

# What is Experience Quality and How it is Formed?

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**Abstract-** Experience Quality is a variable that is widely used in research across the tourism spectrum. The origin of a concept must be known by researchers in order to better understand and place it in a particular field of research. This study discusses how the quality of experience is formed and what variables precede it. After the history and predecessor variables are explained, then the dimensions that make up the quality of experience are analyzed. This research is expected to clarify the concept of quality of experience and help researchers understand this concept for use in further research.

**Keyword:** *Experience quality, service quality, tourism.*

## Introduction

This paper aims to track the developments and the conceptualizations of experience quality. By reviewing relevant literature, we can evaluate how the experience quality is formed and what preceded it.

The conceptualization came from various theoretical framework, particularly the service quality. Service quality is defined as the quality of service attributes controlled by the supplier. Service quality is very widely used in the context of tourism to confirm expectations of consumers (Parasuraman et al., 1985). According to Lewis and Booms (1983) in Parasuraman et al. (1985), service quality is used to measure how well a service delivered to consumers can meet expectations. However, the dimensions offered by service quality are too limited to cover all aspects of quality (Fick & Ritchie, 1991). The dimensions contained in service quality are deemed incapable of representing subjective aspects beyond what the producers offer, so that in the end the experience quality variable is then used to complete the dimensions that are not in service quality.

## How service quality became experience quality

The quality of experience tends to be evaluated holistically and focuses on internal factors rather than external factors. Internal factors are factors that come from within the visitor, while external factors come from the environment. In the context of tourism, the quality of experience refers to a psychological aspect, which is further the result of visitor participation in tourism activities (Chen & Chen, 2010). This visitor participation can be seen in the forms of affective responses to their environment. One form of activity is the interaction between visitors and other parties who contribute to the experience provided in these tourism activities (Kim et al., 2007).

The success of tourism industry players is not only determined by the process of delivering services in accordance with consumer expectations, but also how industry players can provide a good experience so that visitors can subjectively enjoy the service products offered. After visitors feel what is offered by the producer, they will then conduct an assessment. Lemke et al. (2011) stated that the quality of experience is an assessment

made by customers for the experience they feel.

Experience quality is the level of pleasure or annoyance of users (in this case tourists) in consuming services (Moller & Raake, 2014). The quality of experience is the result of fulfilling expectations in accordance with the individual's personality and actual conditions during the process. The meaning is that the quality of the experience felt by visitors can be influenced by the individual's personality related to the actual condition that is felt at that time, where the actual condition is a certain moment or time where an individual feel something, thinks, and acts. This has been suggested by Crompton et al. (1995) in which their study stated that the quality of experience involves various attributes brought by visitors, not just what service providers offer. The various attributes brought by the visitors were re-explained as aspects of subjectivity such as psychological aspects and emotional responses. Moller and Raake (2014) suggest that the quality of experience is a condition in which individuals carry out an assessment process both during and after experiencing an experience. The process of assessing this experience is considered more subjective because it depends on the feeling of the visitor in consuming the experience in the activity (Chen & Chen, 2010).

**The nature of experience quality build upon experts**

In relation to the tourism context, the quality of experience is also defined as a psychological outcome of visitor participation in tourism activities (Wu et al., 2014; Jin et al., 2015) which further strengthens the concept put forward by Crompton (1995) which suggested that the quality of experience involves various attributes carried by visitors. This aspect of subjectivity is also reiterated by Otto and Ritchie (1996), Fernandes and Cruz (2016) that the quality of experience is the subjective response of each individual when they participate in tourism activities. Research on experiences in the tourism industry is based largely on emotional, physiological and intellectual assumptions.

Based on the explanation of some of the concepts of quality of experience above, below is revealed about the recapitulation of definition from several experts about the concept.

**Table 1. Recapitulation of definition of experience quality**

| No. | Author                      | Definition  |
|-----|-----------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Chen & Chen<br>(2010)       | The quality of the experience is the result of the participation of visitors in tourism activities.   |
| 2.  | Fernandes & Cruz<br>(2016)  | The quality of experience is the subjective response of each individual when they participate in tourism activities.  |
| 3.  | Cole & Chancellor<br>(2009) | Experience quality is the psychological result of visitors participating in tourism activities.   |
| 4.  | Lemke et al.<br>(2011)      | The quality of experience is an assessment made by the customer for the experience he feels.  |
| 5.  | Jin et al. (2015)           | The quality of experience is defined as a psychological result of visitor participation in tourism activities   |
| 6.  | Moller & Raake<br>(2014)    | The quality of experience is the result of fulfilling expectations in accordance with the individual's personality and actual conditions during the process |

### **The dimensions of experience quality**

Otto and Ritchie (1996) explain the definitions of the 4 variables stated.

- Hedonic (hedonics) is related to the affective response of visitors to Subak-based historical tours such as joy, comfort, and impression.
- Peace of mind relates to the need for safety and physiological and psychological comfort when visiting tourism destinations.
- Involvement is related to the desire to have control and choice in the services offered, as well as the need to be educated, provided with information, and inspired by mutually beneficial cooperation between destination service industry players and visitors.
- Recognition is related to feelings of importance and attention by the producer.

### **Conclusion**

Because the quality of experience is subjective, there are many perspectives that form the dimensions of the quality of experience (Fedler & Ditton, 1986). According to Otto and Ritchie (1996) in their research in the hospitality sector, flights and tourist attractions, 4 factors that make up the quality of experience are hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, and recognition. Cole and Scott (2004) revealed 3 factors that shape the quality of experience, namely entertainment, education, and community, which are included in their research in the zoo industry. Cole and Chancellor (2009) stated that the quality of the experience consists of programs, amenities, and entertainment. This was included in their research which concentrated on festivals held in downtown Indiana, United States. Kao et al. (2008) stated that the quality of experience consists of immersion, surprise, participation, and fun. The same dimension is also applied in research conducted by Jin et al. (2015). Lemke et al. (2011) in their research stated that the quality of experience consists of 4 dimensions, namely hedonism of product category, involvement, product complexity, and relationality.

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