I will just pay myself. May mga kaibigan ako kasama but if I can pay for myself, I will just pay for myself kasi yung iba ano eh ksi may sarili nga silang gastos.” – Participant 4 (Philippines)

[English Translate] “Up to what extent of exploring stage? But if I can pay for myself, I will just pay. I have friends who join, but I will still pay for myself if budget permits and they have their own expenses as well.” – Participant 4 (Philippines)

“I think it’s more time before the pandemic. More of promotion yung passion ko para sa mga heritage sites dito sa Pilipinas. More of promotion based sa mga tourist destinations.” -Participant 4 (Philippines)

[English Translate] “I think it was during the pre-pandemic times. My passion would be more on promoting heritage sites here in the Philippines through tourist destinations.” - Participant 4 (Philippines)

“By visiting heritage sites, we get the chance to look back and reflect on what may be done today to avoid the mistakes of the past and as well as what was done before which may be done today to benefit our countrymen. In the fast changing world, heritage sites play an important role in preserving our culture and history for the future generation. It is a reminder to everyone of a country’s humble beginnings and how it withstood challenges of the modern world. To summarize, I’ll end it with a quote from the national hero of our country, Dr. Jose Rizal: “Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan.” or roughly translates to “He who does not know how to look back at where he came from will never get to his destination.” - Participant 6 (Philippines)

Findings signify that despite the sacrifices, investment of time and personal resources, and challenges from the little help of governments that youth usually experience, they are passionate about participating and getting involved with the idea of promoting preserving cultural assets and heritage sites for the benefit of the nation. They see their work as significant in society and meaningful for future generations so

they are able to continue in all movements that participants started. Participant 3 also voices out that such passion becomes a guiding principle to continue volunteering. Importantly, youth involvement can make heritage protection stronger (Devianto et al., 2019).

This was further discussed by Menkshi et al. (2021), who believe that getting young people—especially students—involved in the upkeep of historical sites, museums, and libraries, training programs for culture, leading tours for tourists, and participating in local heritage projects increases not only their awareness of heritage values but also helps to preserve and promote them because there is a greater level of knowledge among young people who have engaged in programs and cultural events that preserve and promote heritage values than there is among those who have not. As young people have shown a willingness to participate in heritage projects and activities, it is vital to highlight their participation in heritage organizations so that national and local governments can fund initiatives to include more young people in these endeavors.

In light of that, a study by Cernicova-Buca et al. (2022) also claimed that when the population's attitude is a source of sustainability for the city, a direct connection between a peaceful urban environment and the population's positive attitude towards their own city is evident. It is influenced by locations and assets as well as how they are arranged in metropolitan areas, as well as the kind of social interactions that these spaces foster. As a result, youth participation in the development of regions has enormous potential. However evidently as stated by participants, work on this issue can only be supported by engagement and ongoing passion because volunteering is not easy. Consequently, ASEAN officials continue to call the youths to volunteer for continuous years as they also recognize the outstanding capabilities

and the role of volunteerism among youths (ASEAN Org, 2004; ASEAN Org, 202).

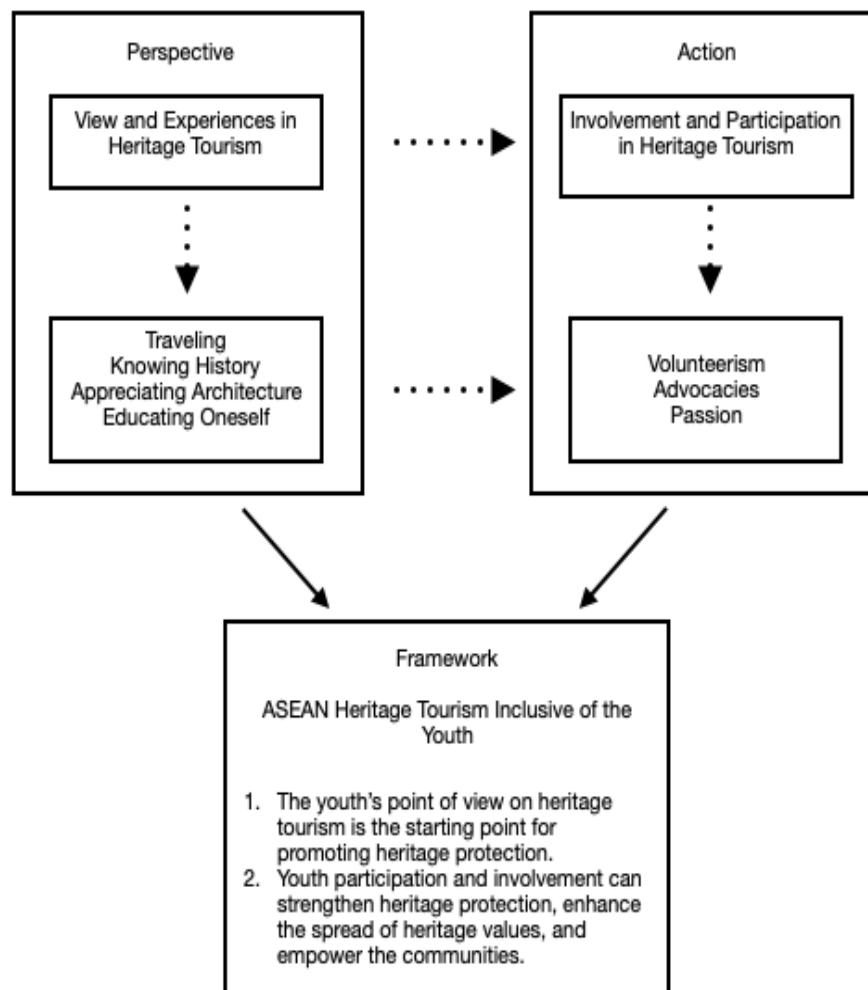
The Symbolic Interaction Framework of Youth Participation

The implications of the Symbolic Interaction Framework of Youth Participation is to highlight the role of youths in the development of ASEAN. As youths make up a substantial section of the population, over 1.2 billion in the world at present, they have been given several forums to discuss their own ideas and causes and advance intercultural understanding at the local and international level (ASEAN Org, 2022). The youths, as politically engaged and actively involved in society, symbolizes the state's soft power forerunner since they can affect governmental policies, advance national interests at the ASEAN level, support national programs, sway public opinion, and shape the country's image through their community exchange and diplomacy. The modern idea of young diplomacy is bred by the chance to speak and act on behalf of the nation and, to some measure, influence high-level decision-makers in ASEAN (ASEAN Org, 2022; ASEAN Org, 2004; Devianto et al., 2018). Thus, youths' engagement in interpersonal relations ensures a welcoming environment that encourages ASEAN youth programs (ASEAN Org, 2022).

In Symbolic Interactionism, the meaning is created through interaction with others. In this study, the other is the youths' experience visiting the ASEAN Heritage Site. The framework below illustrates the themes and patterns elicited from ASEAN youth participants, the importance of youth's point of view on heritage tourism, and how their experiences create meaning and define their actions of participating and getting involved in heritage tourism. Such actions conveyed a symbolic meaning for

promoting heritage protection, enhancing the spread of heritage values, and empowering the communities.

Figure 1. Framework for ASEAN Heritage Tourism inclusive of youth's involvement.



This framework can be used for ASEANOLOGY program and intervention development, policies enhancements and evaluation performances. According to Nelles and Ferrand (2021), connecting youths to larger regional networks opens opportunities and promotes further assistance for youths' mobility within and among ASEAN nations, which connect communities across national borders become a part of the ASEAN community-building strategy (ASEAN Org, 2022). As youth have the capacity to engage in such activities, they can support government or decision-makers in raising public awareness about preservation of cultural heritage and environment in ASEAN regions and how that can impact the communities (Timothy, 2018). The youth can affect governmental policies or advance national interests at the ASEAN level, support national programs or sway public opinion due to movement of their populations (ASEAN Org, 2004).

Through youths' volunteerism, advocates, and passion, the protection of the welfare of young people and the advancement of their views on issues are given top priority (Ali et al., 2018). Conversely, the framework can also give insight about how the tourism industry can help develop the ASEAN and raise concern about its political, cultural, and economic status for both regional and international growth. Youth participation in the urban and local development of regions has enormous potential. This is because the development of the ASEAN community largely depends on young people, who are digital natives and use social media and other online communication tools for intercultural communication, which improves connections and understanding across boundaries or different tourist destinations (ASEAN Org, 2021).

CHAPTER VI

RESEARCH SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Summary

The youth's point of view on heritage tourism is the starting point for promoting heritage protection and urges one another to be responsible and address the environmental issues. Significantly, their participation and involvement can strengthen heritage protection (Devianto et al., 2019)

This study understands the view of ASEAN Youth participation in ASEAN Heritage Tourism using qualitative study through Symbolic Interactionism framework. Symbolic Interactionism is a sociological perspective that focuses on how individuals use signs or symbols to create shared meaning between themselves and others. The researcher conducted interviews with 6 ASEAN youths coming from Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia because the main focus is the youth's experience in their respective ASEAN countries using semi-structured data where results were transcribed and coded for emerging themes. Three research questions guided this study: 1. What does heritage tourism mean to ASEAN youth; 2. What are the ASEAN youth's involvement and participation in heritage tourism; 3. What framework for heritage tourism in ASEAN can be proposed that is inclusive of youth's involvement?

For the youths visiting heritage sites is a means for "traveling", "knowing history" with a form of "appreciating architecture" and "educating oneself". The youths participated as active volunteers, advocates and aware of the impact of the ASEAN movement on society, regional development, and for future generations. This provides a balanced view of the youth's contribution and participation to ASEAN heritage

tourism and contributes to ASEANOLOGY in the use of sociological frameworks and methodology like Symbolic Interactionism.

Conclusion

Beyond the gaps that the internet has bridged, at the heart of the matter are people, especially the tech-natives, the next generation of youth who will become cultural enthusiasts, peacebuilders, and leaders who have both gift and responsibility to build renewed capacities, share innovative skills and co-create a sustainable world, that truly leaves nobody behind, both online and offline. The study concluded that the youth's view on ASEAN heritage tourism is important in building a community for ASEAN youth to share their knowledge and expertise about their views and experiences in heritage tourism. As well strengthening the ASEAN community of youth by driving peace and mutual understanding through their involvement and participation in heritage tourism. Lastly, empowering cross-border exchanges and collaborations to unlock the potentials of ASEAN youths in the heritage tourism sector.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher offers a Symbolic Interactionism framework. In Symbolic Interactionism, the meaning is created through interaction with visiting the ASEAN Heritage Site. The framework illustrates the themes and patterns elicited from ASEAN youth participants, the importance of youth's point of view on heritage tourism, and how their experiences create meaning and define their actions of participating and getting involved in heritage tourism. Such actions conveyed a symbolic meaning for promoting heritage protection, enhancing the spread of heritage values, and empowering the communities. This framework can be used for ASEANOLOGY program and intervention development, policy enhancements, and

evaluation performances. Conversely, the framework can also give insight into how the tourism industry can help develop the ASEAN and raise concern about its political, cultural, and economic status for both regional and international growth. These findings contribute to ASEANOLOGY, which could help the ASEAN community become more cognizant of youths' empowerment connections to history, culture, and a shared regional identity while celebrating diversity. It also offers a theoretical and practical approach that is both balanced when addressing challenges and issues in the ASEAN region, which can contribute to the growth of knowledge, research, and sharing in ASEAN studies and allied fields.

Recommendation

For Future Researchers, who wish to further expand the field of knowledge regarding ASEAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN ASEAN HERITAGE TOURISM: A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM STUDY, the researcher recommends that they may further look into the other interviewees based in ASEAN countries such as Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Also, future researchers may consider how ASEAN youths' participation can help build stronger roles of young tourists, entrepreneurs and cultural enthusiasts to come together to co-create sustainable solutions that are pro-planet, pro-people, pro-peace, and also pro-profit, which is a sustainable tourism or tourism with a conscience.

For ASEAN, the tourism sector, youth organizations and policymakers since it is expected that the findings of the study will benefit all of these groups. The researcher recommended that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, may strategize and promote access to and enjoyment of cultural diversity among youths.

Practical

Findings highlight the importance of youth's involvement in preserving nature and enriching social capital, so it is recommended that ASEAN may also create more platforms and programs where a lot of youths can participate and voice out their ideas on how things can be improved and how they can help in the development of regions. It is also recommended for the tourism sector or industry to collaborate with ASEAN in formulating programs that can create a sense of individuality among visitors in cultural heritage. They can collaborate to create an event for youths that can help the youth participants foster a collective belonging that could empower the movement of preserving cultural heritage.

The findings of the study clearly highlight how crucial the role of youths is in the development of the ASEAN regions. The researcher recommends to youth organizations that they may strategize on how to express their advocacies in a larger network and call for more volunteers since their participation and involvement are crucial in preserving the culture, sharing experiences with others, and creating a community to promote ASEAN cultural heritage. They could also create a project in empowering local communities and encourage vulnerable groups to be involved in social and cultural life. The suggestions for getting young people involved in heritage tourism are ideally in line with the tenets of volunteering, advocating, and passion, leading to an extensive plan that not only gives young people power but also enhances the growth of heritage tourism in the ASEAN region.

Policy

The study also recommends to government tourism that engaging youths in heritage conservation projects may maximize them to volunteer their time and effort to safeguard cultural assets. By actively participating in restoration efforts, cultural documentation, and preservation workshops, young people can become hands-on contributors to protecting and maintaining heritage sites. This volunteering aspect instills a sense of responsibility and ownership in the youth, fostering a deeper connection to their cultural heritage. The plan to involve young people in cultural conservation projects extends beyond the traditional definition of volunteerism, starting with the idea of volunteering. It gives people a chance to actively engage in preserving cultural resources, making it easier for them to make a direct connection between their efforts and preserving history. Young people give not just their time but also their excitement and dedication to restoration projects, cultural documentation, and preservation programs, developing a strong sense of ownership over their cultural inheritance. In addition, the study recommends that they may create a Youth Ambassador Program in line with the idea of advocacy, giving young activists a platform from which to passionately promote their community's cultural heritage and tourist attractions. The importance of cultural preservation and tourism growth may be increased as a result of these ambassadors' passionate sharing of authentic experiences with peers and tourists alike. Through their advocacy, they may go beyond simple promotion and transform into communicators of cultural narratives, bridging the gap between tradition and modernity and demonstrating their commitment to preserving the very core of their cultural identity. Supporting those youth-led tourism activities, which show their ardent devotion for their history, furthers the story.

The study further recommended that the policymakers or government pass a law that can allocate a fund for youths' advocacies and movement with ASEAN and tourism in preserving cultural assets and heritage sites. By creating youth-driven policy forums, policymakers can gain valuable insights from the young population on heritage tourism matters. Collaborating on joint heritage promotion campaigns would further highlight the shared cultural richness of ASEAN member countries and attract international tourists seeking diverse cultural experiences. They may also strategize rules and policies for promoting heritage protection and help local regions think of intervention plans in building a vast community of volunteers to preserve the heritage. To effectively convey the significance of this engagement, governments must initiate comprehensive awareness campaigns that highlight how preserving cultural heritage is essential for the identity and history of the ASEAN region. Such campaigns should showcase the tangible benefits of youth participation, emphasizing how their active involvement in heritage tourism can lead to sustainable growth and socioeconomic development.

To further involve and challenge the youth in the tourism sector, governments can introduce a range of strategic additions to their existing programs. One such initiative could be the establishment of Youth Ambassador Programs, where passionate and motivated young individuals are empowered to represent and promote their local cultural heritage and tourism destinations both within the region and on the international stage. This way, the youth become active advocates for their heritage, driving interest and attracting travelers seeking authentic experiences. In addition to this, governments can encourage youths to actively participate in heritage conservation projects, which could involve hands-on experiences in restoration efforts, cultural documentation, and preservation workshops. Moreover, organizing skill

development programs tailored to youths can equip them with essential tourism-related skills for their active involvement in heritage preservation. By being directly involved in such projects, young individuals gain a deeper understanding of the value of their heritage and take pride in being part of its safeguarding for future generations. Cultural exchange initiatives can also play a pivotal role in engaging the youth. By organizing exchange programs between different ASEAN states, young people can experience and appreciate the rich diversity of the region's heritage, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation for each other's cultural traditions.

Governments may also capitalize on young people's passion for innovation and digital creativity by developing interactive heritage maps, virtual reality experiences, and compelling social media campaigns. This seamless blending of technology and legacy not only provides a wider audience but also represents their love of cultural preservation with modern communication tools. Last but not least, encouraging young people to take part in cultural exchange programs stokes their desire to learn about and appreciate other countries' rich histories. These interactions, which are enhanced by their passion, promote intercultural communication, respect for one another, and cross-cultural understanding. The enthusiasm they bring to these interactions serves as a catalyst for establishing relationships between nations and communities, strengthening the fabric of intercultural peace throughout the ASEAN area.

In essence, these recommendations connect youth's view on heritage tourism to their advocacy, volunteering, and passion like a unified framework. The youth not only influence the growth of heritage tourism but also take on the role of torchbearers for cultural legacies by active involvement, ardent advocacy, and steadfast passion. Together, they provide the area a fresh boost of vigor and dedication, fostering a

sustainable, thriving, and culturally rich tourism industry that resonates with the echoes of the past while resonating in perfect harmony with the present and the future.

The governments of different ASEAN states can consider several additional initiatives that focus on heritage and cultural heritage. Firstly, governments should establish dedicated youth-oriented programs and initiatives that specifically target heritage tourism. These programs could include youth heritage camps, cultural exchange workshops, and heritage-themed competitions that challenge and inspire young individuals to actively participate in preserving and promoting their cultural legacy. Moreover, integrating heritage education into the school curriculum can play a pivotal role in fostering a sense of cultural appreciation and identity among the youth. By incorporating heritage-related subjects and activities, students can learn about their cultural heritage from a young age, encouraging them to become ambassadors for their heritage and inspiring future generations to do the same.

Collaboration between governmental agencies and sub-cultural agencies is vital for effective youth involvement in heritage tourism. Cultural ministries, tourism departments, and youth organizations should work together to design and implement programs that cater specifically to the interests and needs of young individuals. Creating partnerships with local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can also facilitate a bottom-up approach to heritage tourism, allowing youths to actively engage with communities and heritage sites. To encourage greater youth participation, governments can provide incentives such as grants, scholarships, or recognition awards for outstanding contributions to heritage tourism. Recognizing and celebrating young individuals who have made a significant impact in preserving and promoting cultural heritage will not only motivate them but also inspire others to follow suit.

In terms of regional development plans, if youth involvement is not explicitly included, governments can actively seek input from young individuals through surveys, focus groups, and consultations. Engaging the youth in the planning process will ensure that their voices are heard, and their aspirations for heritage tourism are considered. Advocacy campaigns can also be initiated to highlight the importance of youth involvement in regional development, emphasizing the role they play in preserving cultural heritage and contributing to sustainable tourism. In summary, by embarking on these comprehensive and inclusive initiatives, ASEAN governments can create a thriving environment for youth involvement and empowerment in heritage tourism. Empowering the youth to take an active role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage will not only enrich the region's tourism offerings but also foster a sense of pride and ownership among young individuals, leading to a brighter and culturally enriched ASEAN community for generations to come.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Consent Form

Participant's Name

Interview Date

Title of Research: Understanding the View of ASEAN Youth on Participation in ASEAN

Heritage Tourism: A Symbolic Interaction Study

Description of the Site Study:

This research is about the ASEAN Heritage Parks. What does heritage tourism mean to ASEAN youth? What are the ASEAN youth's involvement and participation in heritage tourism? What are the implications for ASEAN heritage tourism of the ASEAN youth's involvement and participation?

-
- I confirm that my participation in this research project is voluntary.
 - I understand that I will not receive any payments for participating in research interview.
 - I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.
 - I confirm that the research interview via Zoom will last approximately 30 – 40 minutes.
 - I understand that the whole interview will be recorded for documentation purposes.
 - I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain in secure.
 - I have read and understood the explanation provided to me.
 - I have been given a copy of the consent form.
 - I wish to review the notes, transcripts, or other data collected during the research interview.
 - I agree that the researcher may publish documents that contain quotations by me.
-

By signing this form, I agree to the terms indicated above.

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Date Signed

Date Signed

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

1. What do you think about heritage tourism?

Follow-up: How will you describe your experience in the heritage site you've visited

2. Why do you think it is important to participate in heritage tourism?

Follow up: Can you kindly share your personal story about your trip to this [particular] ASEAN Heritage site whether within the Philippines or outside the country? and why did you choose to visit this place among all the other places?

3. What has been your involvement in the [particular] Heritage Tourism? And how long have you been involved in the [particular] Heritage Tourism?

Follow up: How long have you traveled around ASEAN countries and visited heritage sites? Kindly also specify from what year and what are places you've visited? Among the countries you've visited, which one is the most memorable and gives you the feeling that you would like to go back again in the future?

4. How did you get involved with the [particular] Heritage Tourism?

Follow up: How did you have an idea about a heritage site?

5. Why did you get involved with the [particular] Heritage Tourism?

Follow up: How will you describe your experience in the heritage site you've visited?

6. What does your involvement in the [particular] Heritage Tourism do to you as a citizen of your country?

Follow up: As a citizen of your country, how do you think your travel to heritage sites around ASEAN can influence, contribute for the future generations?