

VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN MUSEUMS

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	7
MUSEOLOGY	9
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MUSEOLOGY IN THE WORLD	13
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF	21
MUSEOLOGY IN TÜRKİYE	21
EXPERIENCE.....	27
TOURISM EXPERIENCE.....	55
MUSEUM EXPERIENCE	61
VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN MUSEUMS.....	73
CONCLUSION	79
REFERENCES	81

INTRODUCTION¹

Throughout history, humans have exhibited a profound fascination with the collection and display of objects they find intriguing and valuable. The acts of gathering and accumulating artifacts are not merely individual pursuits; they are also undertaken by states that represent various communities and societies. The evolution of modern museology can be traced back to ancient times, beginning with the Mouseion of Alexandria, and extending through the emergence of private collections and cabinets of curiosities in later eras. This trajectory ultimately led to the establishment of public museums following the Renaissance. What were once exclusive collections accessible to only a few in ancient times are now open to the entire public, including tourists, under the auspices of museums.

Museums are broadly recognized as non-profit entities that contribute to society through their socio-cultural roles. Today, visiting museums ranks among the most popular activities for tourists (Forgas-Coll et al., 2017: 246). By attracting visitors, museums enhance the image of their respective destinations and indirectly stimulate economic growth through increased overnight stays and tourist expenditures (Carey, Davidson, and Sahli, 2013: 554-556; Gustafsson and Ijla, 2017: 447). Additionally, museums bear socio-cultural responsibilities towards both society and their visitors. They serve as vital institutions that address the learning and educational needs of the community, particularly through their capacity to connect the past with the present (Trofanenko, 2010: 275-276).

Traditionally, while museums have sought to encourage public visits, they have often favored an object-centric presentation style that prioritizes artifacts over adequately addressing visitor desires and needs. However, contemporary museology has shifted towards visitor-centered approaches. Nowadays, museums are evaluated not solely based on the size of their collections, but rather on the richness and quality of the experiences they provide to their visitors (Samis, 2008: 4).

The experiences available to visitors within museums encompass personal, socio-cultural, and physical dimensions (Dierking and Falk, 1992: 173-174).

¹ This book is based on the literature review section of the author's doctoral dissertation titled "*Using Edutainment to Enrich Visitor Experience in Museums*" submitted to "*Dokuz Eylül University*" in 2022. The methodology and application sections of the dissertation are not included in this work.

Furthermore, experiences possess multiple dimensions. Notably, Pine and Gilmore's (1998) framework categorizes experience into entertainment, education, esthetics and escapism; which has gained considerable attention in the literature. Museums offer opportunities for visitors to engage with these dimensions in varying degrees and intensities, tailored to individual preferences and contextual factors.

Today, it is generally accepted that museums' primary socio-cultural mission is their educational role. Additionally, as tourist attractions, museums strive to fulfill visitors' desires for enjoyment, relaxation, and entertainment. From various perspectives, it is evident that museums sometimes regard their visitors as guests and at other times as customers. Current museological practices are increasingly abandoning the traditional object-focused presentation approach, transitioning instead towards a visitor-oriented model that emphasizes community engagement. From the visitors' viewpoint, their expectations from museums prominently include both learning opportunities and enjoyable experiences.

The content of this book is primarily derived from the literature review chapters of author's doctoral dissertation. This book will explore the concept of museology and its historical development, focusing separately on its evolution in both a global context and within Türkiye. Additionally, it will delve into the concept of experience and its various dimensions. Finally, the literature surrounding museum experiences and visitor experiences in museums will be critically examined.

MUSEOLOGY

The Concept of Museology and Its Historical Development

Throughout history, people have exhibited the behavior of collecting and accumulating objects for various purposes. In ancient civilizations, individuals created collections of items driven by beliefs (such as religion), curiosity, and other motivations. Over time, more conscious and systematic collections, gathered and displayed for specific purposes, laid the foundation for modern museums and museology (Pearce, 2003: 3; Özkasım, 2015: 3; Lewis, 2021).

The term "museum" etymologically originates from the *Mouseion* (*Museum* in Latin), structures dedicated to the Muses (*Mousai*), the mythological figures of inspiration, found in various cities across Mediterranean civilizations during ancient times (Theoi, 2021). In Greek mythology, the Muses are nine sister goddesses, the offspring of *Zeus*, the chief god, and *Mnemosyne*, the goddess of memory, responsible for creativity and inspiration in fields such as epic poetry, music, theater (including pantomime, comedy, and tragedy), dance, and astronomy (Grimal, 1997: 519). Originally, Mouseions were places where arts like music and poetry were performed, philosophical discussions were held, and education and research in various sciences such as astronomy, mathematics, botany, and zoology took place. Over time, they evolved into locations resembling schools, where scholars and educators gathered, often housing libraries as well (Lee, 1997: 385; von Naredi-Rainer and Hilger, 2004: 13).

One of the most famous and significant Mouseions of its time was the one located in present-day Alexandria (*Mouseion tis Alexandriás*) (El-Abbadi, 1990: 84). Here, philosophers and other scholars began to collect and display various works related to art and science. Viewed through the lens of contemporary museology, the collections gathered at the Alexandria Mouseion, particularly their public exhibitions, are considered the earliest examples of museums where collecting and exhibiting practices were implemented (Erskine, 1995: 38-39; Karadeniz, 2009: 24). Çalikoğlu (2012: 120) describes the Alexandria Mouseion, which included the renowned Library of Alexandria, as “*a structure that forms the core of today’s museum concept, embodying the characteristics of a museum, school, and research institution.*”

By the 16th century, Paolo Giovio, who built a structure in 1537 to showcase his extensive collection of paintings, derived the term "*museum*" from the Mouseion (Musaeum) (Zimmermann, 1995: 159-160; Madran, 1999: 4). The name he gave to his building was “*Il Museo di Giovio a Borgovico*”,

which means “Giovio Museum at Borgovico”. Furthermore, following the French Revolution in the late 18th century, the former king's art collection (*Cabinet de roi*), now deemed public, was housed in the Louvre Palace, which was initially referred to as the “French Museum” (*Muséum Français*) and later became known as the “Louvre Museum” (*Musée du Louvre*) after several name changes. This transition marked a significant step in modern museology as the collection was opened to public access. After the Louvre Palace was renamed the Louvre Museum, the term “*museum*” firmly established itself in Western culture and languages (Lee, 1997: 386-387, 410; Shaw, 2004: 13).

A review of definitions related to museums in the literature reveals a consistent emphasis on the functions of museums and museology, such as collecting, preserving, exhibiting, and educating. Traditional definitions often highlight the classical functions and physical characteristics of museums, while evolving definitions increasingly recognize museums as organizations (institutions) with significant contributions to society and communication objectives.

In foundational definitions found in the literature, Allan (1960: 13) defines a museum as “*a building that brings together scattered artifacts in time and space, where these items are arranged for purposes of study, research, and enjoyment.*” Meanwhile, Başaran (1995: 48) describes museums as “*institutions managed in the public interest to protect, study, evaluate, and especially exhibit a collection of culturally valuable artifacts through various means, thereby enhancing public esthetic appreciation and education.*” The Turkish Language Association defines a museum as “*places or structures where works of art and scientific artifacts are kept and exhibited for public viewing*” (TDK, 2019).

It is evident that definitions of museums from various national and international organizations have evolved over time, reflecting contemporary understanding. Recently updated definitions include the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's characterization of a museum as “*an educational, scientific, and artistic institution that identifies, uncovers through scientific methods, studies, evaluates, protects, promotes, and exhibits historical artifacts, aiming to raise the cultural level of society by educating the public about these artifacts*” (KTB, 2019). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2021) defines a museum as “*a permanent, non-profit institution that acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for education, study, and enjoyment, serving society and its improvement*”.

When the various definitions of museums are examined, it is seen that museums are primarily emphasized as institutions that contain important and valuable artifacts (collections). While defining the concept of museum, the purposes and functions of museums are also mentioned. However, in changing definitions, it is seen that the purposes of museums initially consisted of physical elements and activities such as examining, preserving and exhibiting artifacts, but over time, the contribution of museums to society, the educational task and communication with people / society are mentioned. While in the past museums were seen as buildings containing artifacts, today they are described as institutions with much more inclusive purposes. When considered as a whole, it can be said that museum definitions have been renewed and developed in parallel with the changing understanding of museology over time.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MUSEOLOGY IN THE WORLD

The historical development and evolution of museology can be approached from two distinct perspectives: chronological progression and content-related aspects (form and spatial changes). The chronological development can be viewed as a continuum beginning with Ancient Greece and extending into the 21st century with modern museology. This linear narrative reflects the gradual institutionalization and professionalization of museums, culminating in modern museology as we know it today.

On the other hand, the exploration of form and spatial change delves into the evolving nature of museum collections and the spaces that house them. This perspective encompasses both physical and digital dimensions, highlighting how museums have adapted their environments to reflect advancements in technology, societal values, and cultural diversity. From early cabinets of curiosities to today's immersive digital exhibitions, the evolution of museology demonstrates a dynamic interplay between the act of collecting and the spaces designed to present those collections. This dual approach offers a holistic view of museology's development, capturing both its temporal journey and its ever-changing relationship with space and form.

Collecting and Museology in the Ancient and Medieval Periods

From ancient times, people have collected objects they found beautiful or sacred, driven by both instinctual and cultural needs (Özkasım, 2015: 3; Wingfield, 2017: 599). In ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Anatolia, treasures, sacred items, war spoils, jewelry, tools, weapons, and other valuables were appropriated by state authorities and nobility, often displayed to guests (Yücel, 1999: 19; Lewis, 2011: 3; Küçükhasköylü, 2015a: 24). The Alexandria Mouseion, which etymologically lends its name to the modern concept of a museum, is considered the earliest known example of a museum in history (Erskine, 1995: 38; Lee, 1997: 386).

During the Middle Ages, it is possible to speak of collections held by rulers (kings, princes, etc.) that resembled those of antiquity. Additionally, religious institutions during this period also established rich collections aligned with their purposes (Yücel, 1999: 20). In the Islamic civilizations, valuable artifacts, manuscripts, and various scientific instruments were displayed in libraries and other areas within complexes (*külliyeye*), made accessible to the public. In Christian countries, various artworks featuring stories from the Bible or

important religious figures were gathered and exhibited, aiming to capture the attention of the largely illiterate populace. Some nobles also collected various artworks, maintaining them as part of a collection, though these royal or noble collections were not open to the public, allowing only select individuals to visit (Madran, 2009: 66; Alexander, Alexander, and Decker, 2017: 35).

Museology During the Renaissance

The Renaissance period saw an increase in scientific research, the discovery or learning of new countries and cultures, and a growing interest in knowledge and history, which strengthened and diversified the understanding of collecting (Altunbaş and Özdemir, 2012: 4). While the emergence and examples of collecting can be historically traced back to Ancient Greece and Rome, developments during the Renaissance marked a significant turning point for the evolution and spread of the concept of collecting in Europe, laying the groundwork for future museology. During this time, various collections were formed by researchers, artists, and wealthy individuals, leading to a heightened appreciation for historical artifacts, which began to be systematically collected (Cannon-Brookes, 1984: 115; Sezgin and Karaman, 2009: 5; Erbay, 2011: 17). One of the key developments in the context of museology during the Renaissance was the shift from displaying collections in designated rooms or cabinets to the creation of specialized spaces for their exhibition. For the first time, spaces specifically built for the purpose of exhibiting items in an organized manner emerged (Özkasım, 2015: 5).

The collection and exhibition of artifacts during the Renaissance typically took place in spaces known as cabinets of curiosities (*Cabinet de Curiosité*), studios (*studiolos*), or galleries (*gallerias*) (Hein, 1998: 186; Swain, 2007: 24). These cabinets were arranged according to the owner's preferences, resources, and the nature and size of the collection, sometimes taking the form of a shelving unit or drawer cabinet, and other times being designated as a room or hall (Swain, 2007: 24; Özkasım, 2015: 7). Initially, cabinets of curiosities housed a mix of different types of content without a specific focus. However, over time, these cabinets evolved into categories based on the nature of the collections (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999: 28). The categories included *naturalia* (botanical and zoological specimens), *artificialia* (artworks such as paintings and sculptures), *scientifica* (scientific instruments, inventions, and crafts), *exotica* (objects from distant lands and different cultures), *mirabilia* (extraordinary and supernatural entities), and *bibliotheca* (written or printed works such as books, catalogs, maps, drawings, and manuscripts) (Artun, 2017: 16-20). The

division of cabinets into different categories can be seen as a significant step toward modern museums, fostering ideas of classification, organization, and specialization across various fields.

“Palazzo Medici” (*The Medici Palace*) founded by the Medici family in Florence in the 1440s during the Renaissance, “Il Museo di Giovio a Borgovico” (*Giovio Museum in Borgovico*) where the term 'museum' was first used in 1537, and the “Galleria degli Uffizi” (*Uffizi Gallery*) opened in 1581 are among the buildings that contributed to the creation and institutionalization of the museum environment in terms of their collection content and physical characteristics, and are considered to be the pioneers of modern museums (Zimmermann, 1995: 159-160; Madran, 1999: 4; Rivera-Orraca, 2009: 32). During this period, collections were also started to be collected in various universities, especially in anatomy, botany and zoology. The fact that some nobles donated or inherited their own collections to universities also had an impact on the enrichment of university collections (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999: 45). In this context, especially the collection donated to Oxford University by a collector named Elias Ashmole and started to be exhibited in a specially built building in 1683 under the name *Ashmolean Museum* is considered by some historians as the first modern museum due to its structure and functioning (MacGregor, 2001: 125-127; Abt, 2006: 124-125).

The Modern Era and National Museums

Although there were numerous examples of collections and museum-like structures throughout history, starting from Ancient Greece and continuing through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Modern Era, these spaces were never open to the general public (Alexander et al., 2017: 38). However, beginning in the 18th century, the establishment of museums supported by regional and national authorities worldwide marked a shift. Museums transitioned from being private properties to becoming public institutions dedicated to societal benefit, opening their doors to all members of the community (Lewis, 2021).

The British Museum, established in London in 1753, is regarded as the first national museum. It opened its doors to the public in 1759 (British Museum, 2022). Similarly, following the French Revolution at the end of the same century, royal collections previously reserved for the monarchy (*cabinet de roi*) were made accessible to the public at the Louvre Museum in Paris, which opened in 1793 (McLean, 1995: 602; Lee, 1997: 385). The 19th century wit-

nessed a rapid increase in the establishment of national museums across different countries, with these institutions adopting more formalized structures (Erbay, 2011: 27). Concurrently, factors such as scientific advancements, growing knowledge and awareness, the Industrial Revolution, and evolving technologies contributed to the emergence of specialized museums dedicated to specific fields, such as history, antiquities (ethnography), science, and technology (Altunbaş and Özdemir, 2012: 3).

During the 18th century, when private collections and cabinets of curiosities were being transformed into museums, significant developments beyond the political dynamics that led to the creation of national museums also influenced museology. The expansion of colonialism in European countries not only sparked curiosity about foreign lands and cultures but also facilitated the display of artifacts brought from colonized regions in museums. Additionally, archaeological and historical research, scientific studies, and excavations conducted during this period played a crucial role in popularizing antiquarianism, collecting, and ultimately museology (McLean, 1995: 602-603; Pomian, 2000: 18).

Museology in the 19th Century

By the 19th century, the number and diversity of museums worldwide continued to grow rapidly. The nationalist ideologies that emerged following the French Revolution influenced governments to research their nations' histories and showcase their cultural wealth in museums (McLean, 1995: 603; Erbay, 2011: 27). During this period, efforts to nationalize and institutionalize private collections increased significantly. Additionally, some countries viewed museums as symbols of prestige and sought to enhance their collections as a demonstration of political power (Owen, 2006: 146-147; Küçükhasköylü, 2015a: 34-35). One of the most significant developments in 19th-century museology was the categorization of museum collections, leading to the rise of specialized museums focused on specific fields (Madran, 1999: 6; Küçükhasköylü, 2015a: 35-37).

An essential advancement toward modern museology during this era was the increasing recognition of the importance of visitors. Although some museums had been partially or fully open to the public in previous centuries, their interaction with visitors was often minimal (Kızılyaprak, 2000: 18). However, the growing number of educated and cultured individuals visiting museums in the 19th century spurred the institutionalization of museums, with manage-

ment beginning to recognize the significance of catering to visitors. Consequently, museums started paying special attention to the public and actively encouraged museum visits (Kotler, Kotler, and Kotler, 2008: 10-11; Küçükhasköylü, 2015a: 35). Despite these developments, museums remained focused on object-centered presentations and management for an extended period.

Another critical development in the 19th century was the establishment of strong connections between museology and education. Some universities began founding and expanding museums tailored to their educational needs, creating specialized institutions. This trend was particularly prominent in countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia, and Italy. These university-affiliated museums often collaborated with disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, zoology, botany, geology, ethnology, medicine, anatomy, and history, supporting education and research activities (Küçükhasköylü, 2015a: 35-37).

Overall, 19th century museology was primarily collection-focused. During this time, numerous museums were founded in various countries and cities, and significant strides were made toward institutionalizing museums. This period is considered part of the traditional era of museology, characterized by a focus on collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts while viewing visitors as secondary. The traditional management approach in museums persisted until the second half of the 20th century.

Museology in the 20th Century

In the first half of the 20th century, rapid changes in social, economic, and political factors, coupled with scientific and technological advancements, began to transform how people thought and lived. The shift from an "industrial society" to an "information society," along with the rise of information technologies and mass communication, significantly impacted museums as well (Walsh, 1992: 50; McLean, 1997: 9). During this era, museums came to be seen as enjoyable spaces for leisure activities, where visitors could spend quality time (Atagök, 2003: 72). To enhance the visitor experience, new approaches and methods in exhibition design were introduced. Museums, traditionally tasked with collecting, preserving, and displaying artifacts, began transitioning to a more modern, visitor-centered management approach (Kandemir and Uçar, 2015: 23; Vermeeren et al., 2018: 2). This modern perspective emphasized active visitor engagement rather than passive, object-focused experiences (Weil, 1999: 229-231).

Heijnen (2010: 14-15) identifies three revolutions in museum practices during the 20th century. The first revolution, occurring in the early 1900s, marked the institutionalization and professional management of museums. The second revolution, emerging in the 1970s, saw a shift from collection-focused to function-focused museums. During this period, museums developed closer ties with society, emphasizing educational and public roles (Ross, 2004: 84; Heijnen, 2010: 15). Ambrose and Paine (2012: 19) also note this transition, describing how museums moved away from object-focused functions such as collection, documentation, preservation, and research toward visitor-, service-, and marketing-focused approaches. Heijnen's third revolution highlights the transformations in museology from the 1990s onward, where museums evolved into human-centered spaces prioritizing visitor engagement and societal benefit (Heijnen, 2010: 15). Similarly, Demir (2013: 1117) observes a growing emphasis on museums as institutions working for the public good, fostering societal development, and promoting mutual communication with visitors.

By the late 20th century, museums had shifted from being spaces primarily visited for leisure or learning about artifacts to places where visitors actively participated, interpreted exhibits, and accessed services (McPherson, 2006: 45). This transition from an object-centered to a visitor-centered approach is considered a hallmark of the shift from traditional to modern museology. Under modern museology, museum functions are categorized into preservation, research, and communication. Visitors increasingly expect museums to provide enjoyable and educational experiences, meet their service needs, and engage with them through marketing and public relations (Hein, 1998: 15; Atagök, 2003: 25; Kervankıran, 2014: 349).

In the later decades of the 20th century, museums began reassessing and redefining their rapidly changing roles in society. Consequently, they transformed their institutional priorities, management strategies, and communication methods. Museums evolved into spaces for interaction, ideal venues for leisure activities, and educational institutions operating with a lifelong learning philosophy (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999: 68; Anderson, 2004: 2). Kenee (2006: 185-186) describes this visitor- and society-focused approach, which actively studies visitors and seeks ways to attract them, as postmodern museology.

Postmodern Museology and Digital Museums

In postmodern museology, the key difference lies in the relationship and interaction between the museum and its visitors (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999: 68; Onur, 2003: 7). Postmodern museology emphasizes two-way communication, fostering collaboration and exchange. Visitors are no longer distant spectators but active participants (Onur, 2003: 7; Schubert, 2004: 132). Additionally, human-centered education and entertainment activities take precedence. This approach encourages visitors to perceive exhibits through multiple senses, helping them feel integrated into the museum experience (Rentschler, 2007: 347-348).

One of the most distinguishing factors of postmodern museology is the integration of technology (Bozkuş, 2014: 334). While terms like "virtual museum" or "digital museum" are often associated with postmodern museology, they represent practices that gained prominence in this era rather than encapsulating its full essence. Nonetheless, digital technologies have become inseparable from the postmodern museology approach.

Simone, Cerquetti, and Sala (2021: 325-327) outline how museums have undergone several stages of digital transformation. *Early Museums*, originating from cabinets of curiosities, represent the traditional museology phase that persisted until recent times (Lewis, 2015: 28-29). In this stage, technology use in museums was minimal, and digital content was absent. More recently, the *Social-Sleeper Museum* emerged, where museums maintained traditional communication channels while exploring online interaction as an alternative (Simone et al., 2021: 326). This phase quickly evolved into the *Social-Focused Museum*, where social media and websites became critical tools. Museums began prioritizing digital communication with visitors, extending engagement beyond physical visits to include pre- and post-visit interactions (Marty, 2007: 356). The next stage, *Digital Museums*, incorporates interactive technologies and digital tools to provide enriched visitor experiences. These museums leverage social media and the internet to engage visitors while offering advanced digital experiences, such as augmented reality or virtual tours (Pallud, 2017: 474-475; De Bernardi, Gilli, and Colomba, 2018: 456). Simone et al. (2021: 326-327) predict that the future of museology will be characterized by the *Augmented Museum*. This concept envisions museums as boundless spaces, free from physical and geographical constraints. Advanced technologies like 3D printing and artificial intelligence will enable virtual reconstructions and immersive storytelling environments, enhancing the historical and artistic value of collections for all visitors, including digital audiences (Duncan et al., 2012: 294-296; Mencarelli and Pulh, 2012: 160).

From the earliest museums to the era of digital transformation, the spatial concept of museums has evolved from physical spaces housing collections to encompassing online platforms. Simultaneously, visitor engagement has shifted from a low-context interaction, where artifacts were prioritized, to a high-context interaction that places visitors at the forefront.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MUSEOLOGY IN TÜRKİYE

The emergence and evolution of museology in Türkiye have deep roots, often traced back to the Ottoman Empire, with significant advancements occurring during the Republic. In the Ottoman era, the foundations of modern museology were laid in the mid-19th century, a time when the empire sought to modernize its institutions and align with global practices. This period saw the establishment of systematic efforts to preserve and showcase cultural heritage, reflecting the Ottoman elite's growing awareness of the importance of historical and artistic preservation.

A pivotal figure in the history of Turkish museology is Osman Hamdi Bey, whose leadership as the director of the Imperial Museum (*Müze-i Hümayun*) had a transformative impact. Beyond merely overseeing the museum, he initiated substantial reforms, such as the enactment of laws to protect antiquities and prevent their export. These efforts positioned the Imperial Museum as one of the most prominent cultural institutions of its time and laid the groundwork for a national museological identity.

With the foundation of the Republic in 1923, museology in Türkiye entered a dynamic new phase. The establishment of the Republic emphasized nation-building, cultural preservation, and the promotion of a shared national identity, which were all reflected in the rapid expansion of museums and their collections. Museums were no longer limited to being repositories of artifacts; they became educational and cultural hubs aimed at fostering public engagement with history, art, and science. During this period, significant legislative and administrative reforms were undertaken to modernize museum management in line with international standards, signaling Türkiye's commitment to cultural and intellectual progress.

Museums in the Republican era also played a critical role in bridging the past and the future, showcasing Türkiye's rich cultural heritage while aligning with contemporary global museological practices. This dual focus has continued to define and enrich the museological landscape in Türkiye, making it a vibrant part of the country's cultural fabric.

Museology in the Pre-Republic Era

The first examples of museums in Türkiye (then the Ottoman Empire) emerged approximately two centuries after their pioneering counterparts in Europe. During the 19th century, the growing influence of nationalism (or

patriotism) on state governance shaped the cultural policies of the Ottoman Empire. In this context, efforts were made to showcase the country's wealth and heritage within museums and to prevent the export of valuable artifacts abroad (McLean, 1995: 603; Erbay, 2011: 31). These initiatives marked the beginnings of modern museology in the Ottoman Empire. They reflected not only a desire to align with global trends but also a growing awareness of the importance of cultural preservation as a symbol of national identity and pride. The development of museums in this period was part of a broader effort to protect and celebrate the empire's rich historical and artistic legacy, laying the groundwork for the more systematic and institutionalized museology that would follow in the Republican Era.

Since the 15th century, sacred objects, manuscripts, various weapons, gifts from foreign states, and war trophies had accumulated over time in the Topkapı Palace (Shaw, 2004: 18-19). In 1730, following renovations to the Hagia Irene Church (*Aya İrini Kilisesi*), some items from this collection -particularly ancient weapons- began to be displayed there under the name "*Dârü'l Eslihâ*" (House of Weapons) (Yücel, 1999: 30-31). Although not open to the public, this initiative is considered one of the earliest examples of Turkish museology (Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 49).

In 1846, Ahmed Fethi Paşa made significant arrangements to the Dârü'l Eslihâ collection housed in the Hagia Irene Church, marking an important step toward the institutionalization of museums (Keleş, 2003: 4). The collection was divided into two sections: *Mecmua-i Âsâr-ı Âtika* (Antique Artifacts, such as sculptures and sarcophagi) and *Mecmua-i Eslihâ-ı Âtika* (Ancient Weapons, including cannons, rifles, swords, and armor) (Erbay, 2011: 33-34). In 1869, Grand Vizier Ali Paşa enriched the collections at Hagia Irene with artifacts from different regions of the empire, formally naming the institution "*Müze-i Hûmayun*" (Imperial Museum) (Cezar, 1995: 231; Shaw, 2004: 50; Yıldıztu-ran, 2007: 29). This marked the first official use of the term "museum" in the Ottoman Empire (Özkasım and Ögel, 2005: 98).

A major step toward national museology came in 1874 with the introduction of the *Âsâr-ı Âtika Nizamnâmesi* (Antiquities Law), which restricted the export of archaeological finds and historical artifacts (Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 50). By the 1870s, numerous artifacts from across the empire were brought to Müze-i Hûmayun. However, as Hagia Irene Church reached its capacity, the *Mecmua-i Âsâr-ı Âtika* collection was moved to the restored Tiled Pavilion (*Çinili Köşk*) in 1880, and the *Mecmua-i Eslihâ-ı Âtika* collection at Hagia Irene was temporarily closed. For the first time, the collection displayed in the

Tiled Pavilion was opened to the general public (Özkasım and Ögel, 2005: 99).

In 1881, a turning point in Turkish museology occurred with the appointment of Osman Hamdi Bey as the director of the museum relocated to the Tiled Pavilion (Keleş, 2003: 4; Buyurgan and Mercin, 2005: 69). Osman Hamdi Bey's tenure ushered in a new era, with significant advancements in both legislation and practice (Gerçek, 1999: 108). One of his first actions was revising the *Âsâr-ı Atika Nizamnâmesi* to completely prohibit the export of artifacts and prevent illegal excavations (Şahin, 2007: 117; Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 53). Osman Hamdi Bey also initiated the first national excavations in the Ottoman Empire at Mount Nemrut and personally conducted excavations in regions such as Adıyaman, Muğla, and Lebanon (Erbay, 2011: 38). Artifacts discovered during these excavations were sent to Müze-i Hûmayun but eventually necessitated the construction of a new museum building, which became today's Istanbul Archaeological Museum.

During Osman Hamdi Bey's period, additional milestones included the establishment of museums in cities like Konya, İzmir, Bursa, and Bergama; the founding of the Naval Museum (*Bahriye Müzesi*); the reopening of the *Mecmua-i Eslihâ-ı Âtika* collection as the Military Weapons Museum (*Eslihâ-i Askeriye Müzesi*); and the creation of the Academy of Fine Arts (*Sanayi-i Neşîse Mektebi*) (Özkasım and Ögel, 2005: 99; Buyurgan and Mercin, 2005: 72; Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 53). Osman Hamdi Bey also introduced modern practices in museum management, including cataloging, classification, preservation, and display of collections (Ateşoğulları, 2022: 37). To attract public interest and encourage donations of antique artifacts, announcements were placed in newspapers (Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 53-54).

After Osman Hamdi Bey's passing, his successor Halil Edhem Bey continued the modernization of Turkish museology. His tenure saw the establishment of the Islamic Foundations Museum (*Evkâf-ı İslâmiye Müzesi*), focusing on Turkish-Islamic artifacts, and the Fine Arts Museum (*Âsâr-ı Nakşîye Müzesi*), dedicated to painting collections, within the Academy of Fine Arts (today's Painting and Sculpture Museum) (Özkasım and Ögel, 2005: 100). Halil Edhem Bey, who began his work during the late Ottoman period and continued into the early Republican era, oversaw significant advancements in museum practices, including the classification and modern display of collections at institutions like Müze-i Hûmayun and the converted Topkapı Palace Museum (Artun, 2017: 30-31).

The collections of museums established during the Ottoman period primarily consisted of military, historical, archaeological, religious, and ethnographic artifacts, reflecting Ottoman culture and identity in both their exhibits and museum spaces (Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 67).

Museology in the Republican Era

Following the proclamation of the Republic, significant advancements were made in museology. Notably, in 1924, several prominent structures, including Topkapı Palace, Hagia Sophia (*Ayasofya*), Dolmabahçe Palace, and the Mevlana Dervish Lodge (*Mevlâna Dergâhı*), were converted into museums (Gerçek, 1999: 144; Keleş, 2003: 5). New laws were enacted to protect historical artifacts, and archaeological excavations began across the country. Soon, numerous museums were established beyond Istanbul, in various cities throughout Anatolia, where historical and archaeological finds were displayed. Ancient cities such as Ephesus, Aspendos, Pergamon, and Göreme were transformed into open-air museums (Küçükhasköylü, 2015b: 58).

The first museum commissioned by the newly established Republic was the Ankara Ethnography Museum, whose construction began in 1925 and was opened to visitors in 1930 (Gerçek, 1999: 16; Yıldızturnan, 2007: 31). Between 1923 and 1943, a total of 35 new museums were opened, either through new constructions or by converting existing structures (Mutlu and Başaran Mutlu, 2018: 71). During the Republic's early years, the Department of Antiquities and Museums (*Âsâr-ı Atika ve Müzeler Dairesi*), later renamed the Directorate of Antiquities and Museums in 1944, and the Turkish Historical Society (*Türk Tarih Kurumu*), founded in 1931, spearheaded systematic excavation projects and museology initiatives (Gerçek, 1999: 147; Buyurgan and Mercin, 2005: 76).

In 1946, Türkiye joined UNESCO, followed by membership in the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 1947. These affiliations paved the way for international collaborations and developments in the field of museology (Gerçek, 1999: 183). From the 1960s onwards, museums reflecting contemporary architectural trends were constructed, and older museums were renovated. During this period, a standardized approach to museum building across different cities was adopted (Kervankıran, 2014: 357). However, the uniform museum designs, which did not account for local climates, collection types, or other regional factors, were short-lived (Özkasım and Ögel, 2005: 101).

Starting in the 1980s, private initiatives made significant contributions to museology in Türkiye. The Sadberk Hanım Museum, established in Istanbul in 1980, became the country's first private museum. Other notable private museums include the Koyunoğlu City Museum and Library in Konya, opened in 1984, and the Rahmi M. Koç Museum in Istanbul, inaugurated in 1994 (Erbay, 2011: 43).

In the 2000s, Türkiye saw trends similar to those observed globally, such as the conversion of international exhibitions, historical sites, and industrial buildings into museums. One of the first examples of this was the Istanbul Modern, opened in 2004. Similarly, the Pera Museum, established in 2005, involved the repurposing of the historic Bristol Hotel. At the same time, government-led initiatives continued to focus on constructing contemporary museums, such as the Zeugma Mosaic Museum, and renovating older institutions like the Ephesus Museum (Küçükhasaköylü, 2015b: 64).

When examining the historical progression of museology in Türkiye, it becomes evident that, since its early beginnings in the Ottoman era, there has been a consistent effort to align with contemporary global trends. However, the pace has often lagged behind international developments. In particular, the existing legal framework and rigid bureaucracy in Türkiye have hindered museum administrations from swiftly adapting to rapidly evolving global museology practices (Bahçeci, 2022: 47-48).

EXPERIENCE

The concept of "experience" is multifaceted and encompasses various features, making it a complex and dynamic term. According to the Contemporary Turkish Dictionary by the Turkish Language Association (TDK), experience is defined as "*the total knowledge a person acquires over a specific period or throughout their lifetime; also referred to as expertise*" (TDK, 2022). The English Oxford Dictionary (2022) expands this definition further, describing experience as:

1. The knowledge and skills gained through doing something over a period of time, as well as the process of acquiring them.
2. Events or occurrences that happen to an individual, influencing their thoughts and behavior.
3. An event or activity that affects a person in some way.
4. Actions such as using a service, engaging in an activity, or participating in an event.
5. Information or events shared collectively by members of a specific community, shaping their ways of thinking and behavior.

Various researchers have explored the concept of experience from different perspectives, offering diverse interpretations. Initial studies in the literature on experience predominantly originate from the field of psychology (Hunt, 1961; Waterston, 1965; Rosen, 1972; Goffman, 1974; Ornstein, 1975). Thorne (1963: 248) defined experiences as significant, emotionally intense moments in a person's life: events that bring excitement, depth, richness, and a sense of completion to life. Similarly, Maslow (1967: 9) characterized positive experiences as moments of profound happiness, often remembered as pure moments of joy, free from doubt, fear, and limitations.

These early definitions emphasized the positive aspects of experiences, focusing on uplifting and enriching events while largely overlooking negative emotions and experiences. However, in later years, research began to incorporate the examination of experiences stemming from negative emotions. Yeagle et al. (1989: 523) noted that experiences shaped by diverse emotions, ranging from happiness and love to sadness, boredom, and hatred, contribute depth and richness to a person's life. This evolution in the understanding of experience highlights its dual nature: it is not solely defined by positive moments but also enriched by challenges and adversities. Experiences, whether joyous or painful, serve as building blocks for personal growth, self-reflection, and a deeper understanding of life's complexities.

The concept of experience is not confined to the realm of psychology alone. Over time, it has become a focal point of study in various disciplines, including medicine, sociology, philosophy, and, most notably, business sciences, particularly in marketing and its subfields. In business, experience is central to understanding consumer behavior. Early research in this area highlights that experiences encompass both positive and negative emotions, such as love, desire, happiness, sympathy, surprise, hatred, fear, sadness, anxiety, and anger (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982: 137). Primarily, experience is considered a reaction to various stimuli arising from interactions with the surrounding environment (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982: 132). When a consumer engages with a service provider or business, they are influenced by the characteristics of the context or environment in which the interaction occurs. The sum of emotions and information conveyed to the consumer during these interactions constitutes their experience (Pullman and Gross, 2004: 553).

From a business perspective, experiences that consumers find unique, memorable, and desirable to relive are deemed positive experiences. Moreover, such experiences are valued when consumers voluntarily share them with others, effectively praising the business and enhancing its reputation (Gupta and Vajic, 1999). These positive experiences often foster customer loyalty and strengthen the emotional connection between consumers and brands. The study of experience in the business domain underscores its multifaceted nature, intertwining emotional, cognitive, and contextual elements. This understanding has not only enriched consumer behavior theories but also provided businesses with insights into creating impactful and enduring consumer interactions.

The concept of experience is inherently complex, carrying diverse cultural and behavioral connotations (Voss, Roth, and Chase, 2008: 249). It is also holistic, emerging from the convergence of numerous interconnected elements (Shaw and Ivens, 2002). Experience can be defined as a blend of physical activities, activated senses, and emotions (Shaw, 2007) or as a comprehensive amalgamation of physical, psychological, emotional, mental, and social components (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998). Similarly, Verhoef et al. (2009: 32) highlight that the nature of experience is inherently holistic, encompassing the cognitive, affective, emotional, social, and physical responses of a customer toward a service provider.

Experience is also holistic in its environmental scope, transcending the boundaries of a single location. For example, a tourist's destination experience extends beyond their stay at a hotel, encompassing visits to museums, shops,

malls, parks, sports venues, and other attractions within the destination (O'Dell, 2005: 15). Additionally, the tourist is influenced not only by the physical space but also by various factors, such as hotel staff, fellow visitors, products, services, and the physical attributes of the building (Mossberg, 2007: 59). Moreover, the experience is not confined to the time spent in a specific location. In the case of a tourist, it includes the entire journey, from choosing a vacation destination and deciding on accommodation to making the purchase, visiting the hotel, and reflecting on the trip afterward. This makes experience a multi-dimensional concept that spans across time and phases (Neslin et al., 2006: 108-109). This comprehensive view of experience underscores its dynamic and layered nature, illustrating how physical, emotional, social, and temporal dimensions interact to create a meaningful and memorable encounter.

Experience, by its very nature, should be regarded as deeply personal and unique to each individual, assessed not by its quantity but by its contribution to the quality of life (Mannell, 1984: 11). Pine and Gilmore (1999: 12) describe experiences as events that engage individuals on a personal level. Schmitt (1999: 53) emphasizes that people are not only rational but also emotional beings, and their interactions with products and services often result in holistic, unique, and personalized experiences. From a consumer perspective, experience is shaped by the interactions between the consumer, the product or service they receive, and the business providing it. These interactions evoke emotional and cognitive responses, which vary significantly among individuals due to the inherently personal nature of experiences. Similarly, Gentile, Spiller, and Noci (2007: 397) note that consumer experiences stem from interactions between the consumer and the business, leading to varying degrees of rational, emotional, sensory, physical, and spiritual reactions. These differences are rooted in the personalized nature of experience. Experiences are further shaped by an individual's prior knowledge, past experiences, character, values, and beliefs (Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003: 41). This contextual framework makes experiences uniquely personal, as no two individuals perceive or react to the same situation in an identical manner.

Another defining feature of experience is its capacity to create lasting memories or knowledge. One of the key aims of an experience is to provide functional and purposeful information through engaging, memorable, and enjoyable moments (McLellan, 2000). Experiences are often described as entertaining, captivating, unforgettable, and memory-forming events for those who live through them (Oh, Fiore, and Jeung, 2007: 120). While products and

services offered by businesses address customers' needs and resolve their problems, experiences form a separate and unique category. These experiences, often referred to as a "mental journey," contribute meaningfully to people's lives by creating lasting and impactful memories (Sundbo, 2009: 432-433). For businesses, crafting these meaningful experiences not only satisfies customers' immediate needs but also fosters deeper emotional connections, turning one-time interactions into enduring relationships.

Sanders (2001) frames experience as a deeply personal phenomenon, felt only by the individual living it. He categorizes past, felt experiences as "memories" and future, yet-to-be-felt, imagined experiences as "dreams." According to Sanders, experiencing is the fusion of memories (derived from the past) and dreams (rooted in imagination). In other words, he views experience as an integration of the past and the future. Other researchers, notably Pine and Gilmore, similarly emphasize the memorable aspect of experience. Drawing inspiration from Goffman's (1975) analogy of daily life as a theatrical performance, Pine and Gilmore use the stage and play metaphor to describe experiences. In this view, businesses "stage" their services to captivate consumers, using their products as props in the performance (Grove, Fisk, and Bitner, 1992: 94; Pine and Gilmore, 2012: 45). Even though the performance may be similar for all audience members (consumers), the impressions it leaves are highly individualized and unique. Once the "show" concludes, the experience remains in the consumer's mind as a memory, with the strength and impact of that memory determining the overall value of the experience (Pine and Gilmore, 2012: 45-47).

Berry, Carbone, and Haeckel (2002: 85) propose that experience is shaped by the interplay of mechanical and human elements. Mechanical elements refer to the functional attributes of a product or service, while human elements encompass sensory inputs such as sound, scent, and visuals, as well as the emotional impact of behaviors encountered during the process. These human elements directly engage consumers' emotions and contribute to the holistic nature of the experience. Tarssanen and Kylanen (2005: 136-137) further elaborate that experience is influenced by personal interest, motivation, physical stimuli, and acquired knowledge. They note that emotional responses, such as enjoyment, excitement, or a sense of achievement, arising during the process can create mental shifts in individuals, varying in intensity based on the emotional depth of the experience.

From the perspective of consumer behavior, experience is inherently personal and carries significant emotional weight (Grundey, 2008: 135). This

emotional dimension is particularly evident in industries like tourism and hospitality, where guests primarily evaluate their experiences based on their emotional resonance (Lashley, 2008: 78). Richins (1997: 134) offers a detailed taxonomy of emotions experienced by consumers during interactions, ranging from anger, dissatisfaction, anxiety, sadness, fear, and shame to envy, loneliness, romantic feelings, love, tranquility, contentment, optimism, joy, excitement, and surprise. This comprehensive view highlights the multifaceted and emotionally charged nature of experiences, showcasing how they intertwine memory, imagination, sensory engagement, and personal interpretation to create unique and lasting impressions. By crafting such experiences, businesses can forge deeper emotional connections, leaving a lasting impact on consumers.

Experience should not be evaluated solely within the timeframe in which it occurs. Instead, it encompasses a three-phase process that includes everything the individual encounters and feels before, during, and after the experience (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998: 23). From a consumer perspective, Arnould, Price, and Zinkhan (2004) view experience as a holistic process comprising pre-consumption, the purchase event, consumption, and the post-consumption reflections.

1. **Pre-Experience Phase:** The pre-experience phase involves activities such as demand generation, research, planning, and budgeting. It sets the foundation for the forthcoming experience by creating expectations and emotional anticipation.

2. **During the Experience:** During the experience, various dimensions emerge, including sensory, emotional, functional, relational, social, informational, and novel values. This phase engages consumers in real-time, influencing their immediate perceptions and satisfaction.

3. **Post-Experience Phase:** The post-experience phase yields outcomes such as enjoyment, entertainment, learning, skill acquisition, imagination, longing, and teaching (Poulsson and Kale, 2004: 271-273; Tynan and McKechnie, 2009: 509). These outcomes often leave a lasting impression, shaping how the individual remembers and values the experience.

From the consumer's perspective, the during and post-experience phases are seen as stages where personal value and benefits are realized (Penaloza and Venkatesh, 2006: 311-312).

Schmitt and Zarantonello (2013: 30) conceptualize the experience process as consisting of four stages:

1. Imagined Consumption – Aligning with the pre-consumption phase, this stage includes the anticipation and planning of the experience.

2. Purchase Experience – The process of acquiring the product or service.

3. Consumption Experience – The actual interaction with and use of the product or service.

4. Remembered Consumption – Reflecting on the experience, this phase corresponds to the post-experience outcomes identified by other researchers.

While these stages are distinct, they are interconnected, creating a continuous loop of emotional, cognitive, and functional interactions that collectively define the consumer's perception of the experience. This nuanced understanding of experience highlights its multi-dimensional and dynamic nature. By addressing each phase strategically, businesses can enhance customer satisfaction, foster loyalty, and create memorable, value-driven experiences.

From a consumer perspective, experience is often explained through the use of a product or service. However, some researchers classify experiences as either direct or indirect (Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2013: 31). Direct experience typically occurs during the purchase or use of a product or service and is usually initiated by the consumer (Meyer and Schwager, 2007: 118). This type of experience involves hands-on interaction, where the consumer actively engages with the product or service. For example, test-driving a car or tasting a sample at a store would fall under direct experience. Indirect experience, on the other hand, refers to encounters that the consumer may not consciously seek or initiate. These experiences often arise through external stimuli, such as exposure to news, advertisements, word-of-mouth communication, or other marketing and informational channels (Kempf and Smith, 1998: 327). Indirect experiences influence perceptions and expectations without the consumer physically interacting with the product or service.

Daugherty, Li, and Biocca (2008: 568) introduce the concept of "virtual experience" as a type of indirect experience facilitated by technology. Virtual experiences occur when consumers engage with simulations, augmented reality, or online platforms that replicate aspects of a product or service without direct physical interaction. Examples include virtual tours of real estate properties or trying on clothing digitally through augmented reality. This classification underscores the multifaceted nature of consumer experiences, revealing how both active engagement and passive exposure contribute to shaping

perceptions and decision-making. Businesses aiming to create impactful experiences must address both direct and indirect interactions to effectively influence customer satisfaction and loyalty.

An analysis of various definitions of experience proposed by researchers reveals the following key components:

- Experiences are compositions formed by the interplay of different elements.
- Experiences are complex and holistic in structure.
- Experiences are reactions to reciprocal interactions.
- Experiences contain subjective elements and are unique to the individual.
- Experiences involve lasting memories and acquired knowledge.
- Experiences are directly linked to emotions.
- Experiences are processes that encompass the phases before, during, and after the event.
- Experiences can be direct or indirect.

Examining these components highlights that experience is not a simple concept. It is multidimensional and requires a comprehensive approach to fully understand its intricacies. Whether shaped by direct engagement or passive exposure, experiences encompass a rich blend of emotional, cognitive, and contextual elements, making them a cornerstone of human interaction and perception.

THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

Traditional marketing approaches, which regarded consumers as rational decision-makers, focused for a long time on offering the best product in the market. However, since the 1980s, providing merely the best and highest-quality product has proven insufficient. During this period, the marketing field saw the emergence of a customer-centric approach emphasizing better service. Yet, this phase was short-lived, as it became evident in the 1990s that even standard service practices were no longer enough to satisfy consumers.

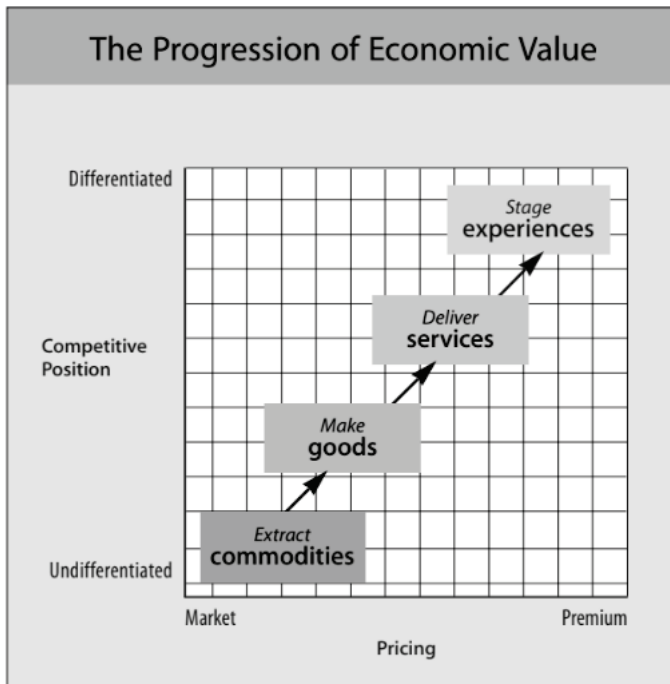
Subsequently, the concept of experience gained importance among consumers, ushering in a new era of marketing. Recognizing the complex, subjective, holistic, and multidimensional nature of experiences, marketers adopted a personalized experiential consumption approach that appealed to consumers' emotions and imaginations.

Kim (2012: 421) highlights that consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced not only by cognitive mechanisms but also by intrinsic and subconscious factors linked to the emotions, fantasies, and desires they seek to fulfill through consumption. Indeed, modern consumers are no longer content with just the functional features of a product or service; they actively seek enjoyable, creative, social, and immersive experiences (McCole, 2004: 535-536).

Postmodern consumers, for instance, wish to uncover the stories behind the products they buy and experience the sensations tied to these products (Jensen, 1999: 34). In other words, today's consumers are not in pursuit of the best product but rather the most memorable experiences that they can later share with others (Triantafyllidou and Siomkos, 2014: 526).

Pine and Gilmore (1998), among the first researchers to observe this consumer quest for experiences, introduced the concept of the "experience economy." They explored the historical evolution of phenomena that create economic value through four distinct stages (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Progression of Economic Value



Source: Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 98

As depicted in Figure 1, the first phase, known as the "agrarian economy," revolved around the creation of economic value through the acquisition of goods (raw materials and resources). This stage was characterized by the sufficiency of simply obtaining these goods. With the transition to the "industrial economy," the focus shifted toward transforming raw materials into final products suitable for consumer use. However, by the last quarter of the 20th century, the production of standardized, tangible products began to be perceived as inadequate.

In this period, the highest form of economic value started gravitating toward the "service economy," where personalized and intangible services were offered to consumers. Businesses increasingly believed in the necessity of providing good-quality services to customers. To differentiate themselves and secure a sustainable competitive advantage, many companies invested heavily in improving service quality. Their focus shifted from internal product quality to external customer satisfaction (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003: 4, 11-12).

By the late 20th century and into the 21st, the "experience economy," marked by the staging of personal and memorable experiences, emerged as the most valuable economic phenomenon in this cycle. According to Petkus (2004: 51), modern economies evolved from harvesting raw goods to manufacturing products, then to providing services, and ultimately to offering experiences. Services, however, increasingly lost their personal touch and became commoditized, which in turn diminished customer satisfaction and the competitive edge of businesses.

Experiential marketing emerged as a solution to capture customers' attention in a lasting and impactful way. In the experience economy, customer satisfaction cannot be achieved solely through the provision of products or services. Instead, it necessitates adding an experiential dimension to the product or service offering (Tsai, 2005: 433).

Today, experiences have become profoundly significant for consumers, who are willing to pay premium prices for activities that deliver exceptional experiences (Sundbo and Sorensen, 2013: 5). As Pine and Gilmore (1998) suggest, the more customized and distinctive a product or service is, the greater its economic value (Figure 1).

Pine and Gilmore (1998: 98) also elaborated on the distinctions among various economic eras in Table 1.

Table 1: Economic Distinctions

Economic Distinctions				
Economic Offering	Commodities	Goods	Services	Experiences
Economy	Agrarian	Industrial	Service	Experience
Economic Function	Extract	Make	Deliver	Stage
Nature of Offering	Fungible	Tangible	Intangible	Memorable
Key Attribute	Natural	Standardized	Customized	Personal
Method of Supply	Stored in bulk	Inventoried after production	Delivered on demand	Revealed over a duration
Seller	Trader	Manufacturer	Provider	Stager
Buyer	Market	User	Client	Guest
Factors of Demand	Characteristics	Features	Benefits	Sensations

Source: Pine ve Gilmore, 1998: 98

The evolution of economic value across different economic models can be effectively illustrated through the example of coffee. In its raw form, coffee beans, once harvested and dried, represent a commodity that can be purchased at a low price. When these beans are processed into ground coffee, they become a product, slightly more expensive than raw coffee beans. This product requires the consumer to add hot water to make it drinkable.

If the consumer purchases a ready-to-drink cup of hot coffee from a vendor, it transitions into a service. This ready-made coffee eliminates the need for the consumer to prepare it, and the added convenience and service aspect increase the price compared to ground coffee.

Finally, imagine a café designed with a distinctive concept, featuring carefully curated decor, lighting, aromas, and ambiance that creates a unique environment for enjoying coffee. Here, the offering transcends mere products and services to deliver a memorable **experience**. This experience, encompassing sensory, emotional, and social elements, justifies the highest economic value among these options.

Pine and Gilmore (2012: 45-47) liken the experiences provided in the experience economy to a theatrical performance. In this analogy; the service provided by the business is the *staged performance*, the products offered are the *props and set pieces* and the consumers are considered both the *audience* and *guests*. The business orchestrates these elements to create an enjoyable and immersive experience for the consumer. Like a well-executed performance, this experience leaves a lasting impression, becoming a cherished memory even after the interaction ends.

Dimensions of Experience

Experience is a multifaceted and complex concept, with its dimensions varying across different contexts. The foundational framework for the dimensions of experience was first introduced by Pine and Gilmore (1998: 102), who identified distinct aspects within the experience economy. Subsequent researchers have expanded on this framework, exploring the dimensions from diverse perspectives (Brakus et al., 2009: 65). Various scholars have identified specific dimensions within the field of experiences, including:

- **Flow** (Wu and Liang, 2011): The state of total immersion in an activity.
- **Entertainment** (Chhetri, Arrowsmith, and Jackson, 2004): Enjoyment derived from engaging and amusing experiences.
- **Learning** (Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick, 2012): Gaining new knowledge or skills through the experience.

- **Socialization** (Crompton and McKay, 1997): Building connections and relationships with others.
- **Sense of Community** (Morgan, 2007): Feeling of belonging to a group or collective.
- **Challenge** (Pomfret, 2006): Overcoming obstacles or pushing personal limits during the experience.
- **Escape** (Belk and Costa, 1998): Detachment from the routine or mundane aspects of daily life.
- **Esthetics** (Kastenholz et al., 2018): Appreciation of beauty, design, or sensory appeal within the experience.

For instance, Kircova and Erdoğan (2017: 651) suggest that these dimensions collectively shape consumer attitudes and behaviors, directly influencing their decision-making processes and perceptions of value.

Flow

Flow is defined as a holistic sensation experienced when individuals are fully immersed in an activity with complete willingness and engagement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997: 6). The flow dimension of experience refers to those special moments requiring a certain level of enthusiasm and skill from participants, where individuals become so absorbed in the activity that they lose track of time and the outside world (Kircova and Erdoğan, 2017: 651).

Activities such as white-water rafting, mountain climbing, and even indulging in chocolate consumption are characterized by high levels of flow. During such experiences, consumers become deeply engrossed, focusing entirely on the activity. They lose awareness of time and their surroundings, achieving a state of intense concentration and enjoyment (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2014: 528).

Virtual reality (VR) gaming is an excellent modern example of how flow can be achieved. VR games often require a combination of skill, focus, and enthusiasm, fully immersing players in a virtual environment. Players interact with the game world in real-time, responding to challenges and tasks that match their abilities, fostering a balance between difficulty and competence—key conditions for experiencing flow.

For instance, in a VR escape room, players solve intricate puzzles under a time constraint, completely losing track of the physical world as they focus solely on the task at hand. Similarly, in VR fitness games, participants are so engaged in the activity -dodging obstacles, scoring points, or competing with others- that they experience a workout without perceiving it as a chore.

The immersive nature of VR amplifies the sense of presence, making users feel as though they are truly "inside" the game. This heightened engagement often leads to moments where players forget time, physical surroundings, and even fatigue, epitomizing the state of flow. This example demonstrates how modern technology leverages the principles of flow to create unforgettable consumer experiences, increasing satisfaction and loyalty.

Entertainment (Pleasure)

Entertainment is likely one of the oldest dimensions of experience and often involves passive participation from the individual (Hosany and Witham, 2010: 54). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982: 135) identify the components of the "hedonism" associated with consumer experiences as entertainment, fantasies, and emotions. Similarly, Pine and Gilmore (1998: 99-102) highlight the hedonic nature of consumption experiences, emphasizing the "entertainment" dimension within their experience economy model. Entertainment represents a dimension where participants passively absorb the activity, such as attending concerts, theater performances, or other similar events (Mehmetoglu and Engen, 2011: 243). Unlike some other dimensions, entertainment cannot be universally measured because it is highly subjective, varying according to individuals' personal characteristics, needs, and expectations (Hazar, 2003: 17).

Entertainment experiences should not be limited to the concept of pleasure alone. They also include a deeper dimension of "appreciation," which involves more profound emotional responses and cognitive engagement. Wirth, Hofer, and Schramm (2012: 407) define appreciation as a sense of deeper meaning, a feeling of being moved, and motivation to reflect on thoughts and emotions inspired by the experience. Oliver and Bartsch (2010: 76) elaborate that appreciation arises when individuals find significance, resonance, or inspiration within an experience. Examples of entertainment experiences can be watching television and attending a show. In these activities there is passive participation, where viewers absorb various sensory stimuli such as visuals and sounds and/or enjoy entertainment by immersing themselves in the atmosphere without active engagement. These passive yet immersive experiences can vary significantly based on the individual's subjective interpretation, emotional state, and context (Yuan and Wu, 2008: 390).

Learning (Education)

The learning or educational dimension of experience involves individuals actively participating in activities that enhance their knowledge and skills. While the immediate reflections of experiences often manifest through sensory and emotional responses, the cognitive and intellectual richness of these activities should not be overlooked (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2014: 528). Learning experiences play a vital role in creating memories and ensuring participant satisfaction (Quadri-Felitti and Fiore, 2013: 6). Intense experiences should educate individuals, offering opportunities to learn new things and become more knowledgeable (Hosany and Witham, 2010: 53-54). According to Tung and Ritchie (2011: 1374), unforgettable tourism experiences often include activities that enhance tourists' knowledge and skills. Furthermore, experiences can stimulate creative thinking, encouraging intellectual growth and improving problem-solving abilities (Schmitt, 1999: 61).

In educational tourism experiences, for example, a tourist (or consumer) actively engages with the environment through mental and/or physical participation. By absorbing the unfolding events of a destination, they gain deeper insights and understanding (Oh et al., 2007: 121). This interaction makes learning an integral part of the overall experience. Getz and Carlsen (2008: 262) introduced the concept of "edutainment," which combines educational and entertainment experiences. This synthesis allows participants to enjoy themselves while acquiring valuable knowledge. Tourists engaging in such activities derive both enjoyment and intellectual enrichment, making the experience more impactful and memorable. Examples of learning experiences may include scuba diving courses, craft-making workshops, and gastronomic events. These activities highlight how the educational dimension fosters active involvement, creating experiences that are both enriching and enjoyable.

Socialization

During consumption experiences, consumers derive social value by interacting with other consumers, friends, family, or their immediate social circle. The social context in which experiences are shaped and lived cannot be overlooked when analyzing consumption experiences. Consumers socialize with others, whether previously known to them or newly met through the activity itself (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2014: 528-529).

The socialization dimension of experiences encompasses two main aspects:

- **Socializing with Strangers:** This involves interactions with individuals who share similar interests, often leading to conversations, connections, or even friendships formed during the activity.
- **Belonging to a Community:** This reflects the sense of being part of a group, whether it is a temporary gathering or a more enduring community formed through shared interests or goals.

These social interactions can occur in both everyday consumption activities and unique or infrequent events (McGinnis, Gentry, and Gao, 2014: 76). Huang and Hsu (2010: 79) emphasize that social experiences are shaped by external factors such as strangers or family relationships. According to them, consumers may enjoy meeting and interacting with new people (Strangers) who share similar interests or hobbies. On the other hand, social experiences may be enriched by spending quality time with family members and loved ones during shared activities. Examples of socialization experiences include sports events, camping trips, shopping excursions, festivals and art events. These activities demonstrate how the socialization dimension enhances the value of consumption experiences by fostering relationships, creating a sense of belonging, and generating shared memories (McGinnis, Gentry, and Gao, 2014: 76; Triantafyllidou ve Siomkos, 2014: 528-529).

Challenge

The challenge dimension of experience is characterized by activities where consumers test their limits, engaging in pursuits that are personally demanding, risky, and adrenaline-inducing (Arnould and Price, 1993: 42). Hopkinson and Pujari (1999: 286-287) describe challenge by emphasizing the degree of difficulty and risk, using the term "*danger*" to highlight the excitement and fear evoked by such experiences.

This danger factor encapsulates the thrill and emotional intensity stemming from the activity itself. Challenges are often associated with high-risk, skill-intensive activities such as mountaineering, skiing, or extreme sports (Pomfret, 2006: 114). However, recent studies have expanded the concept, identifying elements of challenge in more common activities like retail shopping and online purchasing experiences (Mathwick and Rigdon, 2004: 331). Examples of challenge experiences are adventure sports, competitive gaming, and high-stakes shopping.

The challenge dimension not only tests physical or mental abilities but also delivers emotional highs through a mix of exhilaration, accomplishment, and even fear. Successfully overcoming a challenge often leads to increased self-

confidence and memorable experiences. Businesses incorporating challenge into their offerings can tap into consumers' desire for excitement and personal growth.

Escape

The escape dimension of experience refers to individuals' pursuit of activities that differ from their daily routines, allowing them to step into novel and refreshing experiences (Thanh and Kirova, 2018: 32). In escape experiences, individuals are not only observant of their surroundings but also active participants in the events they engage in (Mehmetoglu and Engen, 2011: 243). Hirschman (1985: 68) notes that escape experiences provide a temporary refuge from pressure, daily problems, and unpleasant circumstances.

The nature of escape experiences varies depending on the type of activity. Tourism, for instance, serves as one of the most prominent means for people to break free from their daily lives, offering opportunities to experience something out of the ordinary before returning to their routine. Consequently, the concept of escape is a significant motivator in tourism research (Oh et al., 2007: 121).

Oh et al. (2007: 122) identify three key components of the escape dimension:

1. **Detachment from Daily Life and Routines:** Here, the specific destination or activity is less critical. What matters is the chance to step outside the monotony of everyday life, rejuvenate, and return refreshed.
2. **Escaping to a Specific Destination:** This component emphasizes the change of scenery or environment. Even if individuals continue aspects of their daily routines, such as work, at the new location, the primary motivation is the shift in place.
3. **Adopting a New Role or Persona:** This involves engaging in activities where individuals can assume a different identity or behavior, such as role-playing or immersing themselves in themed experiences. The act of physically escaping routines or locations becomes secondary to the transformation itself.

Examples of escape experiences are tourism activities like vacations to exotic destinations or serene retreats to break away from daily life. Other examples include visits to theme parks, participating at adventure sports and enjoying activities such as chocolate tasting or gambling, which temporarily detach individuals from ordinary concerns. Escape experiences allow individuals to disconnect from stressors, reset their mental state, and often gain fresh

perspectives on life. These activities often contribute to improved well-being and provide a sense of renewal. Businesses that tap into the escape dimension can cater to consumers' desires for both novelty and relief, making their offerings highly appealing.

Esthetics

The esthetic dimension of experience refers to individuals' interaction with the sensory and emotional aspects of a physical environment (Thanh and Kirova, 2018: 31). While this dimension often involves passive participation, the resulting experience is profound and deeply engaging (Mehmetoglu and Engen, 2011: 243). Esthetic elements stimulate visitors' imagination, creating a lasting impression.

Lighting, sound, colors, spatial design, and architectural features play pivotal roles in shaping visitors' esthetic experiences (Rentschler and Gilmore, 2002: 68). In the esthetic dimension, individuals are passive spectators who do not directly influence the environment. However, they derive pleasure from observing and appreciating the structure, appearance, and overall design of the space. Thus, the design, visual appeal, and multisensory elements of a location are critical for creating impactful esthetic experiences (Alfakhri et al., 2018: 524). Examples of esthetic experiences are visiting museums, enjoying natural landscapes and architectural wonders.

Nostalgia

According to Snyder (1991: 228), nostalgia stems from experiences that evoke positive emotions such as pleasure, satisfaction, joy, and well-being. When individuals face uncertainty and anxiety about the future, they often seek comfort in the happy and secure moments of the past, embracing the feeling of nostalgia (Cameron and Gatewood, 2000: 109). Holak and Havlena (1998: 218) describe nostalgia as a valuable and positive emotion triggered by memories of past experiences. Because of this, experiences hold the potential to create strong nostalgic memories. Nostalgic and memorable experiences serve as positive events that help consumers escape the monotony of their routines. Particularly enjoyable experiences can create what are known as "*reward memories*" (Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2014: 535-536). These reward memories are etched into consumers' minds, formed by positive experiences such as pleasure, escape, and flow. Nostalgia connects consumers to emotionally significant past events, providing comfort and a sense of continu-

ity. This connection often makes experiences more meaningful and memorable. For example; retro-themed activities -events like 1980s dance nights or vintage car shows- evoke memories of a simpler or happier past.

Models of Experience Dimensions

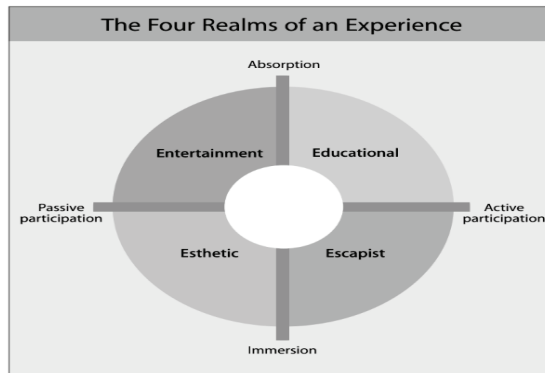
In the experience literature, various researchers have explored the possible dimensions that constitute an experience, developing models to better understand them. These models offer valuable and meaningful perspectives for analyzing the experiences of consumers or tourists. Below are some of the most prominent models:

1. Pine and Gilmore's Four Realms of Experience (1998)
2. Mathwick, Malhotra, and Rigdon's Model (2001)
3. Tarssanen and Kylanen's The Experience Pyramid Model (2005)
4. Triantafillidou and Siomkos' Diamond Model (2014)
5. Bolton et al.'s The Cube Model (2018)
6. Quadri-Felitti and Fiore's Memorable Tourism Experience Model (2013)
7. Yuan and Wu's Experience Quality Model (2008)

1. Pine and Gilmore's Four Realms of Experience

In the literature, the classification of experience dimensions widely accepted is Pine and Gilmore's (1998) approach, which examines experiences across four dimensions: entertainment, education, esthetics, and escapism. This approach considers experience within a two-dimensional structure based on “*consumer participation*” and “*environmental connection*” (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Four Realms of Experience



Source: Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 102

In terms of consumer participation, experiences can involve either passive or active participation. Active participation refers to situations where the consumer is directly involved in the experience, playing a role in and contributing to the performance. On the other hand, passive participation describes experiences where the consumer merely observes the activity without any direct role or contribution (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 101-102; Williams, 2006: 487; Deligöz and Ünal, 2017: 139). For example, watching a movie in a cinema is a passive experience, whereas dining in a restaurant is considered as an active experience for the customer.

The environmental connection dimension measures the consumer's level of interaction with their surroundings. This dimension includes two options: absorption and immersion. Absorption refers to a weaker connection between the participant and the activity, while immersion signifies a more intense engagement. In absorption, individuals remain somewhat detached from the activity, whereas immersion involves being fully enveloped in and at the center of the activity (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 101-102; Williams, 2006: 487-488; Deligöz and Ünal, 2017: 139). For example, a tourist watching a street festival from the balcony of their hotel experiences absorption, while actively participating in the festival, interacting with performers, and dancing demonstrates immersion.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) divided their two-dimensional framework into four distinct areas, which represent the experience dimensions (Figure 2): entertainment, education, esthetics, and escapism. Any given experience can span one or more of these dimensions to varying degrees. An experience does not necessarily belong to just one dimension; it can simultaneously exhibit characteristics of several or even all dimensions. The "*sweet spot*" region of Pine and Gilmore's model (Figure 2) represents the richest and most intense experiences, encompassing elements from all four dimensions (Konuk, 2014: 34).

In the entertainment dimension, participation is more passive, and the environmental connection is at the absorption level. Activities in this dimension should capture the individual's interest and provide enjoyment. Examples include watching television, listening to music, or attending a concert as a spectator. In the education dimension, participation is more active, while the environmental connection remains at the absorption level. This dimension involves learning new things and enhancing knowledge or skills. Taking swimming lessons is an example of an educational experience. In the escapism dimension, participation is active, and the environmental connection is immersive.

Escapism may include elements of education (teaching new skills) or entertainment (providing enjoyment). Finally, in the esthetics dimension, participation is more passive, while the environmental connection is immersive. Esthetic experiences occur when individuals passively, yet intensely, engage with the sensory appeal of the environment. This dimension is influenced by the physical setting. For example, observing the Grand Canyon from a viewpoint represents an esthetic experience, while hiking through the Grand Canyon is an example of escapism (Pine and Gilmore, 1998: 101-102; Williams, 2006: 487-488; Oh et al., 121-122; Deligöz and Ünal, 2017: 139; Kırcova and Erdoğan, 2017: 650-651).

In summary, the entertainment dimension in Pine and Gilmore's model involves perceiving, the education dimension involves learning, the escapism dimension involves doing, and the esthetics dimension involves being there (Petkus, 2004: 51). These four dimensions are not independent of one another. On the contrary, they often coexist within the same experience. The richest experiences for individuals are those that encompass all four dimensions (Williams, 2006: 488; Mossberg, 2007: 66). Figure 2 shows that where the four dimensions intersect, a fifth region emerges. Pine and Gilmore (1998: 102) call this region the "sweet spot," where the most beautiful experiences are found. For example, visiting Disneyland is considered a "sweet spot" experience because it includes all aspects of these dimensions (Yuan and Wu, 2008: 390).

2. Mathwick, Malhotra, and Rigdon’s Model

Mathwick et al. (2001: 39), building on Holbrook’s (1994) idea that experiences can be actively or passively participated in, proposed a different model. They divided the act of participation into active or reactive dimensions, categorized the benefits participants derive from the experience as either intrinsic or extrinsic, and thereby developed a four-dimensional model (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Mathwick, Malhotra, and Rigdon Model

Intrinsic value	Playfulness	Aesthetics
Extrinsic value	Consumer return on investment (CROI)	Service Excellence
	Active value	Reactive value

Source: Mathwick et al., 2001: 41

According to Holbrook (1994: 40), intrinsic benefits arise from the appreciation of an experience for its own sake, independent of any other outcomes. Extrinsic benefits, on the other hand, refer to additional gains obtained during the ongoing experience.

In the model, *playfulness* refers to experiences that provide an escape from daily routines. It involves activities that engage the individual's interest and are inherently enjoyable. Playfulness is characterized by voluntary participation and intrinsic enjoyment. *Esthetic response* dimension captures the reaction of an individual to the overall attributes of an object, artwork (abstract or tangible), performance, or visual appeal, including symmetry, proportion, and other qualities. *Consumer return on investment* (ROI) dimension involves the active utilization of financial, temporal, behavioral, and psychological resources to maximize benefits from the experience. Consumers derive efficiency and economic value from their involvement. *Service excellence* dimension reflects consumer satisfaction and appreciation of the quality of services provided by a service provider. It emphasizes the consumer's perception of the provider's ability to deliver outstanding service (Mathwick ve diğerleri, 2001: 41-44; Yuan ve Wu, 2008: 392).

The model provides a structured framework to evaluate experiences from multiple perspectives, focusing on the interplay of active or reactive participation and the intrinsic or extrinsic nature of the benefits. By combining these dimensions, it becomes possible to understand the varying motivations and outcomes of consumer experiences.

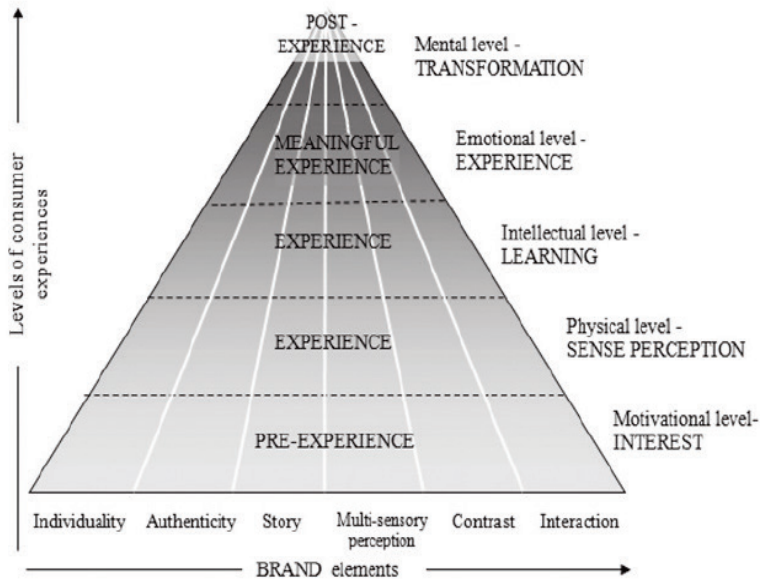
3. Tarssanen and Kylanen's The Experience Pyramid Model

Tarssanen and Kylanen (2005) developed the "Experience Pyramid" model to explain consumer experiences (Figure 4). According to this model, the formation of an experience requires the combination of several experiential elements located at the base of the pyramid. These elements are individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast, and interaction.

The first experiential element, *individuality*, relates to triggering the customer's feeling of being valued. The second element, *authenticity*, reflects the customer's subjective perception of what makes a product or service original. The third element, *story*, closely connected to authenticity, serves to tie all the components of the experience together. The fourth element, *multi-sensory perception*, involves delivering an experience that can be appreciated by engaging as many senses as possible. The fifth element, *contrast*, highlights aspects of the experience that deviate from the consumer's daily routine. The

sixth and final element, *interaction*, represents the relationships between the consumer, the business (company), and other customers (Tarssanen and Kylanen, 2005: 139-144).

Figure 4: The Experience Pyramid Model



Source: Tarssanen and Kylanen, 2005: 140

These six experiential elements are distributed across five hierarchical levels, starting from the bottom with the motivational level, followed by the physical, intellectual, emotional, and culminating with the mental level.

Motivational Level - Interest: At this stage, the experience is at the level of interest, with a nascent desire forming toward the experience.

Physical Level - Sense Perception: Here, the consumer begins to perceive and familiarize themselves with the environment where the experience will take place.

Intellectual Level - Learning: During this stage, thinking and learning experiences occur, influenced by environmental stimuli.

Emotional Level - Experience: Consumers experience meaningful and positive emotions, such as joy and excitement.

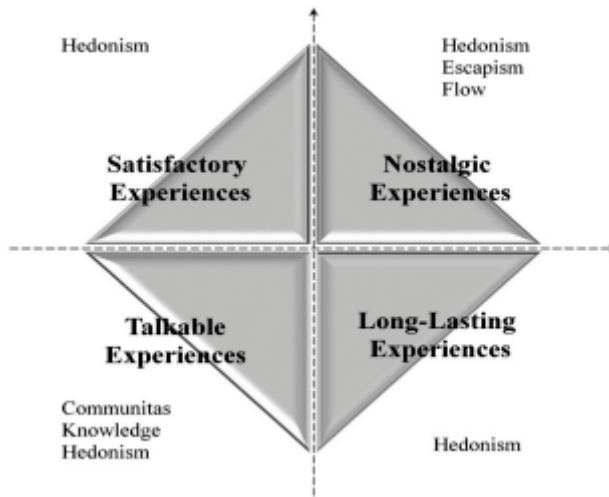
Mental Level - Transformation: At the final stage, the positive and strong emotional reaction to a meaningful experience leads to a personal transformation. At this level, the consumer feels renewed, changed, and improved.

Tarssanen and Kylanen’s model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how various elements and levels of an experience combine to create impactful and transformative consumer experiences.

4. Triantafillidou and Siomkos’s Diamond Model

Triantafillidou and Siomkos (2014: 535-536) proposed a model that categorizes the outcomes of consumption experiences into four types based on their effects on various post-consumption variables. These categories are *satisfactory*, *nostalgic*, *talkable*, and *long-lasting* experiences (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Triantafillidou and Siomkos’ Diamond Model



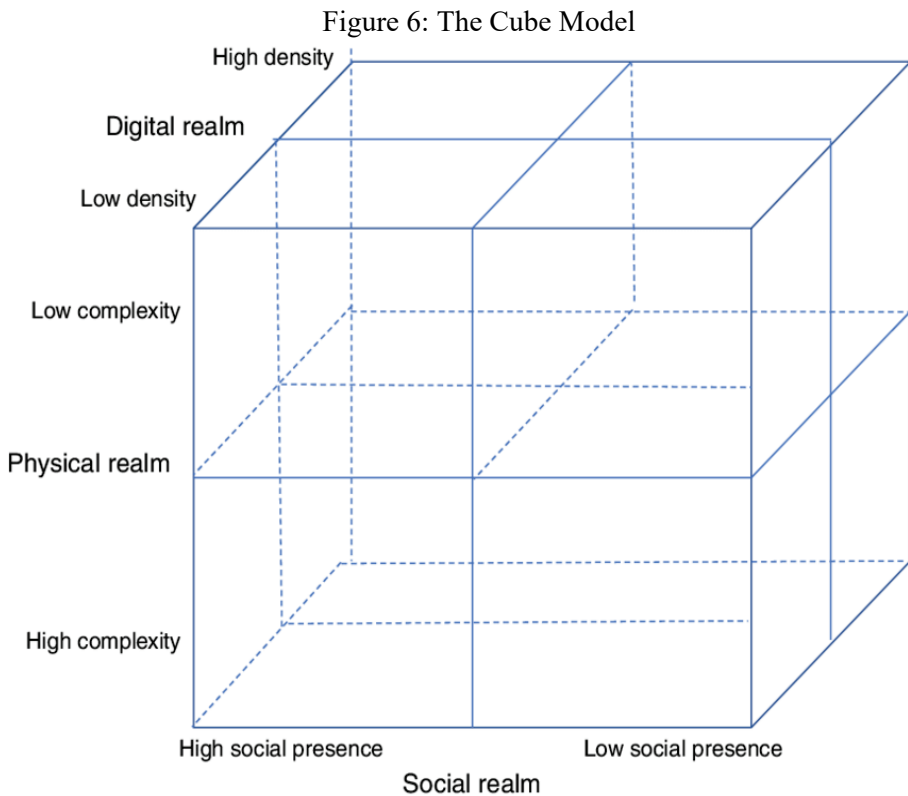
Source: Triantafillidou and Siomkos, 2014: 536

In this model, satisfactory experiences are consumption activities that produce positive emotions such as joy and pleasure. They provide immediate contentment and emotional uplift. Nostalgic experiences involve positive and memorable events that help consumers escape from routine and temporarily lose their sense of present reality. Nostalgic experiences often connect individuals to cherished memories. Talkable experiences are experiences that consumers wish to share with loved ones or significant others. They provide new topics for discussion and facilitate social interactions. Finally long-lasting experiences are gratifying experiences that leave a lasting impression and are enjoyable

enough for consumers to desire repeating them in the future. This model highlights how different aspects of consumption experiences contribute to emotional satisfaction, social engagement, and long-term consumer loyalty.

5. Bolton et al.'s The Cube Model

Bolton et al. (2018) developed the Cube Model to design the future of customer experience by incorporating a unique aspect: the digital dimension. Their model visualizes customer experience as a three-dimensional cube with eight compartments, combining the *digital*, *physical*, and *social* dimensions (Figure 6). According to this model, the intensity of the digital dimension, the complexity of the physical dimension, and the degree of social interaction in a given experience are evaluated as high or low based on the business structure. This evaluation determines to which of the eight compartments the experience corresponds.



Source: Bolton et al., 2018: 780

The social dimension in the model represents the social interactions consumers have during their experiences. As technology advances, and likely continues to grow, consumers are increasingly encountering non-human technological elements such as robots and artificial intelligence. However, human interactions remain integral to certain experiences. For instance, in a crowded café, where significant human interaction occurs, the social dimension's intensity is high. Conversely, resolving an issue with AI in customer service represents a low degree of social interaction (Bolton et al., 2018: 780-781).

The physical dimension encompasses the design of the physical environment, the arrangement of furniture and equipment, and other environmental elements. Interactions between individuals and the physical space directly impact their experiences. As businesses increasingly digitalize, the role of the physical dimension is evolving. Many companies now use emerging technologies such as augmented reality, virtual reality, and smart mirrors that allow customers to visualize clothing virtually. The complexity of the physical dimension is considered high when consumers spend significant time in the physical space, such as shopping traditionally by trying on clothes in a store. Conversely, it is considered low when consumers spend minimal or no time in the physical space, such as using kiosks for quick purchases or shopping via websites or apps (Bolton et al., 2018: 780).

The most significant contribution of Bolton et al. (2018) to the literature is the inclusion of the digital elements of customer experience in their model. They highlight the rapid adaptation of businesses to digital technologies, including online sales, mobile applications, virtual reality, augmented reality, blockchain, wearable technologies, neuroscience applications, and various forms of automation (Bolton et al., 2018: 779). Digital technologies create highly personalized and engaging environments through intensive interaction and rich information exchange between organizations and consumers (Parise, Guinan, and Kafka, 2016: 411). These technologies are transforming customer expectations and behaviors, alongside the operational structures of organizations (Lemon, 2016: 45). The intensity of the digital dimension increases parallel to the use of digital technologies. For example, paying a bill in person at an office or bank reflects a low digital intensity, whereas paying the same bill via internet banking or mobile applications reflects a high digital intensity (Bolton et al., 2018: 780).

6. Quadri-Felitti and Fiore's Memorable Tourism Experience Model

Quadri-Felitti and Fiore's (2013) *Memorable Tourism Experience* (MTE) model is a framework designed to identify the key dimensions that contribute to the creation of impactful and unforgettable tourism experiences. The model is grounded in the understanding that tourism is more than just a service, it is an emotional and sensory journey that can leave lasting impressions on individuals.

This model builds on Pine and Gilmore's (1998) four realms of experience (entertainment, education, esthetics, and escapism) and extends the understanding of what makes tourism experiences memorable by adding more nuanced dimensions. These dimensions focus on the personal, emotional, and cultural factors that enhance the significance of the experience for the traveler. This model focuses specifically on tourism and highlights six key dimensions that contribute to memorable experiences:

- **Hedonism:** The pleasure and enjoyment derived from the activity.
- **Novelty:** The uniqueness or distinctiveness of the experience.
- **Local Culture:** Engagement with the destination's heritage and traditions.
- **Refreshment:** A sense of renewal or rejuvenation.
- **Meaningfulness:** Personal significance or life enrichment.
- **Involvement:** Active participation and connection with the experience.

These dimensions help explain why some tourism experiences remain vivid and impactful for consumers. In tourism, a culinary tour in Tuscany aligns with Quadri-Felitti and Fiore's memorable tourism experience model. Visitors savor fine wines and traditional Italian dishes, experiencing hedonistic pleasure. They engage with novelty by exploring unique vineyards and local eateries, connect with regional culture through insights from locals, and find refreshment in the serene countryside. The experience becomes personally meaningful as participants learn about artisanal food and immerse themselves in hands-on cooking classes that deepen their involvement.

7. Yuan and Wu's Experience Quality Model

Yuan and Wu's (2008) experience quality model focuses on understanding the quality of experiences from the consumer's perspective, particularly in the context of tourism and leisure activities. The model emphasizes the factors that contribute to an overall positive and memorable experience, proposing three key dimensions of experience quality: *entertainment* quality, *esthetic* qu-

ality, and *educational* quality. These dimensions highlight how different aspects of an experience interact to shape consumer satisfaction and influence future behavioral intentions.

In this model, entertainment quality means the enjoyment and satisfaction derived from the experience. Esthetic quality is the visual and sensory appeal of the environment. Esthetic quality is particularly relevant in contexts such as museums, art galleries, and natural attractions, where the physical surroundings significantly impact the experience. Educational quality is the knowledge or skills gained through the experience. Educational quality is often emphasized in museum visits, interactive exhibits, guided tours, or hands-on workshops.

By focusing on quality, this model helps businesses understand how to enhance specific aspects of their offerings to better meet consumer expectations. Modern art museums often align with Yuan and Wu's experience quality model. Visitors are entertained by curated exhibits and audiovisual displays while admiring the esthetic appeal of architecturally stunning spaces and thoughtfully presented artwork. Guided tours and interpretive materials add an educational dimension, enhancing understanding and appreciation of the pieces on display.

TOURISM EXPERIENCE

The visitor experience in museums is a dynamic, interactive, and continuous process influenced by a blend of personal, social, and physical elements. It is shaped not only by the visitor's characteristics and expectations but also by the quality of services provided by the museum. As part of the broader tourism experience, the museum visit encompasses many features typical of a tourist experience. However, it also has distinct aspects that set it apart, reflecting the unique traits of museum visitors and the specific nature of the museum experience itself.

Tourism Experience

Customer experience stems from interactions between a customer and a product, service, or company, resulting in reactions that leave a lasting impression. This experience is inherently personal, unfolding across various levels of engagement like rational, emotional, sensory, physical, and even spiritual (Shaw and Ivens, 2002: 23-25). Its evaluation hinges on comparing the customer's prior expectations with stimuli encountered during the interaction (Gentile et al., 2007: 397).

In the service industry, experiences naturally occur where the service is provided. They arise through interactions between the customer, service personnel, and the surrounding environment (Bitner, 1992: 57; Clarke and Schmidt, 1995: 150; Mossberg, 2007: 64). Similarly, in tourism, the pinnacle of the tourist experience typically takes place at the destination itself, where the core activities unfold.

Tourism experience is the outcome of a tourist visiting a specific destination and spending time there (Page et al., 2001: 412). This experience should ideally contrast sharply with daily routines, often involving activities that are the complete opposite (Quan and Wang, 2004: 300-301). Graefe and Vaske (1987: 392-394) identify the essential characteristics of a tourism experience as the tourist's emotional engagement, interactions between tourists and elements of the tourism system, and active participation in the experience.

The motivations driving tourists to participate in tourism experiences can vary significantly. Some are fueled by hedonistic desires for pleasure, while others seek an escape from daily routines to relax in a different environment. For certain tourists, the activity itself is the primary allure, while for others, tourism may be perceived as a habitual or social obligation. However, tourist motivation is rarely singular; secondary motivations often play a vital role in

shaping the intention to engage in a tourism experience and, consequently, the nature of the experience itself (Sundbo and Dixit, 2020: 21).

Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987: 330) emphasize the inherently individual nature of tourism experiences. Uriely (2005: 205-206) supports this, highlighting the variability of tourism experiences across individuals, where the same activity can result in vastly different experiences for different people. Examining the psychological dimension, Larsen (2007: 9) underscores that the source of the experience lies in the individual. Therefore, it is shaped by diverse expectations and events, with the post-experience impacts varying from person to person. The meaning of a tourism experience is profoundly influenced by variables such as the individual's cultural and social background, purpose of the visit, companions, social group values, the destination's image, and more (Wearing and Deane, 2003: 4-5).

Tourism experiences are inherently complex and multidimensional. Quan and Wang (2004: 303) argue that tourism experiences should be viewed as an aggregate of activities such as accommodation, dining, transportation, shopping, entertainment, and more. Depending on the tourist's objectives, these activities can serve as the primary or supporting elements of the experience.

Furthermore, tourism experiences are shaped by the sensory, emotional, and behavioral attributes of visitors. Oh et al. (2007: 120) define a tourism experience as encompassing everything a tourist undergoes at a destination. This may include behavioral or perceptual, cognitive or emotional events, expressed directly or implied. Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003: 38) assert that the tourism experience emerges through actions such as visiting, observing, learning, enjoying, and adopting different modes during the tourism activity process.

Dimensions of Tourism Experience

The literature offers various approaches to defining the dimensions of the tourism experience. Mossberg (2007: 61-62) identifies four primary dimensions: emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual. The interplay between these dimensions stimulates the tourist's senses, creating a multifaceted tourism experience as a blend of these elements. Aho (2001: 33-34) proposes an alternative framework, outlining the dimensions of tourism experience as emotional, informational, practical (application-oriented), and transformational (where the experience induces lasting changes in the individual's way of life). These dimensions highlight both the immediate and long-term impacts of tourism on individuals.

Cole and Scott (2004) focus on the structural aspects of the tourism experience, defining four dimensions: performance quality, experience quality, overall satisfaction, and the intention to revisit. According to their model, *performance* quality drives *experience* quality, which in turn influences *overall satisfaction* and the likelihood or *intention to revisit*. The interaction of these dimensions determines the overall quality of the tourism experience (Cole and Scott, 2004: 79).

Volo (2009: 115) offers a different perspective, describing four characteristics of the tourism experience: accessibility, emotional transformation, effort, and value. The *accessibility* dimension examines how easily potential tourists can access the experience. *Emotional transformation* considers the extent of emotional impact on participants during the experience. *Effort* refers to the level of exertion required by the tourist to engage in the experience, while the *value* dimension evaluates the cost-benefit balance from the tourist's perspective.

Tung and Ritchie (2011: 1377-1381) add another layer to the discussion by identifying four dimensions of a memorable tourism experience: affect, expectations, consequentiality, and recollection. The *affect* dimension captures the emotions, positive or negative, such as happiness, sadness, or excitement that tourists unconsciously associate with the experience. The *expectations* dimension deals with how the experience aligns with or diverges from the tourist's pre-visit expectations, shaped by prior research or third-party information. *Consequentiality* refers to perceived personal changes or developments resulting from the trip, such as discovering a new passion or strengthening emotional bonds with travel companions. Finally, the *recollection* dimension encompasses the actions tourists take to relive or commemorate the experience, such as reminiscing or planning a return visit.

These varied approaches underscore the multifaceted and multidimensional nature of the tourism experience, reflecting its ability to blend emotional, cognitive, and practical aspects into a unique and lasting impression on the individual.

Stages of Tourism Experience

To gain a deeper understanding of the tourism experience, researchers often analyze it in stages, offering a chronological framework that begins before the experience and concludes with the post-experience phase.

Hammitt (1980: 107) divides the tourism experience into five sequential stages:

- **Travel Expectations:** Includes planning and anticipation prior to the journey.
- **Journey to the Destination:** The travel phase leading to the destination.
- **On-Site Experience:** Activities and experiences at the destination itself.
- **Return Journey:** The process of traveling back home.
- **Recollection:** Reflecting on and remembering the experience after returning.

Building on Hammitt's model, Craig-Smith and French (1994) condensed it into three broader stages:

- **Expectation Stage:** Experiences during preparations and anticipation before the trip.
- **Experiential Stage:** Includes the journey to the destination, the time spent at the destination, and the return trip.
- **Reflection Stage:** Revisiting memories and reflecting on the trip after returning home.

Aho (2001: 34-36) expands on the tourism experience by proposing a seven-stage model:

- **Orientation:** Initial interest and awareness of a potential trip.
- **Attachment:** Strengthened interest leading to the decision to travel.
- **Visit:** The actual travel and experiences at the destination.
- **Evaluation:** Comparing the experience with past trips and alternatives to derive insights for future journeys.
- **Storage:** Preserving memories through photos, souvenirs, and personal recollections.
- **Reflection:** Recalling and reliving the experience repeatedly.
- **Enrichment:** Continuous engagement with the trip through interactions with souvenirs, photos, or practices developed during the trip.

Arnould et al. (2004) propose a four-stage model emphasizing the consumer journey:

- **Anticipated Consumption Experience:** Encompasses intention setting, destination research, planning, budgeting, and imagining the trip.
- **Purchase Experience:** Selecting and booking elements like accommodations, transportation, and other services.

- **Consumption Experience:** Experiencing sensory pleasures, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, excitement, flow, and personal transformation during the trip.
- **Post-Consumption and Nostalgia Experience:** Reflecting on the trip, reviewing photos, sharing stories, comparing with past experiences, reminiscing with friends, and imagining “what-if” scenarios.

Each model emphasizes a different aspect of the tourism experience, but common themes emerge, such as anticipation, on-site experience, and post-trip reflection. While some models focus on the emotional and sensory aspects, others integrate practical steps like planning and purchase decisions. Together, these frameworks highlight the multifaceted and evolving nature of the tourism experience, providing a comprehensive lens through which it can be analyzed.

MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

Museums are widely recognized as non-profit organizations that contribute to society through their socio-cultural functions. At the same time, they also provide significant economic benefits to their host destinations (Jansen-Verbeke and van Rekom, 1996: 366). Museums act as attractions that draw visitors and tourists, thereby directly or indirectly boosting the local economy (Keleş, 2003: 2). Within the tourism sector, museums are considered recreational enterprises (Kozak, Akoğlan Kozak and Kozak, 2015: 90).

As attractions that are integral to the tourism industry, museum experiences often align closely with general tourism experiences. However, museum experiences also possess unique characteristics that set them apart, making them distinct in their own right.

To better understand the experiences visitors have in museums, it is essential to first explore their motivations, typologies, and expectations. By doing so, the unique nature of the museum experience can be fully appreciated and its connection to the broader context of tourism better defined.

Motivations of Museum Visitors

Researchers studying museum visitor typologies often base their models on the motivations behind the visits. Prominent studies on this topic include those by Jansen-Verbeke and van Rekom (1996), Falk, Moussouri, and Colulson (1998), and Packer (2008). Commonly identified motivations across these classifications include learning, enjoyment, pleasure, well-being, relaxation, and socialization.

Jansen-Verbeke and van Rekom (1996: 370-374) categorize museum visitor motivations into five key areas:

Socialization: Visitors are motivated by the opportunity to share the museum experience with others (e.g., friends or family) or to interact with new people they meet during the visit. Socialization may involve discussing the museum's collections, exchanging perspectives, or simply enjoying the presence of others in the space.

Learning: This motivation stems from a desire to gain knowledge, discover new information, or engage with the history and background of exhibits. It includes seeking thought-provoking content or materials that expand intellectual horizons.

Curiosity: Curiosity is driven by esthetic appeal and emotional stimulation. Visitors motivated by curiosity often enjoy observing exhibits, discovering unique artifacts, experiencing art in its original form, or simply being captivated by the beauty and creativity on display.

Enhancing Life Value: Museums are often viewed as meaningful and enriching places. Visitors may seek to enhance their quality of life, feel a sense of fulfillment, or stay active and engaged by exploring a museum. These motivations connect the experience to a broader sense of personal enrichment.

Relaxation: Given that museum visits are typically occasional activities, relaxation is a common motivation. This includes seeking a temporary escape from daily routines, unwinding, or finding a peaceful and restorative environment within the museum setting.

These motivations highlight the multifaceted reasons people visit museums, demonstrating their role as not only educational and cultural spaces but also as places for recreation, emotional connection, and personal growth. Understanding these motivations helps in designing museum experiences that resonate with diverse visitor needs.

Falk, Moussouri, and Coulson (1998: 108) identify six distinct categories of motivations for museum visitors. These categories provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing why people visit museums:

Place (Location): Visitors are motivated by the symbolic significance of museums within a destination. For tourists, especially those on vacations or day trips, museums are often seen as cultural or entertainment landmarks of the destination. This motivation reflects the desire to explore what is considered representative of the local identity or heritage.

Learning (Education): Rooted in the esthetic, informational, or cultural value of museums, this motivation centers on visitors' interest in acquiring knowledge. While some may visit museums to learn about specific topics, most are drawn by a general expectation of gaining new insights or being intellectually stimulated, regardless of the subject matter.

Life Cycle: This motivation is connected to an individual's lifestyle and habits. For many, visiting museums becomes a routine part of life. For instance, individuals who visited museums during childhood often continue to do so in adulthood, and may even pass on this tradition by visiting museums with their own children or loved ones.

Socialization: Similar to the life cycle motivation, socialization emphasizes the communal aspect of museum visits. Visitors driven by this motivation see museum outings as opportunities to engage in shared experiences with

family, friends, or acquaintances, fostering connections and spending quality time together.

Entertainment: This motivation relates to the recreational value of museums. Visitors may seek to use their leisure time in enjoyable and engaging ways, aiming for a fun or intriguing experience in a relaxing and pleasant environment. Museums often serve as venues for both casual exploration and immersive enjoyment.

Practical Considerations: Practical factors often complement or influence other motivations. Examples include weather conditions, proximity and ease of access to the museum, availability of time, crowd levels, entrance fees, or access rights (e.g., museum membership or cards). These considerations, though secondary, can significantly impact the decision to visit a museum.

These motivations highlight the diversity of visitor interests and underscore how both intrinsic desires (e.g., learning, socializing) and external factors (e.g., accessibility, time) converge to shape the museum-going experience. By understanding these categories, museums can better cater to a wide range of visitor needs and preferences.

Packer (2008: 42-50) classifies museum visitors' motivations into five key categories, reflecting the diverse needs and expectations that drive people to engage with museum experiences:

Learning (Education): This motivation involves the desire to acquire new knowledge, reinforce or deepen previously learned information, and develop cultural awareness.

Enjoyment (Entertainment): Visitors in this category are drawn to experiences outside their daily routines, such as viewing intriguing objects and collections, participating in fun and exciting activities, and finding joy in social interactions.

Well-Being (Feeling Good): This motivation relates to the benefits visitors derive from the museum experience. It includes personal development, a sense of accomplishment, and the satisfaction of engaging in activities that enhance self-confidence and competence.

Restoration: Focused on emotional and social expectations, this motivation includes the desire to immerse oneself in the ambiance of the museum, escape the demands of daily life, experience "flow" and connect harmoniously with others. It emphasizes the transformative and restorative potential of museum visits.

Relaxation: A personal motivation characterized by the need for tranquility and calm. Visitors motivated by relaxation seek peaceful, soothing,

and stress-free environments that provide a respite from the busyness of everyday life.

These categories reveal how museums cater to a spectrum of motivations, from intellectual curiosity to emotional renewal and relaxation. By understanding these diverse drivers, museums can design experiences that resonate with their audience and enhance the overall visitor experience.

These classifications help museums better understand their audience's diverse needs and behaviors, enabling them to tailor experiences that cater to different visitor profiles. Museum visitors can also be classified into various typologies based on factors beyond their motivations. These include the groups they belong to, their approach to exploring exhibitions, their movement patterns within the museum, demographic characteristics such as age, and their levels of interest and experience (Mokatren et al., 2019: 384).

Museum Visitor Typologies

Early studies on museum visitors categorized them into two simple groups: those who visit museums and those who do not. Hood (1983: 50-51) refined this simplistic and somewhat limited typology by examining visitors based on the frequency of their visits. He divided them into three groups: *nonparticipants* (those who almost never visit museums), *occasional participants* (those who visit sporadically), and *frequent participants* (those who regularly visit museums). Similarly, typologies proposed by Serrell and Becker (1990), Dean (1994), and Sparacino (2002) focus on categorizing visitors based on the time spent in museums and their levels of interest. On the other hand, Veron and Levasseur (1983) developed an intriguing ethnographic model that groups museum visitors into four archetypes: *Ants*, *Fish*, *Butterflies*, and *Grasshoppers* who focus deeply on a few selected exhibits while skipping others.

Currently, the most prominent and widely used typology in the literature is the framework developed by Falk and Dierking. Initially comprising five visitor types, this model was later expanded to include eight distinct categories (Falk, 2009; Falk and Dierking, 2013, 2018).

When analyzing museum visitor typologies, researchers generally take one of two approaches. Some, like Falk and Dierking (2009, 2013, 2018) and Veron and Levasseur (1983), focus on personal characteristics such as visitors' reasons for visiting, behaviors, and habits within museums. Others, such as Serrell and Becker (1990), Dean (1994), and Sparacino (2002), categorize visitors based on measurable aspects like the time spent in museums and the

frequency of visits. These typologies highlight the diversity of museum visitors, providing valuable insights for tailoring museum experiences to meet the varying needs and preferences of different audience segments.

Veron and Levasseur Typology

Veron and Levasseur developed a typology of museum visitors based on ethnographic observations of visitors at the Louvre Museum. They categorized visitors into four groups according to their behavior and style of navigating the museum (cited in Kuflik et al., 2012: 161-162):

Ant: This type of visitor tends to follow a systematic and orderly approach. They aim to observe almost all the exhibits, dedicating significant time to their visit. Energetic and thorough, they show a high level of engagement with the museum's offerings.

Fish: These visitors usually gravitate toward the center of galleries, wandering without a clear focus. They avoid getting too close to the collections and exhibits, showing little interest in details or individual artifacts.

Butterfly: Butterflies exhibit unstructured and scattered movement throughout the museum. Their paths are often influenced by the museum's physical layout and other factors, such as the presence of other visitors. They frequently stop to explore areas that capture their attention, often seeking additional information about specific exhibits.

Grasshopper: Grasshoppers spend extended periods focused on particular artifacts or collections of personal interest. However, they pay little or no attention to the rest of the museum's offerings.

Veron and Levasseur noted that visitors do not necessarily adhere to a single behavioral pattern throughout their visit (Kuflik et al., 2012: 162). For example, a visitor initially classified as a "Fish," wandering passively through galleries, might later transition to spending significant time engaging deeply with one or more specific collections.

Research by Zancanaro et al. (2007: 241-244) supports this observation. Their study found that museum visitors often start their visits displaying behaviors typical of "Butterflies" or "Grasshoppers." However, as the visit progresses and their level of interest shifts, they frequently adopt behaviors associated with "Ants" or "Fish."

This typology underscores the dynamic nature of museum visits, highlighting how visitors' interests and engagement levels can evolve throughout their experience. It also demonstrates the importance of designing museum spaces and exhibits to accommodate diverse visitor behaviors and preferences.

Serrell Typology

Serrell (1996: 48-50) criticized the tendency of museum researchers to subjectively categorize visitors by their exhibit-viewing styles, using labels like “wanderers,” “browsers,” or “explorers.” Serrell argued that such classifications are less effective and practical because visitors often exhibit diverse and fluid styles of navigating museums. Instead, Serrell proposed that classifying visitors based on the amount of time they spend in the museum is a more objective and useful approach. In an earlier study, Serrell and Becker (1990: 263) introduced a three-part typology to categorize museum visitors:

The Methodical: These visitors spend a long time in the museum, meticulously examining every exhibit. They show high levels of engagement and attention to detail.

The Sampler: This group dedicates a moderate amount of time to the museum. While they spend time observing exhibits, they engage less deeply, often moving quickly between displays.

The Transient: Transients are typically hurried and less interested, rarely stopping to examine exhibits or read descriptions. Their engagement with the museum is minimal, often limited to a brief and superficial interaction.

Serrell and Becker’s approach offers a straightforward and objective framework for understanding visitor behaviors, emphasizing time spent in the museum as a key indicator of engagement and interaction. This typology helps museum professionals design spaces and experiences that cater to different levels of visitor involvement.

Dean Typology

Dean (1994: 25-26) categorizes museum visitors into three groups based on their level of interest in the collections on display:

Casual Visitors: Casual visitors move quickly through the museum and show minimal engagement with the exhibits. They perceive the museum visit as a leisure activity but lack strong motivation, interest, or curiosity about the displays. Their interaction with the museum’s content is brief and surface-level.

Cursory Visitors: Unlike casual visitors, cursory visitors display a moderate level of interest and curiosity about the museum experience and its contents. While they may not attempt to absorb all the information or read every label, they focus more on sections or collections that particularly capture their interest. Cursory visitors tend to spend extra time exploring specific exhibits

but remain selective about how they allocate their time and energy within the museum.

Learners: Learners are a minority among museum visitors but are highly engaged with the exhibits. They examine displays in detail, read labels and descriptions carefully, and often spend extended periods in the museum. This group values the educational aspects of the museum and seeks a deeper understanding of the collections on display.

Dean's typology highlights the varying levels of engagement among museum visitors, ranging from passive interaction to in-depth exploration. This framework provides valuable insights for museums in tailoring their exhibits to cater to different types of visitors, ensuring an inclusive and enriching experience for all.

Sparacino's Typology

Sparacino (2002: 12), similar to Serrell and Becker (1990) and Dean (1994), categorizes museum visitors into three main groups based on their level of interest and the amount of time they spend in the museum. Sparacino also emphasizes the need to identify subtypes within each group:

The Greedy Visitor: This type of visitor seeks to know and see as much as possible. They have no time constraints and are eager to explore extensively.

The Selective Visitor: These visitors focus their time only on specific exhibits, often ignoring others. Their preferences are driven by their purpose for visiting or their particular interests, choosing to explore a few selected items in depth.

The Busy Visitor: Preferring to gain a general understanding of the museum without spending too much time on any particular exhibit or collection, this type of visitor quickly moves through the space. They skim the main highlights of the exhibition for an overview, without delving into details.

Falk and Dierking Typology

Falk and Dierking classify museum visitors based on their motivations, emphasizing that visitors' pre-visit motivations shape both their expectations and the experiences they have during the visit. Their typology, initially consisting of five groups, was later expanded to include eight distinct categories and is now one of the most widely referenced and utilized frameworks in museum studies (Falk, 2009; Falk and Dierking, 2013: 47-50; Falk and Dierking, 2018: 80-82). The eight visitor types are as follows:

Explorers: These visitors are naturally curious and interested in the museum and its collections. Their primary motivation is to find engaging content that leads to a rich learning experience.

Facilitators: Facilitators visit museums primarily for the benefit of others, such as their children, students, or out-of-town guests. Their experience quality is directly tied to the experiences of the people they are accompanying. This category is further divided into subgroups like "facilitating parents" and "facilitating socializers," reflecting the specific roles they play during the visit.

Professionals/Hobbyists: These visitors have a professional or personal interest in the museum's content. They visit with specific goals and are driven by a desire for in-depth learning and exploration tied to their profession or hobby.

Experience Seekers: For these visitors, a museum visit is an essential part of the destination's must-do activities. Their motivation is to say, "I've been there and done that." They prioritize enjoyment and esthetic experiences over learning.

Rechargers: Rechargers seek reflective, spiritual, or restorative experiences. Their primary motivation is to relax, re-energize, and achieve a sense of mental or emotional fulfillment.

Respectful Pilgrims: These visitors aim to honor the memory of what an institution or monument represents. They visit places of cultural or historical significance, such as memorials or landmarks, to pay their respects. Examples include visiting Anıtkabir to honor Atatürk or the Gallipoli Memorial to commemorate fallen soldiers.

Community Seekers: Community seekers look for connections between themselves and the museum's collections, seeking a sense of identity, heritage, or belonging. This group includes people visiting ethnic or religious-themed museums or fans exploring the museum of their favorite sports team.

Dutiful Students: These visitors are typically students or individuals fulfilling an assigned task or duty. Their visit is shaped by their need to complete a specific objective, such as a school project or a work-related assignment. They often limit their exploration to areas of the museum relevant to their task.

Falk and Dierking's typology provides a comprehensive understanding of the diverse motivations driving museum visits. By recognizing these distinct visitor types, museums can design tailored experiences that align with visitors' needs, ensuring that each group finds value and meaning in their visit.

Expectations of Museum Visitors

Human characteristics and behaviors are highly dynamic and complex (Sheng and Chen, 2012: 54). Accordingly, individuals' expectations from museum visits vary significantly depending on factors such as their visit purpose, visitor profile, demographic traits, and other variables. Additionally, the type, structure, and nature of a museum's collections also play a critical role in shaping visitor expectations (Falk and Dierking, 2013). Given this variability, it is challenging to compile a standard list of expectations that applies universally to all museum visitors. However, researchers have attempted to create comprehensive frameworks to capture the general expectations of museum visitors.

In one of the pioneering studies in the field, Hood (1983: 52) explored why some individuals visit museums while others do not. He identified six key expectations visitors may have from a museum experience:

- **Social Interaction:** Opportunities to be with others or engage in social activities.
- **Meaningful Engagement:** Doing something valuable or worthwhile during the visit.
- **Comfort:** Feeling at ease during the experience and not being disturbed by the physical environment.
- **Challenging Experiences:** Seeking stimulating and thought-provoking encounters.
- **Opportunities for Learning:** Access to educational experiences and new knowledge.
- **Active Participation:** Being actively involved in the experience rather than passive observation.

Yucelt (2001: 5), on the other hand, simplified visitor expectations into two primary categories:

- **Learning:** The desire to gain important and unique knowledge.
- **Entertainment and Social Rewards:** The expectation to have fun and benefit socially from the experience.

Sheng and Chen (2012: 53, 58) offered a detailed classification of visitor expectations, considering demographic factors:

- **Convenience and Entertainment:** Particularly important for women and individuals with higher education levels.
- **Cultural Enrichment:** Valued by younger visitors and those with lower income levels.

- **Personal Connection:** Establishing a sense of attachment or relevance to the exhibits.
- **Reminiscence:** Especially significant for married individuals and older visitors, focusing on nostalgia or memory.
- **Escape:** Particularly desired by single visitors seeking a break from routine.

One of the most comprehensive analyses of visitor expectations comes from Rand’s (2001: 13) “*Visitors’ Bill of Rights Declaration*”, which lists a detailed set of expectations (Table 2). This framework outlines the rights visitors should have during their museum experience, covering aspects like accessibility, engagement, and satisfaction etc.

Table 2: The Visitors’ Bill of Rights

<i>The Visitors’ Bill of Rights</i>	
<i>Expectation</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Comfort</i>	“Meet my basic needs.” Visitors need fast, easy, obvious access to clean, safe, barrier-free restrooms, fountains, food, baby-changing tables, and plenty of seating. They also need full access to exhibits.
<i>Orientation</i>	“Make it easy for me to find my way around.” Visitors need to make sense of their surroundings. Clear signs and well-planned spaces help them know what to expect, where to go, how to get there and what it’s about.
<i>Welcome / belonging</i>	“Make me feel welcome.” Friendly, helpful staff ease visitors’ anxieties. If they see themselves represented in exhibits and programs and on the staff, they’ll feel more like they belong.
<i>Enjoyment</i>	“I want to have fun!” Visitors want to have a good time. If they run into barriers (like broken exhibits, activities they can’t relate to, intimidating labels) they can get frustrated, bored, confused.
<i>Socializing</i>	“I came to spend time with my family and friends.” Visitors come for a social outing with family or friends (or connect with society at large). They expect to talk, interact and share the experience; exhibits can set the stage for this.

<i>Respect</i>	<p>“Accept me for who I am and what I know.”</p> <p>Visitors want to be accepted at their own level of knowledge and interest. They don’t want exhibits, labels or staff to exclude them, patronize them or make them feel dumb.</p>
<i>Communication</i>	<p>“Help me understand, and let me talk, too.”</p> <p>Visitors need accuracy, honesty and clear communication from labels, programs and docents. They want to ask questions, and hear and express differing points of view.</p>
<i>Learning</i>	<p>“I want to learn something new.”</p> <p>Visitors come (and bring the kids) “to learn something new,” but they learn in different ways. It’s important to know how visitors learn, and assess their knowledge and interests. Controlling distractions (like crowds, noise and information overload) helps them, too.</p>
<i>Choice and control</i>	<p>“Let me choose; give me some control.”</p> <p>Visitors need some autonomy: freedom to choose, and exert some control, touching and getting close to whatever they can. They need to use their bodies and move around freely.</p>
<i>Challenge and confidence</i>	<p>“Give me a challenge I know I can handle.”</p> <p>Visitors want to succeed. A task that’s too easy bores them; too hard makes them anxious. Providing a wide variety of experiences will match their wide range of skills.</p>
<i>Revitalization</i>	<p>“Help me leave refreshed, restored.”</p> <p>When visitors are focused, fully engaged, and enjoying themselves, time stands still and they feel refreshed: a “flow” experience that exhibits can aim to create.</p>

Source: Rand, 2001: 13.

Museum visitor expectations are diverse and influenced by a variety of personal, demographic, and contextual factors. By understanding these expectations, museums can better design their exhibits and experiences to meet the needs of different visitor groups, ensuring a more engaging and satisfying visit for all.

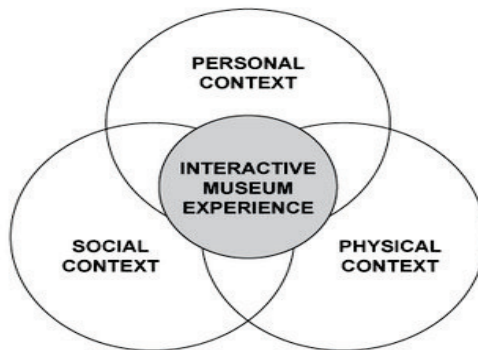
VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN MUSEUMS

In modern museology, the traditional artifact-focused approach, which often rendered visitors passive, has been replaced by a visitor-centered management philosophy. Understanding and recognizing visitors' needs, behaviors, and expectations are crucial for museum management to provide a superior experience. From the visitor's perspective, the museum experience is a multi-dimensional and complex phenomenon, encompassing their profile, motivations, typology, behaviors, and expectations, as well as events occurring before, during, and after the visit.

Museums inherently blend both tangible and intangible elements of experience. Accordingly, the visitor experience is shaped by the performance quality of the service providers and the quality of the visitors' own engagement with the museum (Kim Lian Chan, 2009: 176). The museum experience is influenced by internal factors, such as the visitor's motivation, personal characteristics, typology, level of interest, and knowledge. It is also shaped by external factors, including the museum's physical features, exhibit presentation, signage, sensory elements (such as sound, lighting, and scent), and interactions with museum staff and other visitors (Falk and Dierking, 2013: 2-3).

From the visitor's perspective, the museum experience is a complex, dynamic, and interactive process that incorporates personal, social, and physical dimensions (Duncan and Wallach, 1980: 448; Dierking and Falk, 1992: 173-174). To better understand visitor experiences, Dierking and Falk (1992) proposed an "*Interactive Experience Model*", which consists of three interconnected components (Figure 7):

Figure 7: The Interactive Experience Model.



Source: Falk ve Dierking, 1992: 176

This model emphasizes the interplay between these dimensions, illustrating how the museum visit is not only an individual but also a collective and environmental experience. This framework underscores the need for museums to address the diverse and dynamic needs of their visitors, ensuring that both internal motivations and external conditions contribute to a fulfilling and memorable experience.

In the interactive experience model, the personal context encompasses factors such as motivation, expectations, prior knowledge, interests, beliefs, choices, and decisions. The social / sociocultural context (*later redefined as sociocultural, Falk and Dierking, 2018: 148*) includes group dynamics and social interactions within or outside the group. For example, visiting a museum alone or with family impacts the experience within this sociocultural framework. Lastly, the physical context refers to the museum's environment, layout, organization, orientation, design, and external events or experiences (Falk and Dierking, 2018: 148).

According to this model, a visitor's museum experience occurs within the museum's physical context and is perceived through their unique personal context. Sharing this experience with others, whether fellow visitors or people outside the museum, constitutes the social context. Thus, the visitor experience emerges as a result of interactions between these three contexts (Gürel and Nielsen, 2019: 57).

Regardless of a museum's collections or services, their effects on visitors vary significantly from person to person. Bettelheim (1980: 8) notes that while every museum offers something valuable, the impact and meaning of that value differ greatly among individuals, even when the content remains standard. Visitors are far from a homogenous group; they consist of individuals with diverse needs, expectations, and preferences (Lang, Reeve, and Woollard, 2006: 10-11). Visitors come to museums to craft their own experiences, shaped by personal stories, knowledge, interests, perspectives, and shifting expectations (Kandemir and Uçar, 2015: 27). This suggests that museum experiences have an inherently subjective nature, varying greatly across individuals.

Although the museum experience is highly personal, it is also directly influenced by the institution's approach to visitor management. Doering (2007) identifies three perspectives museum administrations can adopt toward their visitors:

1. **Visitors as Strangers:** This traditional approach reflects a collection-focused philosophy, where the institution prioritizes its artifacts and collections over visitor engagement.

2. **Visitors as Guests:** Here, the museum views its visitors as guests and focuses on providing good service. However, this service remains standardized and does not adapt to individual visitor profiles or needs.

3. **Visitors as Clients:** This modern perspective sees visitors as clients whose needs, expectations, and demands must be understood and met. The museum aims to deliver the best possible experience and achieve visitor satisfaction, reflecting the principles of modern museum management.

Doering's perspectives align with Pine and Gilmore's (1999) experience economy model, where the focus shifts from offering products to providing services and ultimately creating personalized experiences.

Museum visitor experiences extend beyond the time spent inside the museum, encompassing pre-visit and post-visit phases. Lewis and Chambers (1989) propose a three-phase framework:

1. **Pre-Visit Phase:** This includes the decision to visit the museum, shaped by expectations and desires.

2. **During the Visit:** The core experience occurs when the visitor is physically present in the museum, often marked by the most intense emotions and engagement.

3. **Post-Visit Phase:** This includes the benefits derived from the experience, such as learning or enjoyment, as well as reactions like a desire to revisit the museum or recommend it to others.

Johns and Clark (1993: 362-363) provide a more detailed six-phase model of the museum visit process:

1. **Pre-Visit:** Expectations shaped by advertising, brochures, and other media.

2. **Arrival:** Includes the journey to the museum, finding parking, and locating the venue.

3. **Entry:** First contact with the museum, involving security checks, ticket purchasing, and queuing.

4. **Visitor Experience:** The main phase, covering the exploration of exhibits, guided tours, presentation styles, and complementary services like food, restrooms, and gift shops.

5. **Exit:** The departure process, encompassing leaving the building and the journey back home.

6. Follow-Up: Post-visit engagement, such as communication between the museum and visitor, or activities like reminiscing and sharing experiences.

This comprehensive framework underscores the multifaceted nature of museum experiences and highlights the importance of designing visitor-centered strategies that address all phases of the visitor journey.

Dimensions of Museum Experience

Studies measuring the dimensions of experience in museums often rely on models designed to evaluate customer or consumer experiences, most notably the four-dimensional approach proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1999). However, there are also models specifically tailored to focus on museum experiences. Among these, the model developed by Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990), known for its emphasis on flow experience, and the four-dimensional approach by Pekarik, Doering, and Karns (1999) stand out as significant contributions.

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson Model

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) outline four dimensions of the museum experience: *perceptual*, *emotional*, *intellectual*, and *communication*. These dimensions collectively capture the multifaceted nature of how visitors engage with museums.

Perceptual Dimension: This is the first and most critical dimension of the museum experience. It encompasses the overall perceptions visitors form based on the visual and informational attributes of exhibits, such as beauty, form, color, and accompanying written descriptions. These elements combine to create a holistic perceptual impact on the visitor (1990: 29-33).

Emotional Dimension: The second dimension pertains to the emotional responses elicited by the museum or its collections. This includes feelings of awe, joy, pleasure, love, hatred, anger, disappointment, or other emotional reactions that result from engaging with the exhibits (1990: 38-41).

Intellectual Dimension: The intellectual dimension involves understanding the technical or subject-specific aspects of the collections, often requiring specialized knowledge or interest. For instance, to fully appreciate an art exhibit, a visitor may benefit from knowing about art history, painting styles, techniques, and the artists themselves. Such knowledge enhances the depth of the museum experience at a cognitive level (1990: 53-61).

Communication Dimension: This dimension refers to the exchange of thoughts and feelings about the exhibits. Communication can occur between visitors and museum staff, among visitors themselves, or even symbolically between the visitor and the artist. Although not a direct interaction, this symbolic connection with the creator of the work enriches the visitor's experience (1990: 62-71).

This model underscores the diverse layers of engagement that contribute to a rich and memorable museum experience, highlighting the interplay of sensory perceptions, emotional responses, intellectual engagement, and meaningful communication.

Pekarik, Doering, and Karns Model

Pekarik, Doering, and Karns (1999) investigated the relationship between visitors' pre-visit expectations and their satisfaction with the museum experience. Their research revealed that pre-visit expectations can either direct visitors toward specific exhibits, objects, or ideas or, conversely, deter them from certain elements of the museum. These expectations significantly influence the visitor's overall experience and the degree of satisfaction they derive from the visit (Kirchberg and Tröndle, 2012: 438-439). As part of their study, Pekarik and colleagues compiled a list of satisfying experiences that museum visitors commonly seek and categorized these experiences into four dimensions (Table 3):

Object Experiences: Unlike the other dimensions, object experiences do not focus on the visitor but on something external. This dimension encompasses visitors' reactions to the authenticity, value, or beauty of displayed objects and their imaginative connection to them, such as fantasizing about owning the object.

Cognitive Experiences: This dimension centers on activities aimed at acquiring knowledge or enriching the visitor's understanding. It emphasizes the interpretive and intellectual aspects of the museum experience, satisfying those seeking educational engagement.

Introspective Experiences: Introspective experiences involve personal and reflective reactions triggered by an exhibit or object. These experiences are deeply individual and can include imagining, reflecting, remembering, or forming emotional connections, creating a private, introspective journey for the visitor.

Social Experiences: Social experiences focus on interactions with others, such as friends, family, fellow visitors, or museum staff. These interactions

can occur during or after the visit, emphasizing the communal and relational aspects of the museum experience.

Table 3: Dimensions of Museum Experience

<i>Museum Experiences</i>	Actions triggering the experience
<i>Object Experiences</i>	Seeing the real thing
	Seeing rare / uncommon / valuable objects
	Being moved by beauty
	Thinking what it would be like to own such things
	Continuing my professional development
<i>Cognitive Experiences</i>	Gaining information or knowledge
	Enriching my understanding
<i>Introspective Experiences</i>	Imagining other times or places
	Reflecting on the meaning of what I was looking at
	Recalling my travels / childhood experiences / other memories
	Feeling a spiritual connection
	Feeling a sense of belonging or connectedness
<i>Social Experiences</i>	Spending time with friends / family / other people
	Seeing my children learning new things

Source: Pekarik, Doering and Karns, 1999: 155-156

This model highlights the diversity of motivations and satisfactions that museums provide to their visitors, emphasizing the importance of addressing various dimensions—external engagement, intellectual enrichment, personal reflection, and social interaction—to create a holistic and fulfilling experience.

CONCLUSION

The museum experience is not just a casual interaction with exhibits; it is a multidimensional journey that encompasses intellectual, emotional, and sensory engagement. Museums, by their very nature, provide a unique blend of tangible and intangible elements that stimulate the senses, provoke thought, and evoke emotions. These experiences occur in a structured environment designed to bridge the past and present, offering visitors a chance to explore history, culture, art, and science in ways that are deeply personal yet universally relatable.

In today's dynamic museology landscape, the traditional artifact-centric approach has given way to visitor-centered strategies that prioritize meaningful and personalized interactions. Museums now strive to craft experiences that cater to diverse visitor needs, creating spaces where learning meets leisure, reflection meets discovery, and the individual connects with the collective. This evolution underscores the importance of viewing museums as more than mere repositories of artifacts; they are, instead, vibrant arenas for intellectual enrichment, emotional resonance, and cultural dialogue.

The visitor experience in museums is a rich and complex phenomenon that transcends the mere act of observing exhibits. It begins long before a visitor steps through the doors, shaped by pre-visit expectations influenced by advertising, word-of-mouth, and personal interests. During the visit, this experience reaches its peak, engaging visitors through interactive displays, thoughtfully curated collections, and sensory-rich environments. Even after the visit, the experience continues to resonate, as visitors reflect on what they have learned, share their experiences with others, and decide whether to return or recommend the museum to friends.

Theoretical models, such as those by Falk and Dierking (1992), emphasize the interplay of personal, social, and physical contexts in shaping these experiences. The personal context includes the visitor's motivations, prior knowledge, interests, and expectations. The social context reflects interactions with companions, other visitors, or museum staff, and the physical context encompasses the museum's layout, design, and sensory elements. Together, these dimensions create a dynamic, interactive process that is as unique as the individuals experiencing it.

Frameworks like the Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) model and the Pekarik, Doering, and Karns (1999) model highlight the multifaceted nature of museum experiences. Visitors may be captivated by the perceptual beauty

of an artifact, experience deep emotional connections, engage in cognitive enrichment, or find themselves introspectively reflecting on personal memories and associations. Social interactions, whether with friends, family, or even strangers, add another layer of richness, turning the museum into a space for collective learning and shared moments.

The subjective nature of museum experiences means that the same exhibit can evoke vastly different reactions among visitors. For some, a museum visit is a deeply introspective journey; for others, it is an opportunity to learn new facts, connect with cultural heritage, or simply enjoy a leisurely activity. These variations highlight the importance of museums adopting visitor-centered management approaches, as proposed by Doering (2007). Whether visitors are seen as strangers, guests, or clients, the institution's attitude shapes their experience profoundly, aligning with the modern principles of the experience economy.

Museums that view visitors as active participants, rather than passive observers, can transform the act of visiting into a memorable journey. This perspective requires museums to not only focus on the quality of their collections but also create environments that encourage exploration, foster curiosity, and provide opportunities for interaction. From offering clear pre-visit communication to ensuring smooth on-site navigation and delivering post-visit engagement, every touchpoint becomes a chance to enhance the visitor's journey.

In conclusion, the museum experience is not a static event but a transformative process that bridges the past and present, personal and collective, tangible and intangible. By embracing a visitor-centric approach, museums can craft experiences that inspire, educate, and resonate long after the visit ends, solidifying their role as dynamic spaces for cultural, intellectual, and emotional growth.

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