Family Decision-Making Process on Cultural Heritage Appreciation in AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional

Gita Widya Laksmini Soerjoatmodjo*, Veronica Anastasia Melany Kaihatu

Pembangunan Jaya University, Jl Cendrawasih Tangerang Selatan 15224, Indonesia

Abstract

AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional or Weekend at Museum Nasional is a Sunday family 15-20-minute theatre program organized by a museum consultancy, @Museum, in collaboration with Teater Koma for Indonesia’s National Museum. As a follow-up research, it zooms in on the decision-making process which leads to family participation in this cultural heritage appreciation program. Semi-structured interviews in this preliminary qualitative research with families attending the program show that aspiration, prior experience and the roles of mothers contribute to the process. It is hoped that this writing would provide feedbacks to other similar initiatives which promote the appreciation of cultural heritage.

Keywords: Cultural heritage appreciation; consumer behaviour; family decision-making process; museum learning

1. Background

Quality of life is a multi-faceted concept encompasses not only sustainable environmental development but also economic, social and cultural. Hence, cultural heritage preservation plays key roles in quality of life. This would

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +6221 745-555; fax: +6221 290-4505.
E-mail address: gita.soerjoatmodjo@upj.ac.id; gita.soerjoatmodjo@gmail.com
first require an appreciation of cultural heritage.

The following is an example of a cultural heritage appreciation program. AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional or Weekend at Museum Nasional is a Sunday 15-to-20-minute theatre for family organized by a museum consultancy, @Museum, in collaboration with Teater Koma for Indonesia’s National Museum. Despite of its prime location and affordable ticket prices (0.54 USD for adult and 0.39 USD for children), this 237-year-old museum has 208,000 visitors in 2011 – rather meagre compared to 847,000 visitors per year for National Museum of Singapore or 10 million visitors per year for Louvre Museum in France (Mariana, 2013).

Inspired by more than 140,000 museum artefacts, this free-of-charge program is performed at the specific gallery where the related collection is on display to bring the audience in close proximity. These performances of *Keris Puputan Klungkung* (The Klungkung Daggers) (Teater Koma, 2013, 11 September), *Samurai Bersepeda* (The Cycling Samurai) (Teater Koma, 2013, 26 September), *Karamnya Kapal Tek Sing* (The Drowning of the Tek Sing Jung) (Teater Koma, 2013, 11 October), *Rainbnya Celengan Majapahit* (The Disappearance of the Majapahit Piggy Bank) (Teater Koma, 2014a, 4 November), *Kuda Perang Pangeran Diponegoro* (Prince Diponegoro’s War Horse) (Teater Koma, 2014a, 24 January) and *Raksasa Bhairaawa Pengasah Parang* (Bhairawa, the Blade Wielding Giant) (Teater Koma, 2014b, 24 January), are showcased from September to December 2013 and promoted via social media networks. Research done by Soerjoatmodjo (2014) highlights how storytelling be used to cultivate public engagement to appreciate cultural heritage.


This writing is a follow up from previous research done by Soerjoatmodjo (2014). It investigates further by zooming in on the decision-making process which leads to family to take part in the program. The purpose of this research is to uncover family decision-making process to participate. The objective of the writing is to address the following question: how families undertake their decision-making process to appreciate cultural heritage through AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional program?

2. Literature review

Previous research done by Soerjoatmodjo (2014) showcases how storytelling be used to create public engagement with cultural heritage. It resonates with Simşek & Kesici (2012) that creative approaches can effectively be used in museum learning by developing a sense of belonging. Günay (2012) and Shamsidar, Abbas, Yusof & Taib (2013) have documented how appreciation of cultural heritage contributes to children’s intellectual, physical, emotional, cognitive, social and aesthetical developments. Museums bring families together for quality interaction, hence it is no surprise that museums target families as main consumers (Haas, 2007). Shamsidar, Abbas, Yusof & Taib (2014) zoom in on museum learning, in which parents can shape children’s understanding about museum collection, duration of stay in the museum and the overall learning experience as facilitators.

Relation of this study to previous research is that despite of the benefits of museum learning, Lupu, Laurentiu & Norel (2013) recognize that parents prefer spending time with their children in other activities rather than taking part in cultural variants. Meanwhile, research on museum family programs in Teo, Khan & Rahim (2013) focuses only on the family duration of stay and spending behavior. Further studies are needed to examine how families get involved in cultural heritage appreciation in museums, as highlighted by Aslan & Aslan (2012). Better understanding would hopefully contribute to museums all over Indonesia - a total of 262 (Munandar et al., 2011).

From literature reviewed, issue of this research is the decision-making process undertaken by families participating in AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional. The family comprises of at least two individuals – a householder and another individual related to him/her - based on blood, marriage or adoption ties (Peter & Olson, 2010). A family comprises of members interacting and influencing each other. Family decision-making is a complex, situational as well as a dynamic process which needs to be understood as a whole.
Families, according to Tanksale, Neelam & Venkatachalam (2013), are consumers undertaking decision-making process in choosing goods and service – including cultural heritage programs as leisure activities. Rizzo & Mignosa (2013) affirm that families play key roles in cultural consumption or transaction to purchase, subscribe or obtain cultural experience.

Decision is defined as a goal-directed, problem-solving motivated act of choosing amongst two or more alternatives (Peter & Olson, 2010). In terms of cultural experience, family looks for social interaction, active participation as well as entertainment values. To achieve family goals in leisure time activities, they go through stages of Kolb (2013) decision-making process cycle, as follow:

- Problem or need recognition, e.g. what family needs to do.
- Information search, e.g. researching for information.
- Evaluation of alternatives, e.g. considering factors such as parking space and available events.
- Decision-making, e.g. reserving tickets.
- Post decision-making evaluation, e.g. discussing the experience to assess whether it matches expectation or not.

In family decision-making process, parents and children take on different roles, yet there is a two-way interaction between both. Regarding family decision-making process on leisure activities, all members play different roles. According to Peter & Olson (2010), those roles are as follow:

- Influencer - who provides information regarding particular product or service to the family.
- Gatekeeper - who controls the flow of information.
- Decider - who decides product or service.
- Buyer - who purchases product or service to be consumed.
- User - who uses the product or service.
- Disposer - who takes the role of terminating the use of product or service.

Findings from Mottiar & Quinn (2003) from leisure decision-making process shows mothers play dominant roles. Solomon (2013) highlights that, even though the process is participatory, mothers start the discussion, gather information and take action in technical aspects such as ticket reservation.

Even though the benefits of cultural heritage appreciation and museum learning are widely documented, families might not put it as a priority, partly due to other leisure activities available as alternatives. Understanding the decision-making process undertaken by families who took part in AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional would contribute to the body of knowledge regarding cultural heritage, which contributes to quality of life advancement.

3. Methodology

The methodology used in this research is as follow. Quoting Keegan (2009), qualitative research is well suited to the exploration of research areas, including new products and services at various stage of development – which applies to AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional.

This writing adopts case study because it offers strength in terms of depth, understanding in context, process and factors in the cause-and-effect relationship. Kumar (2011) argued that case study is useful to capture a holistic view of the phenomenon as it provides an overview and in-depth understanding of a case, process and interactional dynamics within a unit of study. The author realizes methodological limitations, as Merriams (2009) explains, findings cannot be generalized to a general population, yet it can be transferrable to similar settings to some degree.

Data gathering tool of this writing is semi-structured interview to allow comparisons while opening doors to flexibility (Steward & Cash, 2006). Face-to-face interviews are done with parents while children are welcome to add their views if they have any. Recordings are transcribed in verbatim to be analysed into coding. Approach used is interpretative phenomenology analysis as it allows idiographic focus to explore how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of a given phenomenon and enables a close examination of the experiences and meaning-making activities (Smith, Flowers & Larkins, 2009)

Procedures of this research are as follow. Based on data provided by @Museum team, the author identifies registered families whose children are of 6-12 years old or elementary schools, since this age group are museum learning key beneficiaries. On the day of the performance, the author greets the families, explains the research purpose, provides informed consent forms and conducts 30 to 60 minute face-to-face interviews in this purposive
sampling. This is in line with Smith & Osborn (2008) who suggest a reasonably homogenous pool of participants to capture the essential sense making in details.

Analysis of transcribed interview is done in these stages: initial readings to find coherent meaning and themes, theme identification and labelling, theme linkages and a summary table of themes with illustrative quotations – with constant reflection and re-examination for insights.

4. Findings

Throughout May-October 2014, the author interviewed 21 families, or 1 for each performance session. Interviews were transcribed and analysed, and the author picked selected families based on clarity and elaboration. This results in seven families being chosen for this writing. All parents interviewed are in their middle adulthood of 40 years old and above. Findings are derived from seven families interviewed, as described in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Descriptions</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Under grad</td>
<td>Post grad</td>
<td>Under grad</td>
<td>Post Grad</td>
<td>Post Grad</td>
<td>Under grad</td>
<td>Under grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Post grad</td>
<td>Post Grad</td>
<td>Under Grad</td>
<td>Under Grad</td>
<td>Post Grad</td>
<td>Post grad</td>
<td>Under Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Intl NGO</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Entrepreuneur</td>
<td>Public servant</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>Public servant</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>Entpreuneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of information</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
<td>Social media network</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Findings of this research show stages of the family decision-making process they undertake. In the interviews, family expresses aspirations as part of their decisions to choose cultural heritage appreciation in National Museum. This is best captured by the following quote, expressed in the reflection by the mother of Family #2 as she engages in meaning making process:

*Our aspiration is that our kids know their roots - not only because history is important in education but because it is part of their identities. Our cultural heritage is part of who we are. We wish our children appreciate cultural heritage.*

Next stage is the family prior experience. Parents of the participating family are exposed to similar past experiences, such as watching and taking part in theatres or taking part in museum educational programs. Hence, parents would like to expose the children to similar opportunities, as expressed in the reflection provided by the father of Family #7. This quote represents his sense-making insights of the process:

*When we brought our family abroad as we pursued our post-graduate degrees in Vienna, we often went to museums during the weekend for children's programs such as puppet plays and story-telling sessions. We were also active in arts and cultural activities when we were university students. So once we heard about AkhirPekan@MuseumNational from our friends, our past experience helped us decided to come.*

Reflection of family aspiration and family prior experience imply the relationship with family background, be it educational, professional as well as social. Such aspiration and prior experience contribute to considering taking part in the program. After these stages are expressed, then the families move forward to need recognition, in which the family recognizes the need to spend leisure time in the weekend. Both father and mother of Family#4 expressed the following reflective quote elaborating how their family recognises the need to have a leisure activity as a family:
Leisure time is important for our family. It is when we all recharge and regroup as a unit. Hence, we want to spend it as meaningful as possible. That is why we as a family need to have something that can be enjoyed by the whole family. Going to the museum as a family to appreciate cultural heritage is something fun and educational for everybody.

The next step is for the parent to conduct information search via social media networks, not only technical aspects of the performance such as duration and content of the performance but also the artefacts’ historical background. Mother of Family#5 expresses the following quote elaborating how she uses social media to find out more about the program:

At first, I found out about AkhirPekan@MuseumNasional from a Whatsapp message a friend sent. I looked for further information from Facebook page – about schedules of the performance, pictures of past performances as well as related historical artefacts. I showed this information to the whole family on family dinner time to be discussed. I reach out to the organizer of the event through Twitter account in order to find out more about more technical information, such as the best route to go to the museum on Sunday.

Families then go to the next stage of evaluating alternatives by considering location and schedule. Decision-making is done afterward, in which reservations via phone calls or emails are made by the parents of the participating families. Mother of Family#1 explains her reasons as quoted below:

We chose to go to the museum because of several considerations. It had educational and cultural values and it was suitable for the whole family. Also, unlike going to the malls, museum trip was very inexpensive. Going to the museum on Sunday was also pleasant – no notorious traffic jam as it coincided with Car Free Day program. We could also combine the trip with other leisure activities, such as taking a city bus tour downtown. All in all, it was a win-win leisure activity alternative for the whole family.

The last stage is post decision-making evaluation. Reflection of the sense-making insights over family-decision-making process is elaborated by the quote below, expressed by the mother of Family #3:

After this, we will have lunch and discuss about the performance, look at the pictures taken throughout the show as well as with the artefacts in the museum and talk about them, exchange views on what is interesting from the performance. We were very happy with it – the kids were entertained and we were able to find out more about our cultural heritage. We were also happy that there were other families who share the same interests with us, it was fun to come together in an event like this.

The quote above captures how the family undertakes the final stage, which is discussing the experience to assess whether it matches their expectation. As a whole, the overall stages of family decision-making process in participating in cultural heritage appreciation can be captured in the following Figure 1 below:
Compared to the existing theory on the cycle of family decision-making process stages on leisure goods and services, this finding captures that in the context of cultural heritage appreciation, family aspiration, and prior experience are two additional stages. Subjects’ reflections on the family decision-making experience uncover aspiration and prior experience of family interviewed for this research, encapsulated in the Table 2 below:

Table 2. Identified family aspiration and family prior experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Aspiration</th>
<th>Family Prior Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children to be aware of their cultural identity, to understand their historical roots, to build strong national pride as Indonesian, to develop cultural appreciation</td>
<td>Theatre, music, dance, other contemporary art forms, museum/gallery visits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings from this research also show that fathers and mothers participate differently. Mothers are key decision makers in information search, evaluation of alternatives and as decision-making, while fathers play supporting roles. Mother’s key concerns are educational and socio-cultural benefits for children. This is captured in the following Table 3.

Table 3. Dominant decision makers in stages of family decision-making process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Aspiration</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Prior Experience</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need Recognition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Search</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-Making</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Decision-Making Evaluation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further analysis of the roles of mothers shows that as consumers, they take the roles as influencer, gatekeepers, deciders and buyers for the family. Based on the information provided in the interview, the family would come to a consensus on those issues – also facilitated by mothers. Roles of mothers are captured in the Figure 2.

5. Discussion and analysis

Findings of this research are as follow. Family decision-making process is in a cycle of stages of (1) family aspiration, (2) family prior experience, (3) need recognition, (4) information search, (5) evaluation of alternatives, (6) decision-making and (7) post decision-making evaluation. Family aspiration and prior experience are added stages in this research and roles of mothers as powerful agents in family decision-making process are highlighted.

By understanding family decision-making process in cultural heritage appreciation, it is hoped to provide feedbacks to similar initiatives. It is hoped that understanding family from consumer behaviour perspective would lead to increased museum visits, better cultural heritage appreciation, continuous advancement of sustainable development and quality of life.

6. Conclusion and recommendation

Based on the retrospective evaluation, this research contributes to better understanding of family decision-making process to a cultural heritage appreciation program in National Museum. Findings lead to the identification of additional stages – family aspiration and family prior experience, in which both fathers and mothers are involved. Since mothers show a more prominent role in the process, this opens up avenues for museums or their consulting agencies to engage families as consumers. Regarding meagre number of museum visitors, museums can design programs to appeal for mothers, who will later on engage the family.

New directions are as follow. Quantitative research can serve as follow-up research to complete the picture—e.g. which artefacts are the most popular, museum visitors’ level of engagement, and so forth.

Acknowledgements

This research is made possible by a research grant from Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian Masyarakat of Pembangunan Jaya University. For the sake of transparency, it should be mentioned that the author is married to the @Museum producer. The objectivity of the writing is attempted as follow. As @Museum team provides access, the
author works independently in data gathering as well as data analysis process. Meanwhile, the level of attention to its idiosyncratic complexity of the data is ensured from the author’s role as the researcher in the previous research regarding the same program. The author also discusses the process and shares the writing to colleagues of Department of Psychology Pembangunan Jaya University for peer reviews and the author is grateful for their inputs.

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