

Exploring the Technological Impacts: The Case of Museums in Brunei Darussalam

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ABSTRACT

Aside from educating the public, museums are adapting to the changing world as they have become one of the popular sites for cultural heritage tourism. Thus, from tourists and educational activities, they generate an increase in the number of visitors every year. With the emergence of interactive technology, it enables museums to produce better visiting experience especially when technology able to facilitate the visitor-exhibition interactivity in diverse ways. This paper investigates visitors' satisfaction and findings demonstrate a detailed insight on how the interactive technology in museum approach shapes the visiting experience. Basically, this study will show the process of creating repeat visitation from the effects of technology use in the museums. Interactive exhibitions with technology use are required in enhancing visitor satisfaction. A conceptual framework is developed to provide guideline and knowledge in understanding the role of interactive technology to secure visitor satisfaction and repeat visitation particularly in the context of Brunei Darussalam.

KEYWORDS

Impacts of Technology, Museums in Brunei, Visitor Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of the everyday life. With its immense presence in this world, it is not possible to neglect the trend of technology integration especially when it offers plentiful of benefits to others. Technology is now popularly being adapted in most organizations, particularly in education-tourism sector where it matches with the main function of technology that is to encourage interaction. Assimilating technology produces diverse learning experience which in turn made the learning process to be enjoyable and accepted by most of its users (Budhwar, 2017). Infusing technology is significantly applicable to museums. Nowadays, having interactive exhibitions is an important aspect to museum professionals whereby it aligns with their missions in trying to convey the museum contents as effective as possible. Despite most researchers' emphasis on the use of multimedia to be only applicable in science museums, history museums are no exception to this trend (Adam, Zheng and Woodcock, 2005). Modern museums are now adopting digital technologies such as virtual reality and touch screen as so people can comprehend better and obtain more knowledge about the objects presented (Ahlam, 2013). As reported by O' Mahony (2013) many people suggested

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museums to start employing technology use in order to grow and gain more visitors. Thus, this new concept of museum is increasingly favored particularly among the younger generation.

Apparently, technology helps museum to sustain in the long run. With technology being the main character that drives the evolution of this world, it enables museums to keep up across the generations. By implementing technology, it may positively affect museum experience, for instance, the artifacts presentation would become more attractive and expressive (Pop and Borza, 2016). However, depending on the artifacts alone would not be sufficient to satisfy visitors as the objects are only exhibited as evidence (Thomas, 1999). To have interactive multimedia will certainly enhance visiting experience. Exhibitions would be more enjoyable and engaging and learning the museum contents would become efficient. When museum professionals understand their visitors' individual desires, museums would score much better as it guides them to devise a proper technology before applying it. At the same time, technology use will contribute to the creation of immersive environment where it fosters emotions and meaningful interaction of visitors by letting them to deeply experience the museum collections (Vaz, Fernandes and Veiga, 2018). As a result, visitors become more satisfied with their visiting experience and thus, lead to future revisit. Museums in Brunei are still practicing traditional approach in exhibiting artifacts and connecting with the visitors. Local tourists, in particular have been complaining on the outdated museum contents making them to lose interest to even revisit again. On the other hand, international tourists claimed the museums to be satisfactory but not entirely rewarding. Thus, there is a need to explore the visitors' opinions on the effectiveness of fusing technology into the museum approach on visitors' satisfaction and their revisit intention. This is especially important as museums in Brunei have becoming the main attraction among the tourists' activities. As there are no study in Brunei context have yet been done in assessing feedbacks on the current museum approach, this paper emerges to serve this purpose to explore how the technological impact on the museums. By understanding both perspectives of museum curators and visitors, this paper will provide an overview of how the current museum initiatives shaped the visiting experience and thus generate to visitors' satisfaction and repeat visitation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Technology Use in Museum

Certainly, museums serve the public as cultural and educational institution of the nation, however, when it comes to value or knowledge transmission, it becomes rather ineffective. As mentioned by Hellgren (2015), the notion of museum in preserving and presenting artifacts is no longer interest the visitors especially in today's world. As people nowadays crave to attain stimulating experiences and attempt to gain meaningful connections, museums are encouraged to alter their traditional method of engagement and traditional approach in designing the exhibitions by implementing interactive technologies. With the aid of technology, it enables museums to enhance the process of visitor-exhibit interactivity that subsequently, increase the visitors' experiences and their degree of satisfaction (Stogner, 2011). Lehn and Heath (2005) agreed to the statement to which technology is surely essential in converting the museum environment for the sake of improving the museum experience and at the same time, turning visitors from passive to active. As declared by Stogner (2009), interactive technologies act as enabler that transforms the museums from performing "expert-centric" to "visitor-centric" services. Among many of the past literatures, technology has become the main focus in trying to accommodate and improve the services in museums. After reviewing thoroughly, several findings have shown that media technology is indeed useful in escalating the learning experience of visitors and some have failed to prove so.

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