

Quality Visitor Experience On Post Pandemic Event: Evidence From The Event Of Jakarta Biennale 2021

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world at the beginning of 2020 has dealt a heavy impact on tourism activities globally, including the limitation of tourism events such as festivals or exhibitions. An adaptation step in organizing events by implementing added health and CHSE protocols create different visitor experience. This research then aims to examine the quality of the visitor experience at the Jakarta Biennale 2021 event as the first major art exhibition event to be held offline with the CHSE protocol. The quality of the visitor experience is reviewed in 7 qualitative descriptive dimensions of memorable tourism experiences, then the analysis is carried out using gap analysis. The findings show that the implementation of the CHSE protocol resulted in gaps in two dimensions of visitor experience (which are involvement and refreshment), but in general, does not reduce the quality of the visitor experience at the Jakarta Biennale event. As an implication, the implementation of the CHSE protocol can be continued and applied in the organizing of other events with some improvement.

Keywords: Quality Visitor Experience, Tourism Experience, CHSE Protocol, Event Organizing, Post-Pandemic Event

A. Introduction

The global pandemic due to the Covid-19 virus at the beginning of 2020 has caused significant changes in the world tourism industry, including Indonesia. The pandemic has paralyzed various economic activities, including tourism activities, and forced all countries, including Indonesia, to prevent the rapid spread of Covid-19. In Indonesia, the policy issued by the government to prevent and controlling of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is by implementing health protocols and imposing Large-Scale Social Restrictions on Community Activities since March 2020 (Purnomo et al., 2021; Tuwu, 2020).

The implementation of this regulation, in addition to having a positive impact on reducing the spread of the Covid-19 virus, has a negative impact felt by the tourism industry, especially MICE. With these restrictions, the MICE Industry must limit business activities by postponing or canceling events from 2020 to 2021 (Whitfield et al., 2014). As a result of the cancellation, the Indonesian Exhibition Companies Association (Asperapi) recorded the impact of losses incurred, reaching 44.3 trillion rupiahs. Asperapi also mentioned that 90% of events are canceled or postponed until the end of 2020 due to the regulation of restrictions (Kompas.com, 2020).

To increase tourism activities, especially MICE, the Ministry of Tourism and related ministries are trying to develop strategies so that the implementation of tourism activities and controls for the prevention of COVID-19 can go hand in hand. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy then compiled and published guidelines for implementing Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability (CHSE) for various tourism activities, including MICE, at the end of 2020. The CHSE MICE guidelines issued are expected to be a guideline and reference for every institution and industry stakeholder in carrying out their activities related to MICE activities amid a pandemic atmosphere (Lexico.com, 2020).

Along with the CHSE MICE guidelines and the socialization that has been carried out, handling the pandemic is also getting better and more controlled. Gradually various economic activities, including tourism activities in Indonesia, began to grow again. With the rise of tourism activities, especially MICE in Indonesia, it is interesting to observe how the CHSE protocol is implemented in an event. On the reverse side, it is also interesting to know the visitors' response to adding new procedures to attend an activity or event. The visiting experience gained by visitors or tourists differs from the experience of visiting before the pandemic. This circumstance is the focus of this research, by taking a case study at the 2021 Jakarta Biennale Fine Arts Exhibition, held from November 21, 2021, to January 21, 2022. Jakarta Biennale is an international contemporary art exhibition held regularly in Jakarta. This exhibition was first initiated by the Jakarta Arts Council in 1974 under the name of the Great Indonesian Painting Exhibition

and became an international exhibition in 2009. Since its inception, it has sought to organize a creative, participatory, and collaborative urban space for its citizens until now. It has collaborated with various parties, including the government, citizens, artists, and the ecosystem of creative workers, to revive the dynamics of urban culture and develop the city's economy. The theme chosen for each of its editions is an attempt to expand the discourse of cultural and visual arts, especially those that inspire and spark conversations to respond to the changes that continue to occur in all aspects of life. As the most extended contemporary art activity in Indonesia's history, for 47 years, the Jakarta Biennale has documented what is said and done about art in the world around us. It has become a benchmark in the art world in Indonesia (Irawan, 2022).

The results of this research are expected to guide event organizers in implementing the CHSE protocol and its impact on the visiting experience. In addition, the results of this study can encourage increased opportunities for better event organizing during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

B. Literature Review

Special Events

A Special Event is a meeting generally held from a few hours to several days and designed to celebrate, honor, discuss, sell, teach about, encourage, observe, or influence human effort (Matthews, 2015). Green (2018) revealed that special events serve as an attraction and aim to provide a unique experience for visitors. Visitors attending special events are interested in various events such as major sporting events, cultural festivals, and others. Therefore it is essential to know what the public needs and wants. The reason visitors choose to attend a special event can begin with visitor characteristics such as age and income (demographics), place of residence (geography), and travel expenses (behavior). Participation in the implementation of special events is voluntary, and visitors are free to decide to participate in events (Kenneth, 1997).

Special Events became the most popular way for local communities to provide recreational opportunities to community members and attract tourists and income (Silvers, 2012). Special events can function as sustainable attractions while fulfilling social and cultural roles in communities at the community level is very important (Michelini & Theodoraki, 2017). Special events have varied activities, from celebrating unique moments with ceremonies and rituals to promoting sporting events to providing opportunities for recreation and social interaction beyond the daily experience (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2011). Noor (2013) divides events based into special category categories: leisure events; cultural events; personal events; corporate events. Special events can be held, from simple and small individual events such as birthday parties or weddings to significant events. Special events such as the Olympic Games can also be held with a broader

complexity internationally. Because of the type of activity, each event has its uniqueness to support implementing a special event. Quoting (Bowdin et al., 2006): "If a special event is planned correctly, the results will be profitable for the company. A good planning procedure would consider what best suits the company and its goals." The results will benefit the company/corporation if the special event is carefully planned. Good planning will give good results for the company and the achievement of its goals.

With its travel restrictions and social distancing, the virus outbreak was implemented, and business tourism (MICE) brings a promising growth path for emerging markets looking to diversify their tourism products. However, global travel restrictions, the imposition of social distancing protocols, and the limitation of activities have forced business tourism (MICE) to adapt to the pandemic. WHO reports that 96% of all tourist destinations worldwide have even imposed travel restrictions since April 2020 (TTG MICE, 2020).

Visitor Experience

Visitor experience refers to the understanding of the concept of tourism experience. Kim describes the tourism experience as "subjective experiences that tourists construct while consuming different products (Kim et al., 2012). The tourism experience can be a Memorable Tourism Experience, which is an indicator that influences tourists' decision-making in visiting a tourist destination as a memorable travel experience (Walter, 2007). Tourism experience must have seven dimensions in order to be memorable tourism experience. The seven dimensions of memorable tourism experiences are Hedonism, refreshment, novelty, culture and social interaction, knowledge, meaningfulness, and involvement (Bakar et al., 2021).

Hedonism is a tourist experience related to the fulfillment of personal tourist satisfaction. Hedonism is considered good according to the pleasure it brings. In other words, Hedonism is contrary to something considered unsuitable, such as only bringing distress, suffering, and unpleasantness. Refreshment is an element of experience that covers the needs of tourists in eliminating their saturation. Refreshment is an element or an activity that aims to refresh the condition of the body and mind caused by the dense activity that drains a lot of body and mind energy. The condition of the body and mind is getting refreshed through entertaining themselves and doing leisure activities.

Novelty is an element of novelty in the experience obtained by tourists in tourist destinations. Novelty is an element of originality or a new finding. Novelty also discovered what others have yet to discover. Finding new knowledge gaps, problems, methods, and even atmospheres in tourist destinations. Culture and social interaction are related to the tourist experience in interacting with the community and local culture around tourist destinations. Culture is complex and

includes knowledge of beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and others obtained by humans as members of society. Social interactions are dynamic social relationships that concern the relationship between individual people, between- human groups, and between individual people and human groups. Social interaction is the key to a social activity because everyday life between humanity would not be created without this.

Knowledge is the experience of tourists that adds the knowledge and insight they have during the trip. Knowledge or insight is the awareness and understanding of facts, truths, and information gained through experience or learning and can also be through introspection. Knowledge is information and data obtained to provide information of the correct value to the general public. Meaningfulness as a tourist experience in maturing and developing themselves during tourist activities. Meaningfulness is considered necessary, proper, and coveted and provides exceptional value for a person. A person has felt and found meaningfulness, then it will lead to a significant and precious life.

Involvement relates to tourist participation in the creation of experiences during travel. Involvement is the engagement of intentions or motivational parts generated by a particular stimulus or situation and is addressed through appearance traits. Engagement is the level of individual relationships in a tourist product or travel service. Understanding visitor's (tourist and tourism) experiences is identified by four frames: meanings, benefits, satisfaction, and experience-based (Borrie and Birzell, 2001 in Jennings, 2009). Furthermore, Jennings suggests that quality tourism experiences research be contextually situated in a specific time and space and by participants in specific social groups (Jennings et al., 2009).

C. Research Methods

A descriptive analysis method is a form of research in the form of fact-finding with the correct interpretation; when an event is adequately described, questions about relationships, differences, and development can be asked. The descriptive analysis method can be interpreted as helpful research by paying attention to specific information using sampling surveys to describe events appropriately.

Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to visitors of the Jakarta Biennale 2021. The questionnaire was distributed online to groups of people who shared their visiting experience on social media Instagram. The questionnaire is filled in indirectly through Google Docs and distributed to visitors during and after the Jakarta Biennale 2021 from January to March 2022. Respondents were obtained using the snowball sampling technique, targeting 100 visitors. However, in the data collection process, the number of visitors who responded and were willing to complete the questionnaire amounted to less than 50 people. The questionnaire results were then analyzed using Importance-

Performance Analysis (IPA) to determine the quality of the visiting experience. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is a performance appraisal instrument known for its practicality and ease of use, yet practical for demonstrating its managerial implications. IPA can assess a user's view of service by comparing attributes' performance and relative importance (Rachmawaty et al., 2021).

D. Result and Discussion

Jakarta Biennale 2021 was held back after a 4-year vacuum. Involving 38 artists from local and outside the country, this exhibition was held at the National Museum, National Awakening Museum, and public areas in the Cikini Area of Central Jakarta, from November 21, 2021, to January 21, 2022. Exhibition activities were complemented by holding other programs, such as guided tours for the community, various art workshops, symposiums, and movie screenings held online and offline. Many Jakartans took the Jakarta Biennale as an art entertainment and an Instagramable tourist destination. It can be seen from the many visitors who came, not only from among art enthusiasts, especially contemporary art but also many who made it a selfie object with the background of artistic artworks. Almost all of them were works of installation art, in addition to sculpture, painting, and crafts, as well as videos or photos. Some ordinary visitors find difficulties in understanding the meaning of the message displayed through the artworks on display, but that is the activity of seeing art exhibitions: a recreational event for the soul and mind to see the world from different sides through the fruits of the mind and emotion of the artists. Some works on display were collaborative works between domestic and foreign artists. The Jakarta Biennale has become part of the healing efforts for Jakartans through the pandemic, which is still uncertain.

Profile of Jakarta Biennale Visitor 2021

The profile of visitors to the Jakarta Biennale 2021 in this study is based on a descriptive profile of visitors between November 2021 to January 2022. The respondents' profile is primarily women (82%) aged 21-30 years old (60%), followed by the age of <20 years (12%), and only a tiny percentage of visitors over the age of 50 years. As many as 54% of respondents are in undergraduate education. Hence they hold the status of students. Viewed from the domicile, 78% of visitors come from Greater Jakarta (Jakarta, Bekasi, Depok, and Tangerang). Most visitors (84%) have just made their first visit to the Jakarta Biennale. Visits were also made with family, as much as 78% compared to visiting alone. Of the 3 (three) locations for the Jakarta Biennale 2021, most respondents visited the National Museum location (71%), followed by the Stovia Museum (18%).

Findings and Discussion

To find out the quality of the experience of visiting the Jakarta Biennale, respondents were first asked about the health procedures and CHSE that must be followed to be able to visit the Jakarta Biennale location. Furthermore, respondents answered questions about the seven dimensions of the visitor/tourism experience: Hedonism, refreshment, novelty, culture and social interaction, knowledge, meaningfulness, and involvement. Then a gap analysis was carried out using Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to determine the gap between expectations and reality obtained by visitors according to health protocols during the exhibition. The smaller the gap between hope and reality, the more qualified the visiting experience gained.

The analysis using importance-performance analysis shows that expectations and realities in 5 of the seven dimensions of tourism experiences are almost without gaps. The elaboration of the findings is as follows: the knowledge and meaningfulness dimensions both have a gap of 0%, followed by the culture and social dimension of 1%, the novelty dimension of 2%, and the hedonism dimension of 5%. Finally, there are two dimensions: the involvement and refreshment dimensions, which get a 15% gap between expectations and reality. These results can be seen more clearly in the following image:



Figure 1. Gap analysis of visiting experiences
Source: Researcher (2022)

These results show that implementing new procedures, which are health protocols and CHSE, did not create a high gap between the expectations and reality visitors got while participating in the Jakarta Biennale exhibition. In other words, the quality of the visiting experience created is relatively unchanged and maintained. Visitors are okay with implementing new protocols to visit or participate in an event, and at the same time, visitors also get a relatively similar quality of experience.

The findings also show that event visitors are open and can accept to adapt to new procedures of exhibitions or events that are held offline or face-to-face. This is in line with the Lu et al. opinion (2011) that the Covid-19 pandemic forced the MICE tourism business process to be carried out by emphasizing the demands of cleanliness and social distancing. This emphasis is implied in hygiene protocols (CHSE) and certifications issued in several countries, such as Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and various countries (Jennings et al., 2009). The implementation is assumed to continue until the pandemic ends. Jarumaneerat & Promsivapallop (2011) also sees that the pandemic has increased virtual and hybrid events and is predicted to be mainstream.

E. Conclusion

Visitor experience with health protocols applied in the Jakarta Biennale 2021 could be concluded as follow: Overall, there is no high gap between expectations and reality on the seven dimensions of the visiting experience. However, the two dimensions of involvement and refreshment have a slightly higher gap value than the other five dimensions (hedonism, novelty, culture & social interaction, knowledge, and meaningfulness). This means that implementing the CHSE protocol increases the quality of the visitor experience at the Jakarta Biennale 2021. Furthermore, implementing the CHSE protocol in the Jakarta Biennale 2021 can be continued and applied in organizing other post-pandemic events.

Referring to the gap found in the involvement and refreshment dimensions, there is a need to improve the quality of event materials prepared by event organizers in the post-COVID-19 pandemic period so that visitors can be involved more in activities and get a new refreshing experience. Jakarta Biennale event organizers also need support from the government as the regulator and supervisor to improve the ability to comply with CHSE health protocol standards for the next event. To enhance the finding, further research could focus on the quality of visitor experience of different events and events with a larger scale of activities.

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