

Museum visitors' experiential factors and recommendation intention

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Siti Athirah Najwa Kamarul Bahrin*

Mazlina Mahdzar

Zuliah Abd Hamid

Arni Abdul Ghani

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Selangor, Malaysia
tira_kamal@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Museums are an integral tourist destination across the globe because it is not only playing as a strategic role in education but indirectly, it exposed visitors to real-life experiences. Museums are also now shifted from the collection centered towards visitors centered. Hence, understand the visitors' experience is crucial as it will help museum to enhance their performance in the future and increase the visitors' level of satisfaction ultimately lead to behavioral intention. Experience economy is to capture tourism experience gained by the stakeholders that enable the organization or practitioner to identify their strength and weaknesses. From the result, the organizations strive in adding value or craft new strategies in order to gain high revenue. This concept has been widely used in varies context of tourism industry such as bed and breakfast, cruise, wine, boutique hotel, festival and with this concept, the researcher able to find which type of experience playing a dominant part in a certain event or occurrence. This paper seeks to provide a deeper understanding about the four realms of experience economy in the context of museum visitors' experience towards their satisfaction and intention to recommend the destination to other prospect visitors.

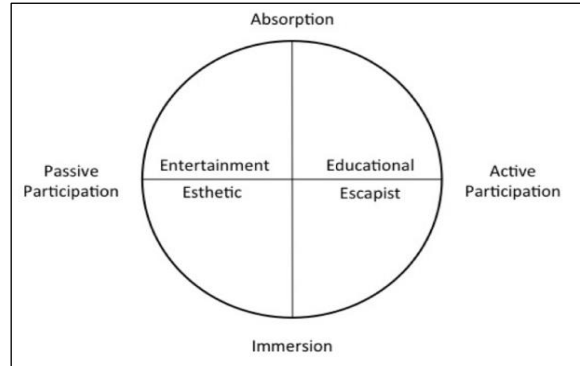
Keywords:

National Museum, experience economy, satisfaction, intention, visitor

1 Introduction

Museum is synonym to a place or institution that opens to the public which conserves, exhibits, and acquires the tangible and intangible evidence of people and their environment from diverse areas because of the distinctive value of its own, for purposes of study, education, and enjoyment (Bierderman, Lai, Laitamaki, Messerli, Nyheim, & Plog, 2008; Longman Active Study Dictionary of English, 1992; Mudzanani, 2015). Apart from that, museum is also listed as one of the major attraction in travel and tourism industry (Bierderman et al., 2008) and also now shifted from the collection centred towards visitors centred and as one of the tourism product; museums are represented as an alternative economic strategy (Muadzanani, 2015). A good example of how museums are reorienting their offer toward the visitors' needs and desires is the Dallas Museum of Art whereby the museum induced a continuing music element, workshop and art history lecturers with the aim of delivering experiences and bringing the exhibition to life (Sheets, 2010). Other example is, Museum Victoria, Australia whereby they create program that engage and connect individuals and help create a sense of belonging and purpose. Museum Victoria strives to evolve with the community and to provide experiences that impact countless visitors in a constructive way (Bennett, 2013). In other word, satisfactions of their customer are based on the experiences that they received from their visitation and it will direct to their post consumption.

Ren, Qiu, Wang and Lin (2016) have pointed out that visitors' experiences are more relevant in the current society, in which they have more choices than they used to. Most of the visitors seek for sentimental memories, feeling and representation which combine to produce a universal and long lasting personal experience (Hosany & Witham, 2010). According to Pine and Gilmore (2014), in the emerging of various competent economy, instead seeking for goods and services deliver, customers are looking for experiences that affect their senses and have an impact towards their personal feeling till one willing to spent in order to experience the goods and services itself (Jurowski, 2009; Pine & Gilmore, 2016). Pine and Gilmore (1998) identify there are four types of experiences which are entertainment, educational, aesthetic, escapist that are differentiated based on two categories: (i) the degree of customer involvement (passive vs. active participation) and (ii) the desire of customer connects or engages with the event and performance (absorption vs. immersion) as depicted in Figure 1.



Source: Pine and Gilmore (1998)

Figure 1.1: The four realm of experience by

Moreover, it is important for customer to engage or connect with these experiences in order to reach the optimum level of satisfaction (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Satisfactions refer to an emotional state of mind response to interaction and it based on purely experiential (Crompton & Baker, 2000) which it can be positive or negative. Higher level of satisfaction is perceived to result in behavioural intention (Crompton & Baker, 2000; Brida, Meleddu & Pulina, 2016) such as loyalty, revisiting or intention to recommend the site to others. In this circumstance, the study investigates to measure the experiences of visitors using the theory of Pine and Gilmore (1998) about their visit to the National Museum Malaysia. The experience is concentrated on the satisfaction of the museum visitors and their intention to recommend.

Studying visitors' experiences within the museum context provided a desirable setting for several reasons. One of the greatest challenges faced by museums is to attract new visitors (Robert & Everitt, 1999; Goulding, 2000; Heilig, Fuerhahn, & Sikkenga, 2014). This supported by Komarac, Dosen and Skare (2017), museum always facing various challenges in competing with other industry such as (1) enterprise competitors (e.g. visiting a major downtown art museum rather than visiting a smaller neighbourhood art museum or going to a theme park); (2) desire competitors (e.g. traveling, reading, and watching TV); (3) generic competitors (e.g. learning something by attending a university course instead of participating in a museum lecture); and (4) form competitors (e.g. viewing a museum's art collection on the Internet; viewing it in a commercial gallery)

In Malaysia, museum industries already started since the early of 19th century. The first museum started operates in 1883 by the British in Taiping, Perak (Department of Museum Malaysia Annual Report, 2011). Since then, more than 100 of museum have been set up in this country (Lau & Mohamed, 2010) and they were run by various government agencies from the federal to state level as there are different types of museum depending on how they are owned, managed, and funded (Museum Association, 2016). Even though some of the museums are not for profit making, still as one of the player in travel and tourism industry, understanding visitors experience is

imperative for the curator or manager to predict, craft strategies, and create added value to the organization for future behaviours and it allowed the organization to enhance their performance (Chan & Yeoh, 2010). Like Museum Victoria and Museum Dallas, National Museum Malaysia does several promotional tools and creates various programs to engage visitors who visit the museum such as education activities, one-night stay at the museum, workshop, cooking class and other. Despite the rapid promotions for museum visits as one of the interesting tourist sites by the local tour operators and the immense attention given by the national and state tourism boards in promoting local museums, there are still fluctuating number of visitors to the museums listed under the Department of Museum Malaysia.

The question whether the experiences earned from the visitation affect the customer satisfaction and behavioural intention According to Chan and Yeoh (2010), there are limited empirical work on the visitor museum experiences as a tourist attraction in Malaysia especially using the theory of experience economy proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998) plus museum literature records an increasing need to focus on understanding of museum visitor's experience. By understanding the visitor experience dimensions from their perspectives attained from visiting a museum, justification can be made to museum development as a tourist attraction site; and an understanding of how people appreciate and respect to culture to add perspective and meaning to their lives. In order for the museum to attract more visitors and to ensure visitor visits are valuable, meaningful and memorable, the understandings of the experience dimensions that lead to visitor satisfaction are crucial for the museum management and managers. Thus, the findings may have significant managerial and practical implications to the management of National Museum in terms of attracting more visitors and enhancing visitors' experience.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Overview of tourism industry in Malaysia

Travel and tourism play a key role in global economy as it generates foreign exchange revenues for several economies because of the increasing borders for global integration (Giap, Gopalan, & Ye, 2016). As part of Malaysia's growth plan towards high income status, tourism was selected as one of the National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) under the National Transformation Programme (NTP) in 2010 (Jala, 2016). According to National Transformation Programme Annual Report (2016), Malaysia continued to gain recognition and was named Asia's Leading Destination at the World Travel Award 2016 and the No. 1 Muslim-friendly Destination by MasterCard-Crescent Rating 2016. The industry recorded 26.7 million tourist arrivals in 2016, from 25.7 million in 2015 and registered RM13 billion in tourism receipt. In addition, the NKEA undertook the tourism Lab 2.0 in 2016, revealed that culture, art, heritage and crafts as well as birding, diving, and homestays as new areas to be developed.

Furthermore, Malaysia has emerged as one of the top region for business destination to host meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibition (MICE) events (National Transformation Programme Annual Report, 2016) and noted that in March 2016 also Malaysia introduce Visa-free entry and eVisa facilities, aimed mainly at facilitating travel from china. Jala (2016) stated that, this is because Malaysia have been losing a huge number of Chinese tourist to other countries over the past few years, whilst Thailand was seeing to have more Chinese tourist because they had eased entry requirement compared to Malaysia. This shows that, the tourism industry in Malaysia is continuing to build as tourist destination by focusing on new opportunities for growth. Jala (2016) also emphasize that good experience must be portray in order to get tourism back on track. All segments of the industry must think of alleviating stress factors for travellers as people who enjoy a seamless and hassle-free holiday will spread the good word.

2.2 Museum in Malaysia

Back then, museum always being associated as knowledge centre, and often perceived by general public as a place for education. Thus, most of individual have a thought of mind that museums are boring, dull, and not suitable for leisure purposes (Gurel & Kavak, 2010; Del Chiappa, Andreu, & Gallarza, 2014). In contrast, Muadzanani (2015) posit that museums are serving multiple functions not only as education centre but as entertainment centre. Museum considered as fully experiential tourism product and people visit museum for varies experience (Gilmore & Rentschler, 2002; Heilig et al., 2014). According to Gurel and Kavak (2010), people visit museum as opportunity to learn something, getting a new experience, doing something during their leisure time and to socialize.

In other part, the museums itself provide the visitor with the design experience. According to Scott, Laws and Boksberger (2009), there are two categories of experience which are wild experience synonym to natural event happen that could be positive and negative, and design experience which is company or event organizer design the experience that they want to be portrayed to their customer so that it will be remembered by the customer. Same goes in the case of museums, every museum's exhibit or collect different product either archaeology, anthropology or cultural history (Muadzanani, 2015). A good example is Chocolate Museum by Fidani (2016) where they provide visitors with interactive digital displays, fascinating facts, state-of-the-art equipment and chocolate making experience. This shows that Chocolate Museum by Fidani (2016) design to engage all four types of experience based on Pine and Gilmore (1998) model in the business strategy in order to achieved customer satisfaction and creates a long lasting memorable experience.

In Malaysia, museum industries already started since the early of 18th century. The first museum started operates in 1883 by the British in Taiping, Perak (Department of Museum Malaysia Annual Report, 2011). Since then, more than 100 of museum have been set up in this country (Lau & Mohamed, 2010) and they were run by various

government agencies from the federal to state level. According to Hasan (2006), since Malaysia has thirteen states overall, every state equipped with their own museum that showcase their own local authenticity. To date, not only museum run by government agencies, private sector also take part in this museum industry (Lau & Mohamed, 2010).

The major purposes for museums in Malaysia are to preserve the national identity and heritage, and to educate the community about it (Hasan, 2006). According to Department of Museum Annual Report (2014) various exhibition conducted in order to create awareness among public about the importance of museum, sharing knowledge and information and to increase tourism sector in Malaysia. According to Lau and Mohamed (2010), The National Museum is one of the popular tourist destinations in Malaysia, with an average of over two million visitors a year. This shows that, even though museums are considered as one of the niche market it still affects the growth of tourism industry in Malaysia.

2.3 Experience in tourism

There are several explanations in describing the word “experience” itself. Experience is an event or occurrence which left an impression on someone (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). In other word, according to Longman Active Study Dictionary of English (1992), experience is a state where people gaining knowledge or skill during practical rather than theory. Generally, it is something that happens to one and has an effect on the mind and feelings based on the interaction occurred. One experience differs to another as it undergoes an emotional sensation of personnel either physically, virtually or spiritual (Chon & Maier, 2010) for example going to theme park, visiting a museum, or participating in sport activities (Pine & Gilmore, 2000). Hence, experience served as a key construct in travel and tourism industry as well as destination positioning (Oh, Fiore, & Jeong, 2007) as travel and tourism offers a broad range of experiences (Kraus & Curtis, 2000). Therefore, by providing a long lasting memorable experience, organization able to create more sustainable return of customer (Pine & Gilmore, 2014). Uniqueness and personalization are integral element in designing memorable experience (Gao, 2013).

Previous researchers sorts the experience into several categories such as (1) Schmitt (1999) customer experience dimensions: sensory experience, affective experience, creative cognitive experience, physical experience, and social identity experience; (2) Brackus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) on brand experience: Sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral; (3) Heilig et al. (2012) on quality experience categories of cultural institution: Multi-sensual appeal, inner movement, learning, interaction. With these dimensions model, researcher emphasized understanding what the tourist experience is and how it impacts toward tourist behavioral intention (Oh et al, 2007). As a result, innovation and added value can be craft in order to create high quality experience that customer willing to pay for (Jurowski, 2009; Pine & Gilmore, 2014). Added value is important in every business as

it play as a competitive advantage that differentiates between one companies to another (Cravens & Piercy, 2013).

2.4 Satisfaction and behavioural intention of visitors

The importance of successful destination marketing is the satisfaction of the tourist as it plays a vital role in influencing their post consumption and it is widely debated in literature. Satisfaction is the sensations or feelings generated both by cognitive and emotional aspects of the goods and services, as well as accumulated evaluation of various components and features (De Rojas & Camarero, 2008). Manthiou, Lee and Tang (2011) defined customer satisfaction as an overall of performance based on prior experiences with a service provider. In the same vein, Han and Hyun (2012) stated that customer satisfaction is seen as an evaluation process which customers compared between their prior expectation and actual services perceived. Elsewhere, Hoyer and MacInnis (2006) view satisfaction as a feeling of enjoyment, pleasure or delight or disappointment perceived by customer which will be compared to their expectation. Thus, tourist satisfaction can be concluded as emotion of the tourist resulting after going through a certain facet of experiences that they received.

There are several researches conducted focusing on customer satisfaction towards behavioural intention such as Harrison and Shaw (2004) mentioned that satisfied visitors will repeat their visitation and recommend the site to others. Guo (2012) highlighted that satisfaction as most important determinant towards customer loyalty; Sheng and Chen (2012) stated, it is important to investigate visitor satisfaction based on their experience for complete understanding of visitor behavioural intention whilst Suhartanto and Triyuni (2016) mentioned that satisfaction level has a direct association with their loyalty towards the destination. To support, Hosany and Witham (2010) reported that there is significant link between customer satisfaction and behavioural intention same goes like Zabkar, Brencic and Dmitrovic (2010) clarified that the link between customer satisfaction and behavioural intention has been empirically confirmed by studies conducted in several hospitality contexts.

However, there are number of study stated there are no relationship towards satisfaction and behavioural intention. For example, Tarn (1999) as stated by Jones and Sasser (1995), they argue that satisfaction of customer often fail to determine customer retention. Even though the overall experience is slightly acceptable, but some factors assessed shows dissatisfactory results. This supported by Oh et al (2007), whereby they stated, memories also tend to be strong when tourist experiences are disappointing. In other word, product failure will be led to bad experience and encourage negative attitude toward the destination (Choi & Chu, 2000). Nowadays, there are increasing number of dissatisfaction among customer toward goods and services (Pine & Gilmore, 2016), instead, they want to purchase something that to be authenticity experience.

2.5 Applying experiential economy concept

The aforementioned dimensions of Pine and Gilmore’s model noted that experience constitutes a good starting point for understanding better customers’ and visitors’ perception of a product or attraction. Few empirical examinations of Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) framework were carried out by researchers. One of it was conducted by Oh et al. (2007). Their study has developed and tested a measurement scale for the four dimensions. Each experiential dimension was reflected by four items. Their operationalization involved measuring all the experience-dimension items using the following 7-point strongly disagree–strongly agree statements: the experience has made me more knowledgeable (EDUCATION); the setting was very attractive to me (ESTHETICS); activities of others were fun to watch (ENTERTAINMENT); and I felt like I was living in a different time or place (ESCAPISM). Oh et al. (2007) adapted this scale to the accommodation sector, and based it on a “Bed-and-Breakfast” concept. Their study found evidence that an experience can also be operationalized according to Pine and Gilmore’s dimensions. Table 1 describes several other literatures or studies that apply the experience economy concept:

Table 1: Dimension of experience economy in tourism industry

Authors	Topic / Sector	Applicable Dimension and Outcomes
Manthiou et al. (2014)	The experience economy approach to festival marketing: vivid memory and attendee loyalty Festival	Findings from the regression models revealed that vividly of memory significantly impacted by all four dimension of experience economy, while loyal visitors are mainly affected by aesthetic and entertainment dimension.
Oh et al.(2007)	Measuring experience economy concepts: tourism applications Bed and breakfast	The aesthetic dimension appeared to be a dominant determinant of experiential outcomes. In contrast, the escapism and entertainment dimension were not statistically significant contributors to guest satisfaction.
Hosany and Witham (2010)	Dimensions of cruisers’ experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. Cruise	Result indicates that cruiser’s experiences can be represented in term of four dimensions. Scale measurements developed by Oh et al (2007) are applicable in a different consumption situation. Overall, finding show aesthetics is an equally important component of the cruise experience followed by entertainment dimension.
Gao (2013)	An exploratory study of boutique hotel experience: research on experience economy and design customer experience. Boutique hotel	Aesthetics was identified as the chief experiential realm for boutique and lifestyle hotels. The authors presented results showing consistency with Oh et al (2007) study in the bed and breakfast industry and Hosany and Witham (2010) study in the cruise industry that aesthetics was the most important experiential realm.
Felitti and	Wine tourism suppliers’	Study demonstrated that the original experience

Authors	Topic / Sector	Applicable Dimension and Outcomes
Fiore. (2016)	and visitors' experiential priorities Wine tourism	economy instrument by Oh et al. (2007) could be adapted to measure an aspect of tourism's supply-side. Author do suggest practical implication to the wine supplier to enhance visitor experience like including offering wine blending demonstrations (entertainment), food pairing seminars (educational), sensory garden tours (aesthetics) and vineyard hiking tours (escapist).
Karpov and Merzlov (2016)	The experience economy approach to marketing Les Plus Beaux Village brand in Russia. Rural tourism	Author state that experience economy approach can provide a new impetus to the development of the association of the most beautiful villages of Russia and make it more competitive in the rural tourism market

3 Methodology

In this study, survey method of self-administered questionnaires used because it is more convenient. The unit of analysis is the individuals which visits the National Museum Malaysia.

3.1 Research instrument

The research instrument consists of several rating scales to capture the study's main variables, namely, museum visitors' experiences, satisfaction, and their intention to recommend. To develop an instrument for this study, previous literature was examined to identify instruments used with studies having similar objectives. A questionnaire was developed based upon previous instrumentation developed by Oh et al (2007), Hosany and Witham (2010), Gao (2013), and Manthiou et al. (2015). Bilingual were used in this questionnaire: Bahasa Malaysia and English. This is because to make sure that the visitors who involve in this study understand and able to answer the questionnaire if they do not fluent in one of the languages. With regard to the instruments, the questionnaire divided into four sections as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Instrumentation

Dimensions	Items	Sources
Section A		
Demographic profiles	7 items	Oh, Fiore and Jeong (2007), Hosany and Witham (2010), Gao (2013), Manthiou et al (2015)
Section B		
Visitor Experiences		
Entertainment	6 items	Oh, Fiore and Jeong (2007), Hosany and Witham (2010), Gao (2013), Manthiou et al. (2015)
Educational	6 items	
Esthetic	6 items	
Escapism	6 items	

Section C		
Visitor satisfaction	5 items	de Rojas and Camarero (2008)
Section D		
Intention to recommend	6 items	de Rojas and Camarero (2008), Hosany and Witham (2010)

4 Findings

Pilot studies were taken before the final process of data collection. This test is to clarify the questionnaire on the right use of terms, meaning and relevance of each item. The pilot test was conducted at National Museum Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. Pilot test was conducted to test the questionnaire toward small group of respondents to answer the survey which is relevant or not based on the responses of those questions to be effective. The size of the pilot sample depends on how big the researcher actual sample is. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), a minimum of 30 sample size could be used when conducting a pilot study. In this research, researcher collected 35 samples to test target respondents that experienced visiting National Museum Malaysia.

The result was analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test. Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test was performed in order to check the validity and reliability of the research instruments (Field, 2009). Besides Hair, Black, Anderson, and Tatham (2010) also stated that this test also checks on the dimensionality of the research instruments. Therefore, the recommended Cronbach’s Alpha value suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) was 0.7. Table 3 displays the results of reliability analysis for pilot test.

Table 3: Results of reliability analysis for pilot test

Questionnaire	No. of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha	Number of deleted items
Section B			
Experience Economy Dimensions			
Educational experience	6	0.886	-
Entertainment experience	6	0.905	-
Esthetic experience	6	0.822	-
Escapism experience	6	0.840	-
Section C			
Satisfaction	5	0.857	-
Section D			
Intention to recommend	6	0.902	-

Table above shows the result of reliability analysis for pilot study. There was substantial variation of Cronbach’s Alpha value for all variables, ranging from 0.822 to 0.905. Since all the variables in this pilot study met the threshold of this analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha > 0.70), it can be concluded that the measurements were at

acceptable level of reliability and can be proceed for actual data collection. Data collection is in progress and the result will be reported in the next postgraduate conference.

5 Conclusion

To sum up, hopefully the finding of this study in the future may provide insightful information that can improve the body of knowledge and also contribute to academicians and practitioner in this industry especially in Malaysia. Finally, it is hoped that this paper will further stimulate interest and encourage other practitioner to use this concept in order to have a better understanding towards their stakeholder experiences. It is becoming increasingly important to provide experiences and therefore they should focus on developing and staging the elements that create customer value and satisfaction.

6 About the Authors

Siti Athirah Najwa Kamarul Bahrin is a postgraduate student of Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Selangor, Malaysia. She majors in Tourism Management and her current research interest is on experiential economy.

Mazlina Mahdzar, Zuliah Abd Hamid and Arni Abdul Ghani are Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Selangor, Malaysia.

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