

Quality in Experience Economy. Creating a tool for measuring quality in museums

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<p>The title of your thesis Quality in Experience Economy. Creating a tool for measuring quality in museums</p>	<p>Number of pages and appendices 60 + 6</p>
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<p>Museums of the 21st century need to change the image and make a shift from places that they preserve and exhibit pieces of art, to places that are engaging their customer and offer memorable experiences.</p> <p>The purpose of this Bachelor thesis is to create a model for measuring the quality of experience in a museum and the factors that affecting that. Based on already existing literature on how to measure quality in service industries, this thesis incorporate the characteristics of experience economy into those and propose an experience quality model with three factors and 26 aspects that are believed to have impact on the experience quality. To support the above mentioned model, a qualitative research was conducted in a museum in Finland.</p> <p>The museum was under observation from the researcher for three days. The results of this research showed that the 26 identified factors have indeed impact on the experience quality of a museum and those museums which want to operate as experience stagers can use that as a starting reference.</p> <p>The result are based on the researcher's subjective opinion and also they been tested only in one museum which that might rise questions on validyty and reliability of the study. Also the pre-existing knowledge is based on the service operations and further study need to be undertaken for creating a model based solely on the experience industry.</p>	
<p>Key words Quality, Service Quality, Experience Economy, Museum</p>	

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of the topic and research problem

It is now acceptable for many researchers that we live in the experience economy, where businesses / organizations do not offer consumers products, goods or services, but rather they are offering experiences that are memorable and unique. Consumers today consume experiences to benefit from the pleasures that are offered by the object of consumption rather than the function it offers. (Pine & Gilmore 1998; Tarsanen & Kylänen 2005)

In spite of the fact that in recent years there has been an increased interest about the nature of experience in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour (Caru & Cova 2003), an understanding of how consumers evaluate the experience quality that is offered in a museum its somewhat insufficient or not existing at all. The purpose of this thesis is directed to this understanding. The chapters that follow develop a theoretical framework on how to measure the quality in experience economy and in particular in a museum environment.

The research problem of this thesis is how to use the literature and already existing knowledge that is based on service industry and service quality, and incorporate that into experience economy so that a theoretical model will be created to evaluate quality in experience industry based on a consumer approach.

1.2 Justification of the study

It is in author's knowledge that as to date, there is no other attempt to create a model of measuring quality in experience industry and there is lack of research in the specific field and that is the main reason for choosing this topic. The challenge that this thesis face is the fact that there is extensive research made in previous years about quality but it is tailor made only for either products or services (Grönroos 1978, 1984, 1990; Lehtinen & Lehtinen 1982; Rust and Oliver 1994; Zeithaml 1981; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1985). Services and service industry it's maybe the industry that is

the closest to experience industry and that is the reason why the literature based on service is chosen for writing this thesis.

Who will benefit for this thesis will be museums that identify that they operate in the experience economy and they are searching a way to measure their customer's evaluation of quality. Also this can be used as a guideline for the museums that are ready to step away from the traditional image of museums and enter the experience industry.

1.3 Research methodology in brief

The selected research method for the thesis is qualitative approach and in particular the observation technic will be used. After reviewing the literature, the suggested model of experience quality is introduced and based on that, the author developed a tool of 26 factors that influence experience quality for assisting during the observation process. After having the tool ready the author will be observing the exhibition in a museum in Finland for three days and then analysing the results.

The purpose for choosing a qualitative method is because the researcher needs to examine the factors that are influencing experience quality in their natural environment as they happen, without influencing the behaviours of the participants, staff members and visitors, by be present and revealing the purpose of visit.

Also there are some ethical concerns that this research need to be aware of and the only way to protect the interest and privacy of the participants was through secret observation. There are questions as well about the reliability and validity since the data collection and analysis are based on the researcher's personal opinion and the way that the events and interaction occur might not appear again in a similar research.

1.4 Definitions

Since there are differences between the economic offerings, as it will be described the following chapters, it is in author's view that there should be differences between those that are purchasing each offering. For example for a product or a service, the person who is buying one of those is called customer while in the experience economy the

buyer its call “guest”. It would be wise to identify the differences between the two before proceeding with the rest of the theory.

Customer is the one who buys something from someone. There are external and internal customers. External customers are not in the business that produces the product as members but are related to the product and are affected by it. The internal customers of a business are everyone associated with it. This term is used in the figurative sense because there is no market for the product but describes the relationships of the members of the company. Internal customers are employees of departments for example (Juran 1988).

On the other hand, guests do not buy something but rather they value (pay) what the experience stager is revealing over time. A guest its part of the offering, in this case the experience, and can influence it, unlike the product customer who is just buying what someone offer to them-if they need it-, experiences are formulated in the mind of the guest and they are totally individual so no two persons can have the same experience.(Pine & Gilmore 1998). Because of that, experiences are very difficult to monitor and measure as for quality since they are completely subjective to individual persons.

1.5 Structure of thesis

The thesis is divided into five main chapters and subcategories. In the first part which is the literature review there will be the identification of key concepts that will construct the theory behind the research. The identified key concepts are service, experience economy and quality. Also in this chapter there will be an explanation of what museum are and their connection in experience economy as well of what are the experience realm and what are the things that characterize an experience stager. Following this there will be an explanation of the characteristics of services and what the factors that influence service marketing and quality are.

In the following part of the same chapter, there will be an explanation of service quality and an introduction of various models that has been developed in previous literature as well as the selected quality model that this thesis is based on. Then in the theoretical

framework the developed experience quality model that is developed based on the above literature will be described and analysed.

In the methodology chapter there will be an introduction of the main research methods as well the methods and tool that are going to be used for the completion of this research. Also in the same chapter a detailed description of the tool that will assist the observation process of the research will be given and what will be the things that will be examined. Also in this chapter readers can find how the research process move forward and how the data will be analysed. In the last part there will be a description of the basic ethical consideration that affecting the research and the how the researcher deal with these considerations. After this the upcoming chapter will give a short description of the museum that this research took place and the actual findings of the observation will be analysed and explained in depth. In the last chapter there will be the conclusions, implications and closing of this research.

Table 1. Structure of thesis

Chapter	Sub chapters
2. Literature review	2.1. Key concepts 2.2. The museum experience and experience realms 2.3. Service marketing and quality 2.4. Service Quality 2.5. Theoretical framework
3. Methodology	3.1. Research position 3.2. Research method 3.3. Research process and data analysis 3.4. Ethical considerations
4. Findings	4.1. Cases 4.2. Results 4.3. Summary of the results
5. Conclusions	5.1. Museum in relation to theory 5.2. Implications of results 5.3. Limitations and future research

2 Literature review

2.1 Key concepts

In this section, the key concepts that this thesis examine will be described namely, service, experience economy, service quality and museums. Following this there will be an explanation of the theoretical framework and the introduction of the identified experience quality model

A key concept is **service**. Service can be defined as an act or an attempt which if added to the product increases the value and usefulness to the customer (Lovelock 1988). It consists, therefore, on the intangible elements that appear in addition to the products.

Services vary in nature in relation to products. Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1988) state that most of the services cannot be measured, checked, made, or verified prior to the sale so to ensure the quality and this is because the services are more performance rather than objects and cannot have real standards of production. Because of these characteristics which make them differ from tangible products, the measurement of service quality is more difficult and because of that, the concept quality gets a more abstract structure.

Another concept in this thesis its **experience economy**. The experience economy it is not a new concept anymore since it has been here for over a decade. It appear at 1998 in the work of B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore and their book article “Welcome to the Experience Economy” and it received a lot of criticism and also a lot of support from researchers. As the authors say:

“It’s crucial to understand that experiences are a distinct economic offering, as distinct from services as services are from goods. Experiences result when a company uses tangible goods as props and intangible services as the stage for engaging each customer in an inherently personal way.”

The supply of products, goods and services was based on the principle that people they have to satisfy their needs. The key word (satisfy) behind the cover of human needs marked the movement of consumers to purchase offered goods, products and services, in order to find balance when their needs not met.

The progress of organizations is based on the share of the market they serve. However, the competition between firms to be on top, not only to have more and more market share but also to create loyal customers, has imposed the need for more diversified product offering. This need, In turn, contribute to move from a supply of goods (fungible), to the supply of products (tangible) and then in the supply of services (intangible) to the stage of experiences. (Pine & Gilmore 1998, 7)

However, supporters of the experience economy Pine and Gilmore (1998, 3) support that “*Experiences have always been around, but consumers, businesses and economist lumped them into the service sector...*” What cause the experiences to be found in the forefront of research and professional people are the follow:

- Increased competition, which leads to more and more differentiation between companies.
- Technological progress, which “encourages” the existence of various experiences.
- The normal progression of the economy, from goods to products, from products to services and from services to experiences.
- The increased prosperity of humans

All of the above reasons led to the rise and prevalence of the experience economy. Now, most companies around the world selling experiences. Starbucks sell the experience of coffee. The Hard Rock cafe is not a simple cafe. It is a restaurant that has a theme, the rock music. The Disneyland is a theme park offering experiences for families. These are only few examples of the new world of experiences.

Quality is the third key concept. The term “Quality” as an application for business operations it was developed during the second part of the 20th century and it has been

used firstly from industrial organizations and at a later point it's adopted by service organization as well. The first organizations that start developing and using quality practices with the purpose of achieving competitive advantage was mostly from United States and Japan.

Quality in general, try to help customers to identify and compare how different organizations work, what and how they are offering their products and services and help them choose what is the most appropriate for them. Quality though is not only meant to guide customers but also the employees of an organization –internal customers- and make sure that they get what they are asking from an employer.

<http://www.virbusgame.eu>

The quality is defined as a predictable degree of uniformity and reliability with low cost and tailored to specific market (Deming 1982). Also, according to ISO 8402 quality is defined as “the whole of the traits and characteristics of a product or service which have been compared with the capacity to meet a specified or implied need”. Crosby (1979) defines quality as “compliance with the requirements”. Juran & Gryna (1988) define quality as “fitness for use”. Japanese firms at first discovered that the old definitions of quality as “the degree of conformity to a standard” are very limited and so began to use a new definition of quality in “user satisfaction” (Wayne 1983). It is interesting that the satisfaction of needs and expectations of customers is the main factor in the above definition. For this reason, it is important for a company to distinguish the needs from early in the development cycle of the product or service. The ability to define precisely those needs, including planning, performance, price, safety, etc., will put the company ahead of their competitors in the market and will give the strategic advantage (Ho 1995).

Quality based on the product

Definitions are somewhat different. Product based approaches, face quality as accurate and measurable variable. According to this view, quality differences reflect differences in quantity of an ingredient or, on the characteristic of the product (Abbott 1955).

This approach adds a vertical or hierarchical dimension of quality and the goods are classified on the basis of the quantity of the desired containing attribute (Garvin 1984).

Quality based on the consumer

These definitions start from the opposite assumption, In other words the quality is in the eyes of the person facing it. It is considered that the consumers have different desires and needs and the products that meet their requirements are those that are considered to be among those that possess the highest quality (Edwards 1968). The above definition supports a personalized view of the quality which is extremely subjective to the consumer. In the marketing literature the above approach has led the concept of the ideal topics: precise combinations of product characteristics that offer the greatest satisfaction to a specific customer (Johnson 1971). Other researchers are defining quality as “Quality is the degree to which a particular product or service meets the requirements of a specific consumer”, (Gilmore 1974). Also, “the quality is every aspect of the product, including the services offered at the time of sale and affects the demand curve” (Dorlman & Steiner 1954). Others state that “In the final analysis of the market, the quality of a product depends on how well match the preferences of the consumer” (Kuhn & Day 1962) and that “quality is the allowance for use” (Juran 1974).

The importance of the customer often becomes more difficult to accept from many companies, especially from museums that are mostly focused on how to preserve and maintain their e.g. artifacts, paintings and other exhibitions which those things are basically the products that a museum offer. For this reason, this thesis will consider the quality from a customer perspective and try to identify what are the elements that enhance quality from a customer point of view.

The definition that will be used and is the most related with the purpose and aspects this thesis is the one that its proposed by Gilmore (1974) which states that quality is everything that a product or service offer to a specific consumer. Edwards’s definition that quality is different depending from the customer it’s also in line with the point of view of this thesis.

Museum is the object of this study. The original definition of the term Museum was as an institute that collects, document, exhibits and interprets art works for the common good. In 1999, the new definition for the interpretation of the term Museum by

the Museum Association marked as follows: “Museums enable people to discover collections for inspiration, for them to learn and to have fun. They are institutions that collect, preserves and makes accessible works of art in society”. The new definition focuses more on the museum’s role in society and less in operation as an organization. While the exhibits marked the main activity or products of each museum, now the main activity of the museum is the match between the needs of the museum and the needs of its audience. Now the main activity of each museum, is what the public sees and how they experiencing what they see. (Vergo 1991, 6)

In the early 1990s the term “New museology” emerged, that refers to the fact that museums must be made more accessible, interactive and targeted to visitors. Museums are beginning to have as goal to satisfy the needs and desires of visitors recognizing at same time that they are places that offer multi-dimensional sensory experiences to consumers. The influence of the “New museology” was a promoter for the recognition of the fact that, the museums in addition to the traditional experience of learning must provide the possibility of other experiences. The change in the culture of museums marked the entrance of museums in a new world, the world of experience and addresses a series of challenges to the creation of an experience museum. (Vergo 1991, 2)

Museums, in spite of the totally unique “product” they offer, these are organizations that have to survive and to grow. Visitors, members and donors are those who keep museums alive. The ability of Museums to attract the largest possible audience and the resources to do this is one of the most crucial objectives, which museums need to meet. It should be noted that the museums from buildings which simply retained and displayed works of art, they have to start to incorporate concepts such as experience, entertainment, the creative stimulation and aesthetic pleasure. Museums try to diversify the image and identity and begin to claim a bigger share of the market of leisure customers.

Challenges of museums

The changed culture of museums marked the presence of a row of challenges that lie ahead for the management of each museum. Challenges faced by the museums in the 21st century are to understand the character, the incentives, the expectations and needs

of already existing customers and build durable relationship with them and also to expand the audiences.

These two above challenges could be described as the main challenges (Black 2005, 27), from where it derives a number of other challenges, which are directly related to the holistic experience acquired by a visitor. In particular:

The challenge of image of the museum.

This communication challenge comes from the change of the orientation of museums, from the focus on works of art, to visitors. The image of museums was as a temple, where the entry into this will be either be afraid or will appear as something boring. Museums have to convince visitors that the visit to an art room is a pleasant, positive and interesting experience.

The challenge of interpretation and atmosphere.

Interpretation is dynamic process communication between museum and public. In practical terms, that means that the interpretation is a channel of communication between the finalized “product”, which is the exhibits, and the public. This channel of communication is urging consumers to deal with the exhibits, which encourage their involvement and which helps the audience to understand by its self the concepts that are hidden in individual works of art.

The atmosphere has transformed from a simple aesthetic element, to a strategic element. Organizations should know the effects that atmosphere has on the creation of experiences for consumers

The challenge of staffing and training method.

The challenge of staffing relates to the existence of a customer service unit in museums, which will be managing the quality of service to customers. The existence of this section is expected to contribute significantly to the quality of service to customers, which service is one of the main factors affecting the experience which the public will obtain during the visit to a museum.

2.2 The museum experience and experience realms

The museums are undoubtedly an area of transmission and acquisition of knowledge. But the way in which this knowledge is transmitted affect the experience. An exhibition should be addressed to the general public. This is the planned audience of museums in the 21st century. The general public look for unique experiences and to acquire those is considered less suitable the purely instructive approach (Black 2005, 168). At the opposite end of this whole framework are alternative forms of education as the experimental education and constructive approach to education. Museums must focus on the needs of their audiences and to apply that learning theory that will have effective impact on both, the presentation of exhibits as well as creating a positive experience or the public.

Museums are places where visitors have the opportunity to experience sensory experiences, learning experiences and experiences that will inspire them. The museums offer unforgettable experiences, ideas and activities that other places cannot offer. Black (2005) argues that museums are places where occur a series of elements that together provide an experience rather than a service. He argues that visitors know very well, as the management of a museum that you can find the same or more information in books, documentaries and the internet. People go to museums to experience what a museum can only offer.

Consider that, it is understood that while the exhibits are the unique selling proposition of each museum, every element of the interior and exterior, entrance, the amenities for the public, the journey to and from the museum, learning processes, the interaction with other people and a sense of recognition and inclusion of each visitor to the coded stories artworks are telling, often create a stronger influence. Therefore, what consumers consume in museums are museum experience which are derived from the exhibits of the space itself and the museum, also from the existence of ancillary activities such as parking and shop.

From the above arguments, it is apparent that a service quality model will most likely not be enough to evaluate the experiences that a museum offers and that there is the

need for a model that is dedicated only for measuring the quality of the museum experience.

Before start developing the suggested model an explanation of the experience realms, the characteristics of experiences and services will follow which the model will based on.

2.2.1 The experience realms

According to Pine and Gilmore (1998, 30) there are four realms of experience. They are specified according to the consumer connection (absorption, immersion) and the form of participation (active, passive participation) of the consumer in experience offered by the experience company:

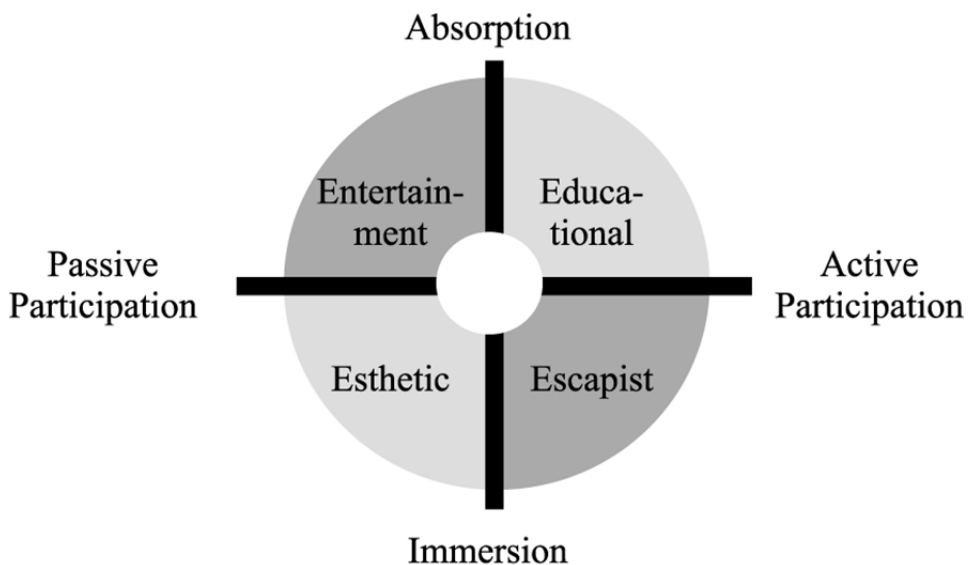


Figure 1. The experience realms. (Source: Pine & Gilmore 1999, 30)

More specifically, when consumers influence in their own way a performance, then actively participate in the experience , such as, for example, skier who in order to ski they participate actively in this activity and thus create their own experience. In contrast, when the consumer does not directly affect a performance then he participates in a passive way to it, like for example in classical music concerts, where consumers simply hear the Symphony Orchestra. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 30)

The second factor determines the limits of realms of experiences, In other words the relationship between consumers and the environment, where the experiences existed; we encounter the immersion and absorption. When an experience capture the attention of consumer then the consumer is absorbed by the experience. Typical example of this is the watching a TV program or a reality game, where consumers monitor the experience of the participants of the game. On the other hand, when a consumer becomes physical or virtual part of the experience, then the consumer has been immersed in the experience, as the participants of the reality game. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 30)

In accordance with the experience realms (figure 1.), the recreational and esthetic dimension of the experiences are characterized by the passive consumer participation while the entertainment and the educational realms are characterized by an energetic involvement of consumers. In addition, in recreational and educational realms, consumers are absorbed by the experience, and with the aesthetics and the entertainment dimension of experience consumers are immersed in the experience. In this point it is worth mentioning that the boundaries between the realms of experience are not strictly defined. In this sense, the four realms are considered mutually compromised and the perfect combination of these four directions leads to excellent experience. (Pine & Gilmore (1999, 32-33)

The determination of the experience realms of the supporters of the Experience economy is a guide to understanding the factors that determine an experience as well as the forms an experience can take in order to engage each customer. Therefore, in a first level revealed the basic conditions for the existence of an experience which is the immersion or absorption of the consumer.

2.2.2 Characteristics of experience economy

Experience economy assumes that companies / organizations are those that offer the experiences. In the terminology of the experience economy the words company or business operator, employees and consumers correspond to words theater stage, members and guests. The guests, in other words consumers, are looking to buy experiences,

which will be unforgettable. Businesses in turn raising the theatrical scene, an experience to involve their clients, and to build with them a relationship which would be personal and memorable.

The consumption of experiences takes part in a “theater stage”. This expression is not a metaphor but is a model. All financial offerings, not only of the experiences, are the result of progress of a company from drama (i.e., the strategy of the company) in the scenario of the theater, where is the experience staged.

The basic marketing strategy proposed by the supporters of the Experience economy Pine & Gilmore (1998) is the “experience production”. They propose five steps for the implementation of this strategy:

- Development of a coherent theme
- Engagement of all five senses
- Elimination of distractions
- Mix memorabilia
- Harmonize impressions with positive cues

These five steps, work as a guide for the enrichment of the theme so that the experiences that will be offered to consumers are as close as possible to memorable. All of the above challenges as well the nature of museums as experience stager, support the fact that museums need to move away from product oriented quality point of view and focus more on the experience quality that guests have and find ways to understand it.

2.3 Service characteristics and quality

In this part, the characteristics of services will be described as well as the connection of service marketing and some of the factors influencing quality.

Characteristics of service

- **Intangibility**

Services are not something tangible as the products we use. Does not have a shape, taste, and texture, odor that can be evaluated before and during the consumption as is the case with a product. Their intangible characteristics and the lack of experience in interaction with the consumer before the purchasing decision make that difficult to be evaluated before use (Zeithaml 1981)

- **Inseparability of production and consumption**

The process of production and consumption are inseparable. Usually, services are produced and consumed simultaneously (Grönroos 1978, Zeithaml 1981). Something that is not the case for the material goods that are manufactured, stored, redistributed or sold. This is due to the need for the customer to be present

- **Heterogeneity**

Due to the Intangibility there isn't the ability to model a service to an extent that is given uniform services with specific standards. The differences arise in the results of the companies that produce the same service, within the brand and employees in different cases. (Sasser, Olsen & Wyckoff 1978)

- **Perishability**

Services cannot be saved. This is not a problem when the demand is stable, but when fluctuate then companies should follow certain strategies to make adjustment of supply and the demand for, so that it do not affect the quality. (Dotchin & Oakland 1994).

The Marketing mixture of services includes three important elements that are distinguish from marketing of products. The 3P's are important factors affecting quality of provided services. These factors are: the people, the procedures and physical evidence.

People

People constitute an important element of the marketing mix, because they are an inseparable part of the supply of services. For example, the service quality offered by a bank, an airline or a commercial establishment is closely linked with how helpful an employee of the bank is the flight attendant, or any other person of the company coming in direct or indirect contact with customers. (<http://www.continuumlearning.com>)

Process

The nature of the various Processes, the degree of their complexity and the time requirements for their completion are also important components of the marketing mix. For example, the transfer of money from one bank account to another it can be done with a visit to the bank during business hours or through ATMs, telephone or from internet from the office or the customer's home without visit the bank. It is clear that the bank that allows banking transactions in more than one way, it offers better quality service to its customers. (<http://www.continuumlearning.com>)

Physical evidence

The location in which a service business supplies its operations, it's a service by its self. If it's located in place which is easier for customers to go to then that can be considered as good service. The exterior and interior of decoration, functioning, as well as the safety and hygiene of the premises, it is also absolutely tied with the quality of the services offered. (<http://www.continuumlearning.com>)

2.4 Service Quality

In literature can be found several definitions of service quality that focus on customer needs and requirements. Parasuraman et al (1985) state that consumers' perceptions of service quality result from comparing expectations before receiving services and real perceptions after the service. If expectations are met, the service quality is considered satisfactory. Linking expectations with experiences are consistent with the conclusions of Grönroos' approach on service quality. Lewis (1988) argues that service quality is to provide a better service than is expected by the customer while Creedon (1988), mov-

ing on the same wavelength, claims that the goal is to meet or exceed customer expectations.

However, there is a portion of scientists who have a different view on the approach to the qualitative measurement standard gap. Babakus and Boller (1992) support the view that the information obtained from the measurement of expectations is incomplete and the only advantage is achieved by measuring the actual performance of services.

Vogt and Fesenmaier (1995) give a different definition of service quality that says it is “a way of thinking about how to satisfy the customers so as to maintain positive attitude towards the product and are loyalty to the service or the brand”.

According to Hung-Chang and Neng-Pai (2004), quality meet the needs of customers and only the client can judge the quality regardless of pre-existing judgments and in different wavelength ranges, the definition of Parasuraman et al. (1985) who argue that the evaluation of the quality of services is very difficult to do by customers in relation to the assessment of the quality of goods, due to the special characteristics of services that are described on the previous sub-chapter (2.4).

The manner in which the service is performed can be a key feature of the way in which the customer perceived. Grönroos (1984) places particular emphasis on “how” the service is experienced, distinguishing quality to “technical”, which refers to the service delivered, and “functional”, which concerns the way in which service it will be offered to the customer.

Since this thesis is focused mostly on quality from the customer approach the approach to service quality that is more appropriate to use, will be the Babakus and Boller (1992) approach which states that the most benefits are obtained by measuring the actual performance of service. Consider that, this thesis identifies the approach of other researchers that expectations and service delivery must match or be exited however it is not the goal of this research.

2.4.1 Dimensions of service quality

The determination of the dimensions of quality was important object of study from researchers and academics that despite the fact that they focused on different parts, were all on the assumption that the meaning of service quality is not one-dimensional (Grönroos 1984, 1990; Berry et al. 1985; Parasuraman et al. 1985). The following part will describe the service quality dimensions as it's seen in literature.

Lehtinen & Lehtinen (1982) categorized the service quality in terms of:

- Physical quality
- Interactive quality
- Corporate image quality

The physical quality is linked to the tangible elements of a service. The interactive quality is related to the interaction between client and service provider. The corporate image quality is linked to the image of the service that the customers, current and future, have about the organization.

Grönroos (1982) refers to two dimensions of service quality:

- Technical aspect
- Functional aspect

The technical side is linked with “what” kind of service is provided, that is what really the consumer takes off the service. The functional aspect includes “how” the service is provided to the consumer, i.e. the interaction during operation of the service.

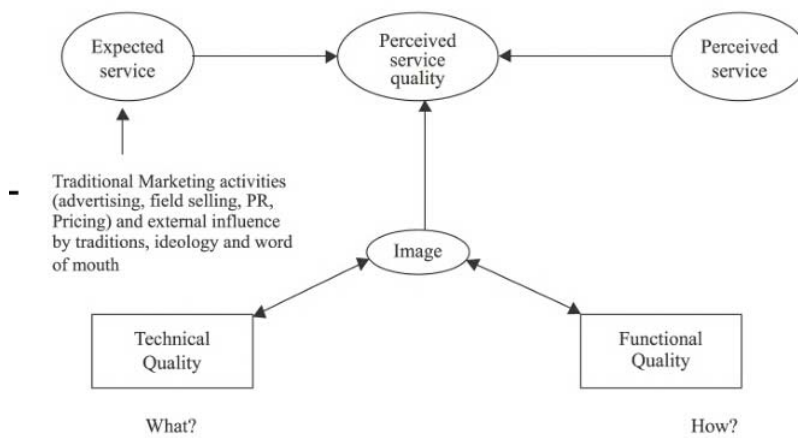


Figure 2. Technical and functional quality model (Grönroos 1984).

According to Grönroos (1984), a company in order to be competitive, first of all must understand what kind of perception of quality the potential customers have and how the service quality can be influenced. To manage the perceived service quality, means that the company or service provider have to be able to match the expected service quality that customers have from communications, with the actual service that the customers perceived.

By matching the expected and perceived service quality, the company can achieve higher customer satisfaction. In this model, Grönroos identified three components of service quality, namely: technical quality; functional quality; and image

Technical quality: the quality of what customers actually receive as a result of the interaction with the service company and how important the customer evaluates the quality of service.

Functional quality: is how the customer gets the technical outcome. This is important to him and to the views of service received.

Image: is very important to service providers and this can be expected to build up mainly by technical and functional quality of service including the other factors (tradition, ideology, word of mouth, pricing and public relations).

The Parasuraman et al. (1985) imported the SERVQUAL tool which is also known as “disconfirmation approach”. This model introduces five dimensions:

- Reliability
- Assurance
- Tangibles
- Empathy
- Responsiveness

According to this approach, if these expectations are not covered in any of these dimensions, there will be some differences in the satisfaction of the customer and the consumer can rate the service provider with a low level of quality. This model is based on theory that assessments during the process of service mainly deals with the functional quality.

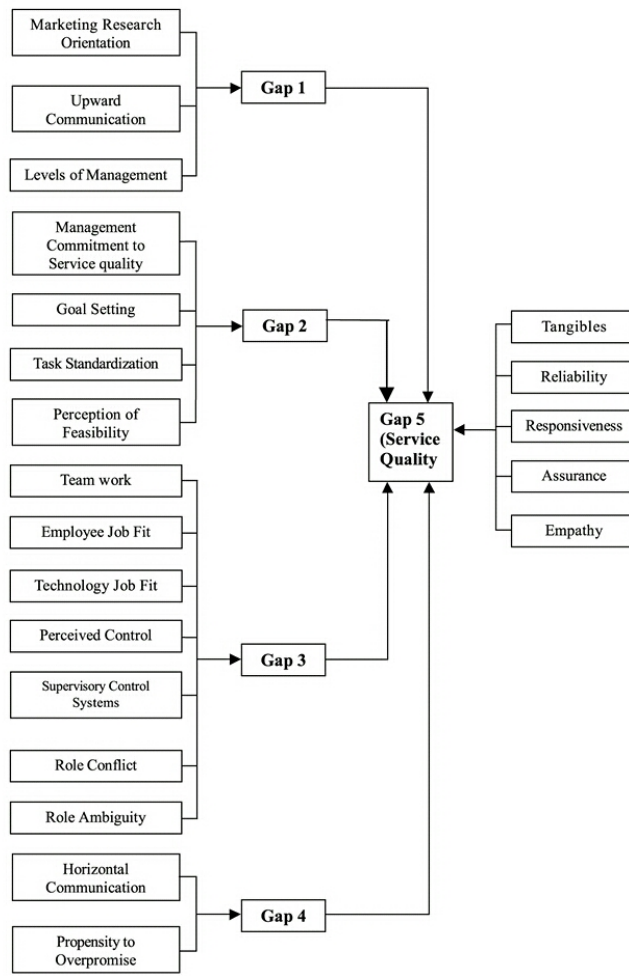


Figure 3. Extended model of service quality (Zeithaml et al. 1988)

This is the extended service quality model (Figure 3) by Zeithaml et al. (1988) which it resulted after revising the original Gap model. In this model the authors are putting more weight in organizational factors and how the company operates, communicate and manage employees. According to this model, management and employees have a very big impact in service quality and that is the reason why this model is included in this thesis to stress the fact that employees have if not the biggest then a very big impact on service quality.

Cronin and Taylor (1992) questioned the validity of servqual and developed an alternative measurement tool based on the result and performance (performance-based). The model of Parasuraman et al. (1985) analyzes the gap between expectations- performances. Based on this and assumptions in the literature that the simple performance-based models are superior for measuring the quality of services and to analyze the rela-

relationship between quality, satisfaction and purchase intent by Cronin & Taylor (1992) presented the SERVPERF.

Initially they took as a basis the original 22 items of SERVQUAL and they presented the formulas given below:

1. Service Quality = (Performance) - (Expectations)
2. Service Quality = Importance * Performance - Expectations
3. Service Quality = Performance
4. Service Quality = Importance * Performance

Where formula number 1 reflects the SERVQUAL, basically the fact that service quality is the gap between performance and expectations. Formula 2 reflects on a weighted SERVQUAL, which means that depending from the way of the service, one factor might have more weight than other, like, for example security. Formula 3 is the simple SERVPERF and formula 4 is a weighted SERVPERF.

Proposals were formulated and tested: A simple unweight performance-based model is more effective than SERVQUAL, the weighted SERVQUAL, and the weighted SERVPERF.

Also that customer satisfaction comes before perceived quality and that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on purchasing intentions. Also according to the authors, perceived quality has significant impact on purchasing intentions.

Rust and Oliver (1994) proposed a model of quality assessment from the customer perspective for a service encounter:

- The interaction between a customer and employee (service product)
- The environment of the service
- The result,(service delivery)

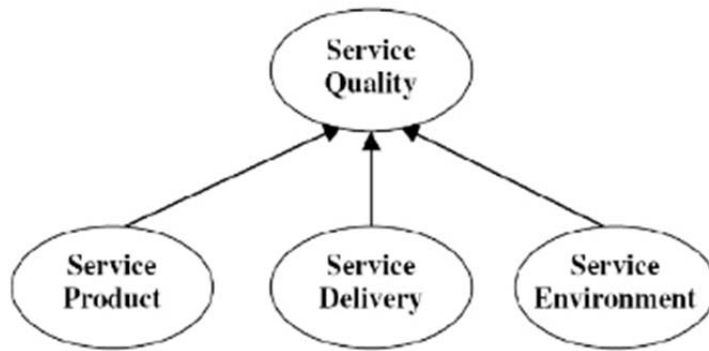


Figure 4. Quality assessment model (Rust & Oliver 1994).

2.4.2 Attribute service quality model

The service quality model that this thesis will base the creation of the experience quality model is the one that is proposed by Haywood-Farmer (1988).

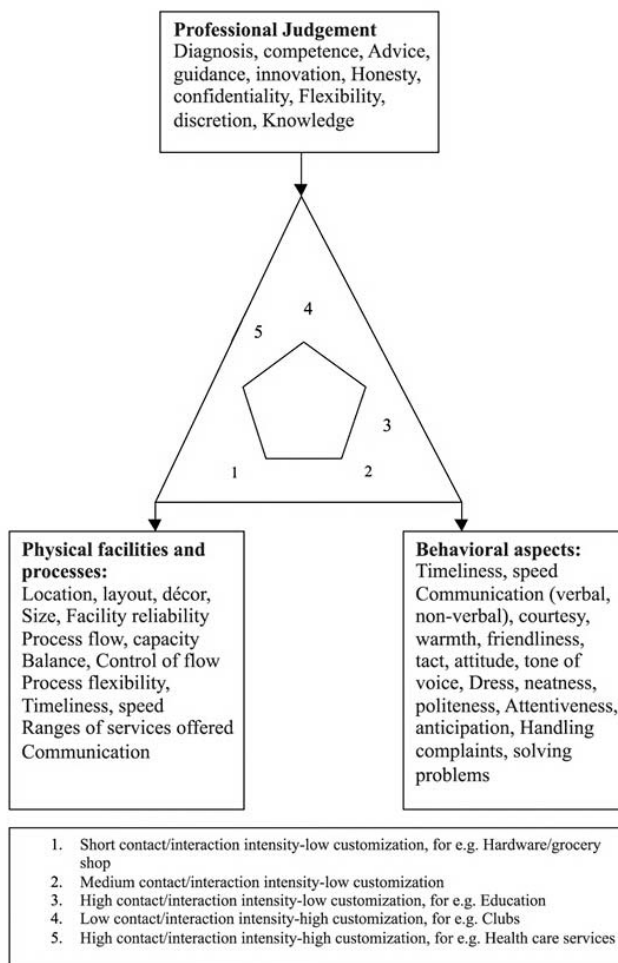


Figure 5. Attribute service quality model (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

The Haywood-Farmer (1988) model supports the assumption that a service provider achieves high levels of quality if it can meet what customers prefer and also what customers expect from a service encounter in a consistent way. According to this assumption, the first step for the development of a service quality model would be to categorize the service quality attributes into several groups, which by themselves consist of several factors, and analyse them individually. In this model, services are categorized in three attributes namely: *physical facilities and processes; people's behaviour; and professional judgment.*

Physical facilities and processes can be compared with what Grönroos (1984) named functional quality or what Parasuraman et al. (1985) call as tangibles. They include factors such as location, decoration, ranges of services capacity and so on.

Behavioral aspects include things such as the communication, friendliness and attitude of staff, overall appearance and the ability for handling complaints. It is part of functional quality in Grönroos (1984) model or in SERVQUAL model it's called as empathy and responsiveness.

Last factor which influence service quality according to this model is called Professional Judgment and it's mostly related to the competences and knowledge of employees as well as if the organization is able to deliver creatively the service (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

Service providers must be careful according to this model, since if they try to concentrate more in some elements it might be appropriate or more useful for them but it can also have a negative effect in the customer perception of quality. For example if a service provider is more concentrated on the procedures then the customer might feel that it has been treated poorly and that company didn't meet his personal needs (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

According to the author here there are different settings for a service encounter, as well different level of interaction and different labour intensity depending on each service encounter and because of that, the model must be customized to fit the service provider operations and business model. He tries to give several examples as they can be seen in the figure 5 and gives the example of logistics operations which are more facility and labour intensive and the model suggest that in this case, special attention must be given in these attributes (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

2.5 Theoretical framework- Experience quality model

In this chapter, the suggested model for measuring the experience quality in a museum will be described.

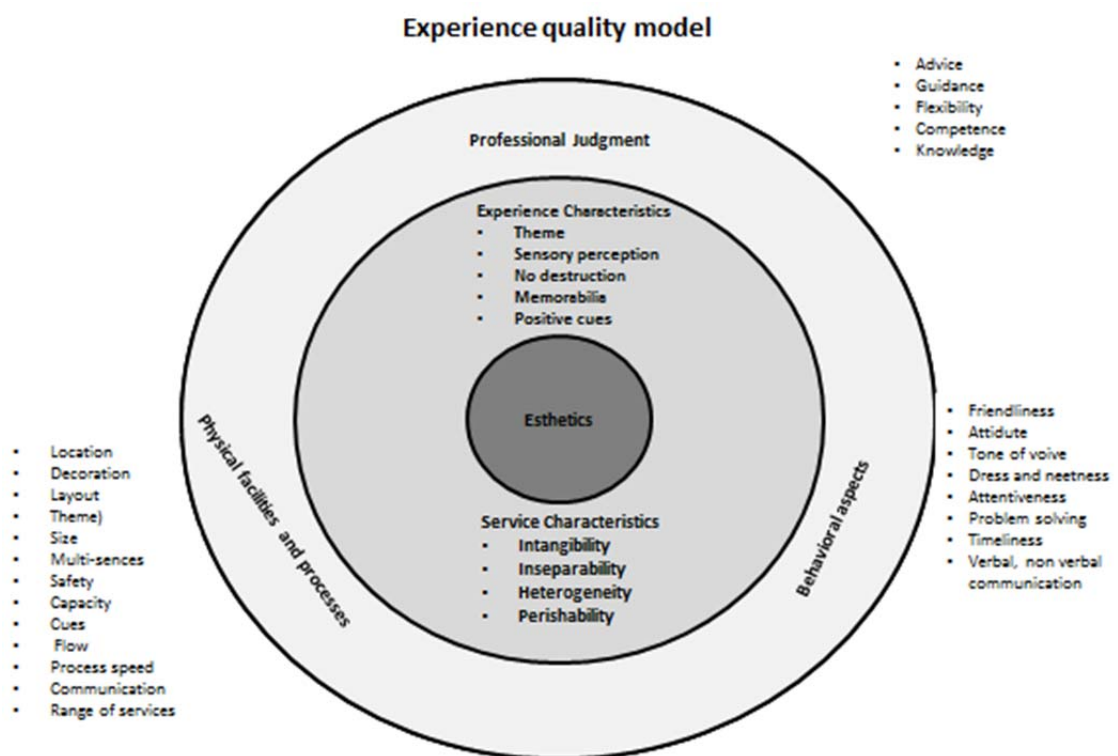


Figure 6. Experience quality model (Developed by author from Haywood-Farmer 1988; and Pine & Gilmore 1998).

Esthetics

In the core of the model there is the esthetic which is the type of experience that is offered in a museum. A museum can have several types of experience where customers can be more, or less active. Due to the nature of the museum that will be examined, this thesis will focus on the esthetic type of experience.

According to Pine and Gilmore (1999, 35) customers “*in esthetic experiences, individuals immerse themselves but remain passive*”. In a museum, customers immerse themselves in the environment of the museum to enjoy the exhibits and they have little or not at all influence on that.

Experience and service characteristics

In the second layer of this model there is a combination of the experience and service characteristics. To start from the experience characteristics, it is suggested that an experience should have a theme that should be the reference for the customers and it will create some expectations of what they will be facing once they attend an experience (Pine & Gilmore 1998). For example, in a museum or exhibition, if there is a futuristic exhibit then the whole theme should match that. Sensory perception is the engagement of as many senses as possible, in a way that it's in line with the theme. Using the same example with the futuristic exhibition, playing classical music in the background, wouldn't fit the whole theme. It is difficult to engage all the senses in a museum experience especially the tasting sense elsewhere than the cafeteria –if any-. No destruction or as it is state from Pine and Gilmore (1998), elimination of negative cues means that there shouldn't be anything that destruct the visitor attention from the exhibition itself or the theme. Signage might be important when entering a museum venue so that visitors know for example where the exhibition starts and where it stops or what they are looking at, but that shouldn't disturb the theme and the decoration of the place. People buy memorabilia in order to remember or take with them something that they experience or to show to other people that they been somewhere, (which that can create a positive word of mouth). Positive cues or *impressions* are what are staying in the visitor's mind from an experience. As it mentioned above, cues must be in line with the theme and should be something that make the visit of a customer as smooth as possible (Pine & Gilmore 1998).

All the above are the elements that characterize an experience but still it is wise to consider what characterize a service since in a museum there will be several occasions that service encounter will take place. For example the ticket sale, or a guide and even when a customer ask for instructions or opinions from a staff member. The characteristics of services, intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability were described in chapter 2.4.3

In the outer layer there are the three attributes that can influence the experience quality similarly as the Haywood-Farmer (1988) model. For the purpose of this model, several factors are added or excluded from each attribute so that it is more suitable for measuring the experience quality rather than service quality. In the following text, the factors that are influencing each attribute will be explained in detail.

Physical facilities and processes

This attribute tries to examine the physical evidence of the experience, as well as the functional aspect of a museum or exhibition, where the experience characteristics are added. Factors that are influencing this attribute are:

- **Location:** As it previously mentioned, location of the facility it can be considered as a service itself. Museums that are located in a central place or with an easy access are those that are most likely to have more satisfied visitors (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Theme:** As it mentioned above, a solid theme it is crucial when staging an experience. Theme should be consistent and not confusing the guest about what is (Pine & Gilmore 1998).
- **Decoration:** Decoration, indoors and outdoors play an important role on for enhancing experience quality (Pine & Gilmore 1998). Outdoor decoration, give a clue to the potential visitors of what they will encounter once they are entering the premises (Haywood-Farmer 1988) while indoor decoration will support the theme of the exhibition.

- **Layout:** Layout will guide the guests through the experience. From the ticket counter until the exit the guests should flow as smoothly as possible. Also the way that the exhibits are placed will have an effect on the quality. For example if are placed too high or too low then the visitors might have difficulties looking at them (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Size:** If the place it's too small then guests might not feeling very good while they are there. Also if it's too big then it might feel empty if the exhibits are not enough or if they are too many, guest might start feeling tired after some time (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Capacity:** Capacity and capacity management can have a negative effect on the quality. If there is too much crowd at the same time at the museum, the guest might start feeling uncomfortable being there or if there is too much noise, then they might not enjoy the exhibition (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Safety:** It's the outmost important feeling that guest must have in the exhibition and can have a big impact on the experience. There shouldn't be objects that are not placed safely and there is the danger that someone injures its self. Also emergency exits must be visible and without any obstacles in case that something happen and there is the need for evacuation (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Cues:** Associated with the experience characteristics and the elimination of negative cues and having as much positive impression, there shouldn't be a lot of things that are destructing the guest's attention from the theme and exhibits (Pine & Gilmore 1998).
- **Flow:** Guest must be moving in a good flow so that they have the time to enjoy the whole exhibition experience. Again if the flow in ticket counter is too slow, then guests will feel dissatisfied. Also the outline of the exhibits must be done in a way that there are not too many guests observing one thing at the same time since some might need some privacy to reflect on it (Pine & Gilmore 1998).
- **Process speed:** it's how long takes for staff to process a customer (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Multi senses:** Is the engagement of as many senses as possible in a way that is consisted to the theme, in a way that does not destruct the experience of the

guests. For example, if there is music in the premises and the volume it's too high then that might have a negative impact on the whole experience (Pine & Gilmore 1998).

- **Communication:** In this part communication means the way that the exhibition communicates with the guests. For example, if there is the need for explaining one piece of art in the exhibition. If there is the need for placing a note in written form of what the particular exhibit is, then it should be placed in a way that the guests are able to see it easily and the text should be visible and clear for them to read (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Range of service:** There should be a set of auxiliary services to support or enhance the whole museum experience without disturbing the theme. For example if there is a cafeteria or restaurant in the premises then it would be good if what they offer its as more possible in line with the theme of the time and the memorabilia shop can mostly offer products that are related to the particular exhibition (Pine & Gilmore 1998).

Behavioral aspects

Behavioral aspects deal with the behavior and attitude of the staff members of a museum. As it mentioned in previous chapter, people are very important when it comes to service quality and the same it's assumed for the experience quality model.

- **Friendliness:** How friendly the staff members are towards guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Attitude:** If the staff are willing to hear and help the guests and if they do so in a way that make guest feel comfortable. (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Tone of voice:** It is very important in an environment such as a museum since other guest might feel destructed when someone speak to loud. That is a reason why staff must be able to use a tone that the guest they are addressing to is able to understand, without at the same time bother other people (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Dress and neatness:** Dress of the staff should be in line with the theme and should be clear to guests when they are searching for help. Also it should be

clean and presentable so that will not have negative impressions to the guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988, Pine & Gilmore 1998).

- **Attentiveness:** Staffs are willing to help and they do so by heart (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Problem solving:** Staff should be able to solve upcoming problems of guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Timeliness:** It shouldn't take too long to attend a guest's needs and also it shouldn't take too much time on a particular person since others might need help as well (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Verbal, non-verbal communication:** This part has to do with how the staff members communicate with the guests. For example while they talk with them but also if the staffs are smiling and are making guests feeling comfortable while they are there (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

Professional judgment

This aspect deals with the competences and knowledge of staff members and employees. Staff members should have a good training and knowledge about the exhibition that take place so that they are prepared to assist the guests when it's needed. The factors affecting this and it would be consider for the model are:

- **Advice:** The ability to give meaningful advices to guest to help them enjoy as much as possible the whole experience (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Guidance:** To be able to guide the guests through the exhibition while giving the necessary information (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Flexibility:** Staff should be adoptable to the situation and the needs of the guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Competence:** How skillful the staff members are to assist the guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988).
- **Knowledge:** If the staff knows about the exhibition and are able to transmit this knowledge to guests (Haywood-Farmer 1988).

All of the above are what is believed that are affecting the experience quality from customer perspective according to the suggested experience model and are what it would be used to create the tool for measuring experience quality in museum.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research position

Researchers often define qualitative research comparing it to the quantitative. The fundamental difference between the two types of research are that quantitative researchers are working with a small number of variables and use many instances, while qualitative researchers study based on case studies and are multivariate (Creswell 1998). Quantitative research approaches working on a number of quantities / numbers that will be collected, described and analyzed. The characteristics of the quantitative data described and analyzed by quantitative sizes e.g. graphs, histograms, tables etc. (Lacey et al 2001).

Cassel and Symon (1994, 3) distinguish six differences between qualitative and Quantitative methods. The first is that the quantitative methods of data are communicated in numbers opposed to qualitative methods dominate non-numeric data. Second, quantitative researchers seek objective descriptions (indicators) as opposed to the subjective interpretation that characterizes qualitative research. Third, the research design and the various stages of the research process, qualitative methods allow more flexibility. The interest here lies in its flexibility, coupled with the unexpected discovery in qualitative research. Most often, quantitative surveys tend to want to anticipate problems before they occur. Fourth, quantitative research focuses more on the prediction compared to qualitative research, which is more interested in the process of understanding. Fifth, qualitative research is highly dependent on the local context of research. Quantitative methods are presented more often liberated from the narrow framework and thus are more widespread. Finally, qualitative research is suitable for creating the theory compared with quantitative methods which main help is to control theory.

The type of research was selected for this thesis is qualitative research. This choice was made because of the nature of anthropological subject and investigation of a small sample. Qualitative research has an explanatory character. Mainly refers to the “how” and “why”, and try to discover relationships between events and their causes, factors

that influence people's reactions and results from the actions of people. Qualitative research as a less structured method investigating things in their natural environment (at the museum). As a result of that, the collection and analysis of the material are made somewhat simultaneously.

3.2 Research method

The method that is going to be used for this qualitative research is going to be observation. Observation is a process that allows the researcher to obtain information and data through direct observation of people, groups, institutions, behaviors, conditions, places, or organizations (e.g., a school, a company, etc.). The researcher makes the observations and then processes it and interprets it. Considered the most qualitative and perhaps the most basic technique for data collection in social research, and one way or another, is mixed with all the other techniques, because each survey, quantitative or qualitative, contained at least some observational data. For example, the observation is often the starting point for a reflection, which then leads to plan and design a survey. Generally, it is a very useful supplementary data collection technique, in combination with other techniques can provide very interesting information on the topic being studied (Gilmore 2001).

Observing is used very frequently in research natural social situations, the physical location and time unfolding social phenomena. The researcher can identify the real components of the image of the public or the situations he observes. So it is a technique that is selected when the research is aimed at in-depth study of some social phenomena and wants to bring qualitative data. The quantitative approach is one that allows to know "what happens?" While the qualitative look at the "why not?" The quantitative data collection methods cannot give the rich descriptions and explanations necessary to understand all this, and especially the experience.

The characteristics of the observation

Observation is a method of social research that attempts to record in a systematic manner the behavior and reactions of the people in their social environment. The ob-

server is trying to keep **systematic notes** from his experience and present it in as objective manner, as possible it can be. Observing need special skills of the researcher and poses several methodological risks, particularly in terms of validity and reliability, because everything stays open the issue of objectivity and impartiality when recording data (Carson, Gilmore, Chad & Kjell 2001).

The observer researcher enters a team, a community of individuals, or in a situation and need to find ways to communicate with them and to explain his role in the group. For the entire period that lasts the observation is found among humans and to observe and record the events, behaviors, attitudes and reactions, in general, than are under study. The key word for the observer is to be able to penetrate so much in a group, in a situation in culture, the atmosphere of a community, to record and interpret final thoughts, feelings, attitudes, perceptions and experiences .Whenever the choice of a research technique as observation, the researcher should be decide beforehand a certain structure, which is important for further work should include the following:

The **degree of involvement** of the researcher is a key element in observation, because it plays an important role both in the relations between researcher with the group, and on the structure of the entire research project. The researcher selects, depending on the type of research conducted and the qualities they want to record, the degree of involvement. For this research, the degree of involvement will be a participant observation, were the researcher will not show the identity or purpose of visit and try to mix in the crowd. The purpose for that is because there is the possibility that staff of the museum or even the rest of the customers, might change their behavior during that time when knowing that someone is looking over what they are doing and how they behave (Carson et al. 2001).

The **structure of the observation** might be thorough, rigorous and systematic basis of a solid observation or be general, free and layered. A key concern of the researcher is to choose what to observe and how to record observations. The free observation provides an extremely rich source material, but the researcher is likely to forget or misrepresent or distort when, after observation, try to record it. If the researcher chooses a more organized way of observation needs to have prepared a framework of observa-

tion, i.e. a prearranged model with specific points which will observe and which will record, or qualitative data (e.g., determine what behaviors influence the situation) or quantified (e.g., how many times it appears that behavior). The framework design of the observation is based on the subjects that has been set from the beginning and that are based on the purpose and research questions of the survey. In the structured observation, which is what this research is going to be, the researcher has to observe what is planned and how important this is to his research. The structure and the tool that is going to be used are described in a later chapter (Carson et al. 2001).

The **approach and entry** to the site / group / community integration group, the duration and extent of the observations. The researcher should have taken account of difficulties due to the nature of this technique and usually relate to his ability to reach out and communicate with the team or the community will study, how to behave during the observation, the degree of acceptance by the group observed but also the choice of group or condition that will occur. The method of observation makes it possible to spot changes, modifications, and adjustments, if deemed necessary by the investigator. The extent and duration of observation relates to the needs of each survey (Carson et. al. 2001).

The **material** collected, the manner of recording (e.g. recording, video recording, researcher's notes), the classification and interpretation, and the decision for full or partial disclosure or concealment by the participants.

All these elements must have pre-decided by the researcher before the observation. However, every researcher can choose the design of their own research as he thinks will best serve the research purpose and questions (Carson et. al. 2001).

3.3 Research process and data analysis

When designing the observation tool the need to follow the steps below:

First-and-determining step is why the study is conducted, what the research questions are, which of them will give answers to observe and what to observe. The choice of the theme also includes the selection of persons or situations under observation as well as

the space and timing of observation (Carson et. al. 2001). For this research, the purpose why the observation is conducted was to try to identify if the particular museum have any characteristics of the experience industry and to what degree these characteristics are corresponding to the experience quality. The goal was that for three days, the researcher had to undertake the whole path that a normal visitor will take, from the ticket counter to the exit and observe as many interactions between visitors and museum staff as possible without influencing the situation. On top of the interactions between visitors and staff, the researcher had to observe the physical facilities of the museum and give his personal opinion on how they are influencing experience quality. Since the observer cannot make a formal monitoring of the area such as video recording or taking photos, the most convenient way was to prepare a protocol with the items that they will be under observation and complete that on place in a concealed way. The observation protocol that it has been used for this research can be seen in

Table 2. Observation protocol (developed by the author from Figure 6 in chapter 2)

Physical facilities and processes				
		Bad	Good	Very good
Location	Location			
		Bad	Good	Very good
	Accessibility			
Theme		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility			
		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
Decoration	Suitability			
		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility			
Layout		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
		Bad	Good	Very good
Size				
		Small	Medium	Big
Capacity				
		Not crowdie	Satisfactory	Too crowdie
Safety				
		Bad	Good	Very good
Cues				
		Bad	Good	Very good
Flow		Bad	Good	Very good

Process speed		Slow	Satisfactory	Fast
Multi senses		Bad	Good	Very good
	Sight			
	Hearing			
	Smell			
	Touch			
Taste				
Communication		Bad	Good	Very good
Range of services		Bad	Good	Very good
	S1			
	S2			
	S3			
	S4			
Behavioural aspects				
Friendliness		Bad	Good	Very good
Attitude		Bad	Good	Very good
Tone of voice		Low	Satisfactory	High
Dress and neatness		Bad	Good	Very good
Attentiveness		Bad	Good	Very good
Problem solving		Bad	Good	Very good
Timeliness		Bad	Good	Very good
Verbal non-verbal communication		Bad	Good	Very good
Professional judgement				
Advice		Bad	Good	Very good
Guidance		Bad	Good	Very good
Flexibility		Bad	Good	Very good
Competence		Bad	Good	Very good
Knowledge		Bad	Good	Very good

The observation protocol was divided in three parts, from which the first part was examining factors that are influencing physical facilities and processes and the following two was focused in the interactions of visitors and employees and for the professional competences of staff. There were thirteen factors influencing physical facilities and processes from which, some of those are divided into sub-factors. Location is divided into location as to where the museum is and on accessibility and they were rated between bad, good and very good. Theme is rated according on how visible it is from not visible, somewhat visible and visible. Also the suitability of the theme is examined however is not suitable with the experience, somewhat suitable or suitable.

After that the decoration was examined on how visible it is as well as if it's not suitable, somewhat suitable or suitable in accordance with the theme. The layout of the whole experience is rated from bad, good and very good while the size is rate from small size, medium, or big size. The capacity was rated according to how many persons were present there at the same time from not crowdie, satisfactory and too crowdie. Safety, cues and flow were examined as well and related between bad, good, and very good. The process speed was evaluated as to how the visitors were proceeded from slow speed, satisfactory or at a fast pace while multi senses were categorized as sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste and rated as bad, good or very good. Also for the last two factors, communication and range of services were rated as bad, good and very good.

The eight identified factors that examine the behavioral factors were friendliness; attitude and tone of voice of the staff, their dress and neatness, attentiveness, problem solving timeliness and verbal non-verbal communication were rated as bad, good or very good. At same length, the factors that inspect the professional judgment of employees, namely advice and guidance that they were giving, flexibility, competence and knowledge, were rated as bad, good or very good.

The data analysis for this research will be done in a narrative way of the findings from the observations. First all the factors will be categorized in tables, as on the tool that has been used for recording the observations. On the table each item that was examined will have the rate that was given from the researcher for each day of the observa-

tion. Also the researcher will describe the events that led to the degree for rating each factor.

There are several factors that might influence the reliability and validity of the data analysis as in most of the qualitative researches. The analysis is subjective to the researchers opinion on how he experience and observe each situation and some other researcher might have a completely different opinion on events if the research was taken place again. Also the results might not be considered valid since it's the opinion of only one researcher.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Observation as a tool for doing research can be considered as ethical problematic because it is a form of deceitful in some degree. There is the possibility that if the target group know that someone will be observing them then they will not like to be part of the research. Even though not everybody would like to take part in a research like that or it will be consider immoral doing that, in some cases there are sometimes good reason why it's allowed to use this kind of controvert research method. These cases include studies that it's very difficult to inform everybody that they are participating in the research, for example if watching people while in movement. Also another reason is that if the researcher believes that if the participants know that they are under observation, then they might change their behavior and that will alter the credibility of the research. (<http://dissertation.laerd.com/>)

Even though there might be good reason why to use observation as a research method, there are several ethical concerns that the research should take into consideration before doing such a research and give good arguments why it is necessary to do so. Ethical considerations that might influence this research can be categorized into three groups according to the harm that might oppose to the participants. The categories are:

Minimizing the risk of harm

There are several ways that participants might be harm during an observational research such as physical and psychological harm, social and financial disadvantages and invasion in privacy and anonymity (<http://dissertation.laerd.com/>).

In researcher's opinion there is no physical or psychological safety of the participants since the research will be conducted in a control environment such as the museum and participants will not be put in any kind of stress but rather observe the natural behavior and interactions with the staff. No privacy invasion will take part either since participants will be asked to give any private information. The only ethical problem under this category will be the harm on financial and social life of employees. For example if one employee do something wrong or the behavior it's not appropriate and the management find out about as a result of the research, then that particular person might lose its job or get a warning from management which might get insulted in front of others. For this reason, there will be no mention on the name of the museum but rather a brief description of it. Also there will be no time and date of the conducted research since that might lead to the confrontation of employees that they were at the museum at that time and date (in case that someone identify in which museum the research took place).

Obtaining informed consent

Another ethical consideration is however the researcher will take the participants approval for being part in the research. It is suggested that participants in a research should always know about it and take part voluntarily (<http://dissertation.laerd.com/>). In this research, the participants will not know that they are under observation for the main reason that if staff members know that are watched, then there is the probability that they will change their behavior. Researcher's goal for this research is to observe the behavior and interactions of employees under normal conditions. Also, museum it's a place where visitors immerse their selves in the museum experience and there is no need for them to feel uncomfortable while knowing that they are under study.

Protecting anonymity and confidentiality

Another ethical factor that needs to be taken under consideration while conducting a research is how to protect anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and how to use the information that they are giving to the researcher

(<http://dissertation.laerd.com/>). For this research, there will be no private information collected or published.

4 Findings

4.1 Case

The case that will be under observation for this research is a museum in Finland. The purpose why the particular museum its chosen is that because it is one of the most renown and respected museum in Finland with some valuable exhibitions and a lot of visitors, domestic and international. The museum has been built in 19th century in the very centre of a major city in Finland

Currently employees around 55 people in all levels and have a variety of services such as a shop, cafeteria, guided tours, audio guides and also a workshop with different kind of courses for visitors.

4.2 Results

In this chapter the results of the research will be described in depth according to each of the aspect and factors that are influencing experience quality as it has been identified from this research in all of the three days that the research is conducted. The description is based on the tables that are created which include the rating of each factor for each day. First the aspect and factors of physical facilities and processes will be explained, followed by the behavioural aspect and at the end there will be the explanation of professional judgment.

4.2.1 Physical facilities and processes

The following table describes the finding of the research for the phical facilities and processes for all three days.

Some of the factors here like for example location and size is fixed and they couldn't change during the three day research. Location is divided in two sections were location means where the museum stands and accessibility how easy is to get there. Location is very good since it's located in the very centre the city and it's in walking distance from the central train station. Accessibility it's also good because there are bus and tram stops right outside of the museum. The only reason why accessibility it's not rated as

“very good” is because if someone want to arrive there by car then it is vary difficult to park.

Table 3. Physical facilities and processes results

Physical facilities and processes	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Location			
• Location	Very good	Very good	Very good
• Accessibility	Good	Good	Good
Theme			
• Visibility	Not visible	Not visible	Not visible
• Suitability	Not suitable	Not suitable	Not suitable
Decoration			
• Visibility	Somewhat visible	Somewhat visible	Somewhat visible
• Suitability	Not suitable	Not suitable	Not suitable
Layout	Good	Good	Good
Size	Medium	Medium	Medium
Capacity	Not crowdie	Not crowdie	Satisfactory
Safety	Good	Good	Good
Cues	Bad	Bad	Bad
Flow	Good	Good	Good
Process speed	Fast	Fast	Fast
Multi senses			
• Sight	Good	Good	Good
• Hearing	Bad	Bad	Bad
• Smell	Bad	Bad	Bad
• Touch	Bad	Bad	Bad
• Taste	Bad	Bad	Bad
Communication	Good	Good	Good
Range of services			
• Memorabilia	Good	Good	Good
• Restaurant	Good	Good	Good
• Book store	Good	Good	Good

Theme it also divided into two sections where the visibility of the theme and suitability to exhibition are invisticaded. In the exhibition there was no particular theme in either of the rooms but just paintings and that way the rate for that was not visible. Since the theme was not visible nowhere in the exhibition, the suitability of the theme was “not suitable”.

Decoration was rated as to the visibility of it and the suitability as to the theme. There was some decoration in the museum which it was somewhat visible but the main focus of the museum was the exhibitions and not the decoration. Again due to the lack of theme, there was no suitability identified.

The layout of the museum and exhibition was given a rate of “good” which is in the middle of the scale. There was relatively easy of going around with the only minus was the fact that the only way to change floors from second to third, then had to first go half way down the stairs to find the other staircase that leads on the next floor. Size of the museum was rated as medium.

During the first and second day of the observation, there were not too many visitors, approximately 25-30 persons and in relation to the size of the museum the rate that was given was as not crowdie. The third and last day, most likely as to the fact that it was Saturday, there was quite more persons in relation to the previous days but still not that many to consider to be too crowdie and that the reason why the rate for that day was satisfactory. Safety was unchanged for all three days and was rated as good. The reason why safety did got the highest rate as very good was the fact that in some cases there was some protective wire in front of paintings and due to the low lighting it wasn't very visible and there was the danger that someone might hit that.

Cues were also unchanged and they were considering being bad. Reasons for that were that although signage is very important for safety and most likely some regulations must to be followed, there was no attempt to make them little bit less disturbing since they were drawing some attention. For example in some cases, there was fire post next to the paintings in which the red colour of it had a negative impact when observing the particular painting according to the researcher opinion.

Flow was considered to be good since there were not many disruptions from the entrance to the ticket counter and from there to the exhibition itself. The layout of the museum, since there were many rooms and there were paintings on every wall, that is creating the need that visitors have to pass twice from the same place in order to pro-

ceed to next room. Also in some case there were some “hidden” exhibits behind some columns which they were a bit difficult to spot.

The process speed was fast during all of the days due to the fact that there was a satisfactory amount of visitors at the same time and the staffs were able to manage with those numbers of visitors.

All the five senses were examined and rated as for the multisensory perception of the exhibition. Apparently in the exhibition the most used sense was sight and that was rated as good. One reason was that there was, in some cases, low lighting which made some of the reading of the interpretation panels somewhat difficult. Hearing was rated as bad for the reason that there was no stimulation of that sense. There were no sounds or background music and the fact that there was wooden floor, the sound of people walking and conversations was the only things that were present. Smell and touch was rated as bad as well and there was nowhere present in the museum in any of the three days. The taste sense was presented in the cafeteria of the museum where there was available basically coffee, sweet and salty snacks and refreshments. Taste is very subjective to the researcher preferences and the rate that was given was for the first day good and for the other two the rate was bad.

Communication as to the way that the exhibition is communicating with the visitor was rated as good. There was enough information for each painting which was placed in a relatively convenient place for reading it. Also there was other information in several places inside the museum with other related information e.g. about artists.

The additional services that were identified and examined by the researcher were the memorabilia and book stores and cafeteria as well. All of the above were rated as good. There was enough memorabilia for visitors to take with which were related on the exhibitions and museum as well there were enough books about them. Cafeteria was considered satisfactory with medium range and quality of products.

4.2.2 Behavioural aspects

This table is describing the behavioural aspects from the museum staff as they were experienced from the researcher during the three day visit.

Table 4. Behavioural aspects results

Behavioural aspects	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Friendliness	Bad	Bad	Bad
Attitude	Bad	Bad	Bad
Tone of voice	High	Satisfactory	Low
Dress and neatness	Bad	Bad	Bad
Attentiveness	Bad	Bad	Bad
Problem solving	Bad	Bad	Bad
Timeliness	Bad	Bad	Bad
Verbal non-verbal communication	Bad	Bad	Bad

To start from the friendliness factor, the rate that was given from the researcher was bad for all three days. The reason for that is the fact that museum staff did not show to be any friendly at all, but rather they project the idea that they are serving the visitors only because they have to do that. There was no interest from their side about visitors and they did not approach anyone to offer help at least during the times that the research was conducted.

Attitude of the staff was rated as bad as well for all days for the same reasons as they described above. On top of that some of the staff was looking suspicious about some of the visitors including the researcher and there was the feeling that they were there as authorities that have power over visitors rather than help or serve them.

Tone of voice was rated differently for each day of the research. During the first observation, the researcher was observing the interactions between a large group and the guide. Maybe because the group was rather big, the guide had to speak in a high tone of voice so that everybody in the group was able to listen to her. The high tone of voice though was interfering with the experience that individual visitors had at that

time and there was the tendency for people to move away from that particular group. During the second day of the observation, the researcher follow a smaller group in comparison with the above mentioned group and during that observation, the tone of voice of the guide was rated as satisfactory since the rest of the visitors outside of the group didn't seem to be bothered from the voice level of the guide. For the last day, there was no available guide to observe and due to that the observer was looking for individual interactions between visitors and staff. The tone of voice during those interactions was very low and didn't seem to disturb other close by visitors.

The only staff members that had a museum uniform were the staff in the ticket counter and the persons that were acting as guides for the groups. The rest of the staff, which were the majority of them, had normal everyday clothes and in some cases they weren't looking quite neat. That is the reason why the rate for dress and neatness was bad for all three days.

Attentiveness, problem solving, timeliness and also verbal and non-verbal communication were rated as bad for all of the three days of the observation. As it mentioned above, staff was showing little or no interest at all about visitors. A characteristic example of the bad non-verbal communication was, when the observer was walking in front of one staff member, she was seating on a chair next to the wall and she was almost asleep. One other similar example was again one member of the staff that she was with the back on the wall and she was covering her face and eyes so that it doesn't show how sleepy she was.

4.2.3 Professional judgement

The next table shows the results for professional judgement for all three days of the research.

Table 5. Professional judgement results.

Professional judgement	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Advice	Bad	Good	Bad
Guidance	Bad	Bad	Bad
Flexibility	Bad	Bad	Bad
Competence	Bad	Bad	Bad
Knowledge	Bad	Bad	Bad

During the observation process, the researcher tried to get involved with the staff members as much as it was possible and tried to ask things from them without revealing the purpose of being there. Throughout the whole process, the researcher had only one good encounter with a staff member during the second day. In particular, while entering the museum and going to the ticket counter, after the transaction, the staff there, assuming that the researcher was never visited the museum in the past, was giving advice on how to proceed to the exhibitions, and what is in each floor as well as the closing time. That is the only reason why the advice factor was rated as good during the second day of observation. For the remaining factors (advice, guidance, flexibility, competence, knowledge) and days of visit, the rate that was given was bad due to the fact that the staff member was unwilling, in some cases, to communicate with the researcher by saying that they do not speak English or that they do not know the answer to the questions or they were referring to the interpretation signs next to each painting.

4.3 Summary of results

The results of the three day observation were fairly not nice for the particular museum under study. The lack of theme and other sensory perceptions which were not present, as well as the presence of many negative cues and the behaviour of the staff members led to the conclusion that the museum is not yet providing any experience quality at all or otherwise it is very poor.

Some fixed factors such as location and accessibility were considered to be very good while the size of the museum is rather on the medium scale. The layout, flow and safety were rather good but there is still room for improvement and avoid some minor safety issues and the fact that visitors need to pass through the same places at least twice during their visit there. The process speed was moving in a fast pace due to the fact that during the times of the observations were not too many visitors at the place.

Behaviour and professionalism of the staff was very disappointing in the biggest part of the research since they didn't show almost no interest at all on attending and helping the visitors while the behaviour of some staff was not friendly and the non-verbal communication of them was not inviting for going to them and start any form of interaction.

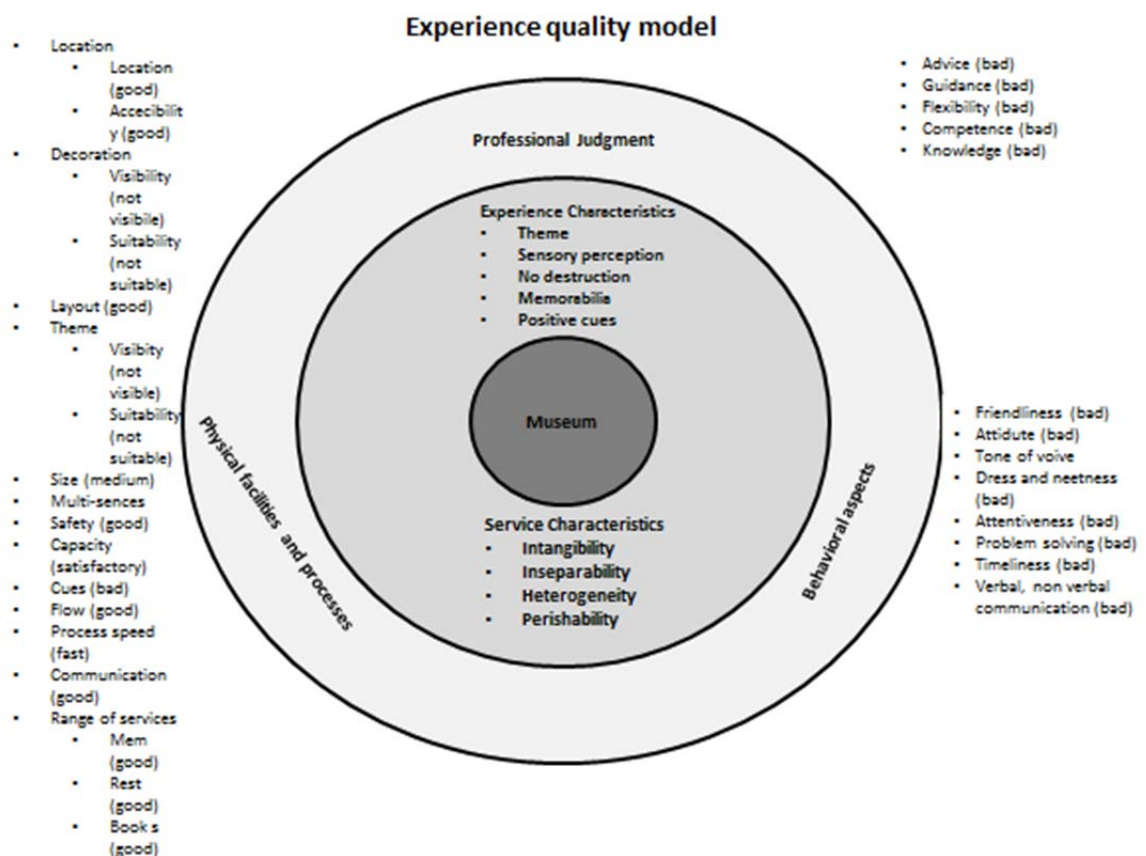


Figure 7. Experience quality model with results (Developed by the author from Chapter 4)

5 Conclusions

5.1 The museum in relation to theory

As it has been discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, museums of the 21st century should start moving from the traditional background that they have from places that just preserve and exhibit objects of art and become more open to the public, more interactive and more welcoming. Management of museums should try to move away from that image of the museum as a holy place that people should fear once they enter to a friendlier and service/experience oriented places that people immerse themselves in the experiences that the museums have to offer.

For doing that, they should take into consideration the service characteristics which are intangibility, insereperability, heterogeneity and perishability. As with any other service provider, museums should be focusing on the factors that are making that service possible, the people that are an inseparable part of services, the procedures that the service its delivered and the physical evidence in other words the environment where the service is taking place.

Moving beyond services, museums have the possibilities and all the capacity to become experience stagers and make a simple visit to a museum into a meaningful and memorable experience were guest will talk about it for the years to come. The characteristics of the experience economy though vary from those of services and that is something that needs to be taken into account from the management of museums. What characterize an experience is the presence of a coherent theme on which the whole stage it's based on. On top of that, experiences need to engage all the senses in such a way that complement and enhance the whole theme. In experiences should have any negative cues that are interfering with the attention of the guest because that will have an effect on the level of immersion of the guest. After guest finish with the experience, they need something to take with and remember what has actually happen there. That's why the mix of memorabilia is important for the experience stager to have, not only for making extra profit from it, but also use it's a marketing tool. Guest will take some-

thing with them and then start talking about to maybe friends and family and that can create positive word of mouth and more customers. The creation of positive cues is the last characteristic of an experience. Everything, even the signage should be according to the theme and guest should feel that they enter a completely different world once they enter a museum experience. Experiences are based on a two dimensional axis and they can be characterize on the level of participation of the guest, that is how actively or passively influence an experience and on the level of connection of the experience and guest. Museums have the possibility to immerse their guests and make them be part of the experience. According to this, museums have the possibility to create multi-level experiences where guest can have different level and connection with it. But as a start, maybe it would be better to make small steps and focus on one thing at each time. That is the reason why this thesis is suggesting the model based on an esthetic experience.

In service contend there are plenty of models for measuring quality and the factors of influencing that but that are not the case for the experience economy. Since museums are consider being a mix of service providers and experience stagers from this thesis, the model that has been created for measuring the experience in a museum have characteristics from both concepts. Also the protocol that has been developed for measuring quality examine the factors that are influencing the two and it has been tested for the particular museum which was under investigation. Unfortunately what this research discovers was not what was expected and the museum was far from being a good service provider yet an experience stager. Figure 7 will display the results of this research and how each factor that has been examined was rated by the researcher.

5.1.1 Conclusion- Physical facilities and processes

According to these factors, the facilities and environment of the museum as well as the how the experience it's staged, play an important role on the quality of the museum experience. Location and accessibility of the museum was amongst the best results and the museum could be located in a better place than where it is now. But that it not enough for the experience economy and the lack of theme, decoration and multisensory perception made the whole experience to feel dull and didn't have any good feeling

while being there. Even though the layout of the museum was good there is still room for improvement but that didn't play a big role when it comes to the experience part especially in a medium size museum as the particular one. Safety was good and like in every other place that have any kind of customers its essential component. Capacity was satisfactory with not too many persons at the same and not too less and that was important for creating flow and the process speed was moving on a fast speed which doesn't create frustration amongst guest. Also the communication which is the way of how the museum and exhibition talk to the guest and can help understand better the experience was good with still possibilities for improvement. The museum had a range of services that could help enhance the whole experience like restaurant, memorabilia shop and a bookstore which was rather good but on the other hand had nothing to do with the theme.

5.1.2 Conclusion- Behavioural aspects

Behavioral aspects measure the behavior and appearance of the museum staff. Namely the factors that were investigated from this research were friendliness, attitude, and tone of voice, dress and neatness, attentiveness, problem solving, timeliness and verbal/nonverbal communication of the employees. As it came to conclusion, the behavioral factors were very important for the whole experience but as well as the service delivery of the museum. Unfortunately during this research the findings were not very good and the impact that the staff members had on the experience was very bad. Not friendly employees, dressed with every day clothes, with bad attitude and no interest of attending the guest that were there somehow made the atmosphere very unwelcoming. Also the fact that the non-verbal communication of the staff which was showing that they are there only because they have to be until they time they will finish, create a feeling that they shouldn't be disturbed. The only good part for this aspect was the tone of voice of the guide during one day was in good level and did not disturb the rest of the guests.

5.1.3 Conclusion- Professional judgment

Professional judgment was measuring the competences and knowledge of the staff members. How well the persons that are working in a museum know their subject and information of the exhibition is very important especially in a learning experience where the guest would like to learn about things and information for e.g. a particular artist or a particular piece of art.

Unfortunately the behavioral aspects of the employees did not make the examination of these factors very easy to identify and they all consider being bad during the research days.

To conclude, all the three aspects and the 26 identified factors that were deliberated above had an impact on the experience quality, some in bigger degree than others. As for the museum it would not be considered as a place that provides a high experience quality according to the findings of this research.

5.2 Implications for managers of museum

According to this research the management of the museum should start taking actions on becoming an experience stager that provides memorable experience to the guest rather than just a place of visual presentation of pieces of art. To do that, the management has to take action on firstly improving the service processes and the things that are surrounding them. For example firstly they should consider taking advantage of the human resources that they have since people are from the most important elements of service. There should find ways to make the employees more motivated and more service oriented towards visitors. The museum has the infrastructure to create a good service/experience environment but according to the findings of this research there is a lack of service oriented attitude from the employee side.

After improving the service aspect of the museum, management could focus on creating a coherent theme as a first step towards being an experience stager and then introduce the sensory element of the experience. Even some background music could make the whole atmosphere change inside the museum.

5.3 Limitations and future research

It is necessary to mention the research limitations that rising from the research methodology used in order to avoid any generalization on the findings.

Initially, it should be stressed that the investigation was conducted in a museum, the name which will not mentioned due to ethical constrains, during an exhibition of art. The research question raised in the study, the process of measuring the experience quality in a museum natural environment may vary in other types of museums, depending on the type of experience that is offered there based on the experience realms.

The nature of the research as qualitative and observational might raise validity issues since it's based on the subjective experience and opinion of the researcher on a series of events as they occurred during the days of observation.

The lack of literature based on the experience economy and how to measure the quality of it made this thesis somewhat difficult because it has to be based on literature and researches that are made for a completely different concept, that of services and service quality which are the closed to the experience economy. For the future there should be created models that are completely dedicated to the experience economy and the characteristics that are creating an experience.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Observation protocol, Day 1 results

Physical facilities and processes	Observation Protocol Day 1			
		Bad	Good	Very good
Location	Location			X
	Accessibility		X	
Theme		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility	X		
	Suitability	X		
Decoration		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility		X	
	Suitability	X		
Layout		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Size		Small	Medium	Big
			X	
Capacity		Not crowdie	Satisfactory	Too crowdie
		X		
Safety		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Cues		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Flow		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Process speed		Slow	Satisfactory	Fast
				X
Multi senses		Bad	Good	Very good
	Sight		X	
	Hearing	X		
	Smell	X		
	Touch	X		

	Taste		X	
Communication		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Range of services		Bad	Good	Very good
	S1Memmor		X	
	S2 Rest		X	
	S3 Book		X	
	S4			
Behavioural aspects				
Friendliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attitude		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Tone of voice		Low	Satisfactory	High
				X
Dress and neatness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attentiveness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Problem solving		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Timeliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Verbal non-verbal communication		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Professional judgement				
Advice		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Guidance		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Flexibility		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Competence		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Knowledge		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		

Appendix 2. Observation protocol, Day 2 results

Physical facilities and processes	Observation Protocol Day 2			
		Bad	Good	Very good
Location	Location			X
		Bad	Good	Very good
Theme	Accessibility		X	
		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility	X		
Decoration		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
	Suitability	X		
		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
Layout	Visibility		X	
		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
	Suitability	X		
Size		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Capacity		Small	Medium	Big
			X	
Safety		Not crowded	Satisfactory	Too crowded
		X		
Cues		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Flow		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Process speed		Slow	Satisfactory	Fast
				X
Multi senses		Bad	Good	Very good
	Sight		X	
	Hearing	X		
	Smell	X		
	Touch	X		
Communication		Taste		
		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		

Range of services		Bad	Good	Very good
	S1Memmor		X	
	S2 Rest		X	
	S3 Book		X	
	S4			
Behavioural aspects				
Friendliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attitude		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Tone of voice		Low	Satisfactory	High
			X	
Dress and neatness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attentiveness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Problem solving		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Timeliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Verbal non-verbal communication		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Professional judgement				
Advice		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Guidance		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Flexibility		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Competence		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Knowledge		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		

Appendix 3. Observation protocol, Day 3 results

Physical facilities and processes	Observation Protocol Day 3			
		Bad	Good	Very good
Location	Location			X
		Bad	Good	Very good
Theme	Accessibility		X	
		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
	Visibility	X		
Decoration		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
	Suitability	X		
		Not visible	Somewhat visible	Visible
Layout	Visibility		X	
		Not suitable	Somewhat suitable	Suitable
	Suitability	X		
Size		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Capacity		Small	Medium	Big
			X	
Safety		Not crowded	Satisfactory	Too crowded
			X	
Cues		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Flow		Bad	Good	Very good
			X	
Process speed		Slow	Satisfactory	Fast
				X
Multi senses		Bad	Good	Very good
	Sight		X	
	Hearing	X		
	Smell	X		
	Touch	X		
Communication		Taste		
		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		

Range of services		Bad	Good	Very good
	S1Memmor		X	
	S2 Rest		X	
	S3 Book		X	
	S4			
Behavioural aspects				
Friendliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attitude		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Tone of voice		Low	Satisfactory	High
		X		
Dress and neatness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Attentiveness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Problem solving		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Timeliness		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Verbal non-verbal communication		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Professional judgement				
Advice		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Guidance		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Flexibility		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Competence		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		
Knowledge		Bad	Good	Very good
		X		