

6-30-2016

Exploring TripAdvisor Online Reviews: The Case of George Eastman Museum

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**Exploring TripAdvisor Online Reviews:
The Case of George Eastman Museum**

By

Mussab Aljahdali

A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management

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June 30, 2016

Committee Approval

The M.S. Degree Thesis of Mussab Aljahdali has been examined and approved by the thesis committee as satisfactory for the thesis requirement for the Master of Science degree.

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Abstract

Different studies have looked at visitor related motivations and experiences under different contexts in the tourism industry. The museum-related experiences remain one of the important elements which are sought by visitors to the museums. Therefore, this study purposes to investigate and determine personal context, social context and physical contexts of George Eastman museum visitors. More importantly, the study utilised a content analysis approach in its research. The specific data about visitors to George Eastman House was obtained from the social media website TripAdvisor. The findings of the study were based on three important elements: personal context, social context and physical contexts. In the personal context based on John Falk classifications (experience seeker, explorer, facilitator, prof-hobbyist, and recharger); the experience seeker had the highest number of visitor comments about 76 reviewers, with explorer category being less represented while recharger category had the least number of visitor's comments. On the aspect of social context, about 12% reviewers indicated the social context where the socio-cultural influence was considered one of the determinants of their museum-visit experience. Furthermore, the physical context was expressed through identified dominant themes that included mansion, the museum exhibits, and George Eastman's personality. In both the analysis of negative and the positive dimensions of the themes, the mansion theme showed a higher positive response in the while the museum and the exhibits showed relatively a negative dimension in the analysis. Through a word cloud visualization approach memories and learning outcomes were analysed with findings indicating "Memory/impression of visit"; "Takes you back" (their experience of being drawn back into the past or into a personal memory of previous times, etc.); and most importantly, "Learn from the visit", were the most predominant themes in memorial and learning outcomes. This study provided important insight into visitor experiences, which can be utilised by George Eastman management to understand perceptions of visitors and thus enhance their services. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies adopt bigger samples as well as diverse contexts besides the museum in order to be able to get an in-depth insight into museum visitor's experiences.

Keywords: e-WOM, George Eastman museum, Interactive experience model, TripAdvisor, visitor experiences.

Acknowledgements

First, I thank Allah for providing me with health, patience, and knowledge to complete this work.

I would like to express my special thanks and greatest gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Muhammet Kesgin for all his guidance and support through my time at RIT. I would also like to thank my thesis committees, Dr Rick Lagiewski and Dr Carol Whitlock for the enthusiastic and motivations.

Special thanks are due to the government of Saudi Arabia for their continuous support through my scholarship period since 2009.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thankfulness to my mother, father, brothers, sisters, all other relatives, and friends for their emotional and moral support throughout my time as a student.

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction about this study. The chapter includes the following: a background of the topic, the statement of the problem that is being investigated, the purpose of the study, the research questions to be addressed, the significance of the study, and an overview of the thesis.

1.1. Background of the topic

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in studying consumption experiences. Understanding consumer behaviour through examining consumption/experiences helps researchers to realize consumer and visitor preferences, likes, and dislikes concerning services provided or experiences encountered. Experiences are an important factor to consider when attempting to understand consumer/visitor behaviour, especially in the tourism industry simply because of the intangible service nature of the industry. There are several ways that visitors express and share their experiences about a visit to a certain destination or local attraction, or even a service they have been offered. This information that is shared by visitors is an important source of data which researchers can investigate to better understand the visitor experience.

One of the ways visitors share their experiences is through the use of social media websites. Among these websites, TripAdvisor is the most popular and many visitors use it frequently when choosing hotels because the site makes it possible to share videos, photos, and have a conversation with other people. In a study by Xiang and Gretzel (2010) on the role of social media in online travel search, research results indicated that most tourists in the U.S. use social media to collect information about the destinations to which they plan to travel. The study confirmed the results after analyzing the most frequently searched names of nine U.S. travel destinations and those which were predominant in the search engines. The analysis revealed that search engine results concerning travel destinations were coming from social media websites. It was also evident that most of the visitors to these sites shared their experiences through the social media sites after travelling to some of the destinations (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

Accordingly, this thesis analyzes the dimensions of visitor experiences in the context of museums. An understanding of the dimensions of museum visitor experience will help to better manage the total experience of a visit to a museum.

Museums are known to be an important tourism attraction for tourists and visitors. This is due to their historical attraction as well as the cultural heritages associated with them. In fact, the world tourism organization (WTO) recognizes museums as contributing important economic and cultural value to the host destination (WTO, 2016). Evidence of the relation between tourism and museums is demonstrated by the large number of museum visitors who are tourists (N. G. Kotler, Kotler, & Kotler, 2008). Similarly, museums have been found to impact the attractiveness of a destination and the visitors' vacation experience (Hu & Ritchie, 1993).

The city of Rochester in the state of New York has a wide range of tourist attraction sites including 15 museums, according to Rochester Historical Society (Rochester Historical Society, 2016). These museums are considered to be a pulling factor for some visitors to the city. One of the museums is the George Eastman Museum. The museum not only has an online presence on different social media websites, including TripAdvisor, it is also considered as a tourist attraction site for the city's visitors.

The George Eastman Museum is a non-profit organization founded in 1947 in Rochester, New York. The museum is one of the oldest photography museums in the world. Several activities are provided by the museum for the community of Rochester as well as for its visitors; these activities include education and entertainment. Additionally, the museum includes a photography exhibition, George Eastman's historic mansion, the Dryden theatre, a library of literature on photography, and workshops on photographic processes (George Eastman Museum, 2016).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Over the years, Rochester museums have acted as tourist attractions for visitors to the city. George Eastman Museum is one of the museums that provides variety of experiences, i.e. learning, entertainment, garden views, cafe and photography history for visitors who come to the area. However, understanding visitor experiences in the museum context requires more substantive research and studies which can then provide more insight that can enable better management of museums. Furthermore, specific museum attributes that directly affect visitor perceptions, as well as other factors which are linked to museum visitor experiences, also need to be widely researched and understood. Therefore, as a means of providing such particular information, this study purposes to investigate various elements associated with museum visitor experiences.

1.3. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this thesis was twofold:

1. To provide a review of the literature related to museum visitor experiences.
2. To investigate museum visitor experiences based on secondary data available on the Internet, specifically online of the museum.

1.4. Research questions

Within this overall framework, the thesis has three research questions:

1. What are the dimensions related to the personal context, social context, and physical context in TripAdvisor online of the George Eastman Museum?
2. What are the positive and negative dimensions of TripAdvisor online of the George Eastman Museum?
3. What are the memory and learning-related dimensions of TripAdvisor online on the George Eastman Museum?

1.5. Significance of the study

The findings of this study will help to understand the preferences of George Eastman Museum visitors, especially the online population who, after their visits, reported their experiences to other potential visitors. The study findings will also be beneficial to the administration of the museum, offering more insights about their visitors, which will help to manage the museum visitor's experiences.

1.6. Overview of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter a background of the study, states the problem, identifies the questions formulated to explore the problem, and finally explains how this study is of importance. The second chapter is a review of the literature relevant to the museum visitor experience, the online marketing phenomena eWOM, and the interactive experience model. The third chapter explains the study settings, data collection, qualitative content analysis method, and the coding process. The fourth chapter represents the results

yielded by the research and provides relevant discussion. The fifth chapter concludes the study, presents its limitations, and provides recommendations for future studies.

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of the literature on visitor experience with particular interest paid to museums and online review platforms.

2.1. The role of eWOM on visitor experiences

Social media has in recent years become one of the essential elements in information communication technology (Ngai, Tao, & Moon, 2015). Both social media and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) have been studied in the tourism and hospitality industry. According to (Doosti et al., 2016), eWOM is an important element in the tourism industry since it is based on visitors' attitudes and intentions. This makes it a primary tool for visitors who want to relay their visit experiences about different tourism destinations. In a study by (Bigne, Andreu, Hernandez, & Ruiz, 2016) on the effect of social media—and more specifically eWOM—it was evident that eWOM is crucial in the tourism industry. A key factor contributing to its usefulness is the ability to convey important attributes of a travel destination, for example, museums, in a more efficient way.

Thus, eWOM is a significant development, especially in the tourism industry with its relevance to visitor experience (Filieri & McLeay, 2014). Furthermore, a study by Filieri and McLeay (2014) examined the importance and influence of online which are mostly based on eWOM. Their findings revealed that information accuracy, product ranking, and information relevance, as well as information timeliness, were resilient predictors of visitors' adoption of information posted on social media travel sites. This, significantly, indicates how important and central the information posted on social media is to visitors' experiences.

The significance of e-WOM to visitor experience has also been studied by various other scholars. For instance, López & Sicilia (2014), in their study on “Determinants of E-WOM Influence: The Role of Consumers' Internet Experience,” were able to analyze eWOM specifically in regard to its consumer influence. Their arguments were based on the idea that for eWOM to have a strong visitor influence, it must come from a credible source. Furthermore, the volume of information that visitors can obtain through eWOM is also very important in influencing subsequent visitor experiences at the travel destination (López & Sicilia, 2014).

Albarq's (2014) empirical study on "Measuring the Impacts of Online Word-of-Mouth on Tourists' Attitude and Intentions to Visit Jordan," established the influence of eWOM on visitor attitudes and perceptions toward a particular visit destination. The author's argument is based on the fact that consumer trust in both advertisements and media organizations has declined, making eWOM one of the more trusted sources of information for most visitors in the hospitality industry. Using structural modelling equation (SEM) techniques in his empirical study, Albarq was able to determine the causal eWOM relationships or interactions between tourists' attitudes in regard to specific travel destinations. The findings indicated that eWOM communications have a positive impact on tourists' travel intentions as well as their attitudes, hence greatly influencing their experiences (Albarq, 2014).

In addition, a conceptual study by Sotiriadis & Van Zyl (2013) revealed that eWOM influenced the decision of most visitors who travelled to different tourism destinations. Furthermore, it was evident in the study that most visitors trusted social media sites such as Twitter in making their decisions about particular travel destinations (Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2013).

Thus, in considering all these studies, the conclusion can be drawn from the existing literature that eWOM can shape visitor experience. These findings demonstrate it clearly influences decisions, as well as attitudes, concerning visiting specific travel destinations.

2.2. Studying visitor experiences

A large and growing body of literature has investigated the consumption experience in general and the museum visitor experience in particular. Numerous studies have attempted to explain visitor experiences based on conceptual frameworks (Falk & Dierking, 2012; Pine & Gilmore, 1999).

In 1999, Pine and Gilmore published a manager's guide to creating lasting value for customers in which they described the 'experience economy'. They stressed the importance of travelers' most memorable moments during their consumption of experiences, and suggested that the memory itself should be considered as the product. The authors identified four major components of consumer value, describing experiential value as comprising one or more of entertainment, education, escape, and aesthetic experiences. They define the four realms of a consumption experience, starting from the intersection of the following two dimensions: (1) customer participation in the experience, from passive (weak) to active (strong); and (2) the

individual's connection with the environment of the experience—or environmental relationship—from absorption (weak) to immersion (strong). Pine and Gilmore identified five key experience-design principles that contribute to creating memorable experiences: (1) theme the experience; (2) harmonize impressions with positive cues; (3) eliminate negative cues; (4) mix in memorabilia; (5) engage all five senses.

Another crucial contribution to this research was made by (Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007) who considered experience economy to be more than the experience of a staged setting. They expanded the concept to include the consumer's personal experiences that occur in their everyday world as well as in their social context. Therefore, the experience economy becomes based more on an individual's characteristics, rather than a generalized economy perception. In this form, it becomes a more relevant concept that is more applicable in the tourism sector (Oh et al., 2007).

Kotler et al. (2008) utilized the title of taxonomy of museum offerings to refer to the dimensions of museum experience (see Table 1).

Table 2-1 Taxonomy of museum offerings

Collections	Temporary; Permanent; Digital
Exhibitions	Traveling; Permanent; Interactive; Experiment
Experiences	Recreation; Sociability; Learning; Celebration; Issue oriented; Aesthetic
Facilities	Architecture; Landscape; Exterior space; Interior design; Entrance; Galleries; Shops; Restaurants; Cafes; Bars; Theater Space; Planetarium; IMAX Theater; Lecture Hall; Library; Laboratory; Restrooms; Parking; Zoos; Aquariums; Gardens; Security; Satellites: Shops, Galleries, Museums
Programs	Opening; Lectures; Tours: Guided, Self-Guided, Group, Specialized; Gallery Talks; Orientation; Diversity development; Member events; Benefit events; Programs and events: Family, Community, Teacher, Youth planned volunteer; Films; Concerts; Travel; Research; Donations; Pricing; Communication; Distributions; Public relations; Marketing; Staff training; Rewards; Art work space; Studios; Partnership
Publications	Texts; Labels; Newsletters; Catalogues; Reproductions; Videos; CD's; DVD's; Audio Tapes; Books; Slides; Brochures
Services	Signage; Staff; Wayfinding; Orientation; Seating; Cleanliness; Accessibility; Cloakroom; Lockers; Audio-Guides; Podcasts; Conservation; Appraisal; Archival
Web-based activities	Web site; Webcasts; E-Newsletter; E-Commerce; E-Gallery; Virtual visit; Blog sites; calendar; Tour booking; Data mining; Distance learning

Source: Kotler et al., 2008

They identified the role and relevance of almost 100 dimensions under 8 main categories: Collections, exhibitions, experiences, facilities, programs, publications, services, and web-based activities. Table 1 shows the sub-dimensions of these eight main dimensions. The taxonomy clearly shows the complexity of museum experiences being influenced by a wide variety of dimensions which contribute to visitors' satisfactory or unsatisfactory experiences.

2.3. Interactive experience model

The interactive experience model is significant for understanding the context surrounding museum visitors' experiences (Falk & Storksdieck, 2010). This model is an integration of three important contexts: the personal context, the social context, and the physical context. As explained by John Falk, these important visitor-based contexts are especially essential in defining visitor experiences since visitors are bound to interact with different aspects in the destination's environment they are visiting. Therefore, the interaction of all these three contexts (personal, social, and physical) combine to form the interactive experience model, influencing the overall visitor experience.

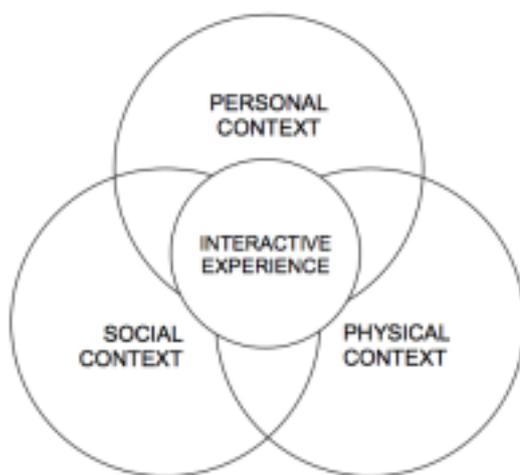


Figure 2-1 The interactive experience model

Source: (Falk and Dierking, 2012)

Other researchers who have significantly employed this interactive model include Tang and Qiu (2015). In their study about “Research on Motivation, Experience, Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention of Museum Tourism—A Case of Macau Museum,” their findings indicate that the act of visiting a museum is a process of experience based on personal, social, and physical context (Tang & Qiu, 2015). In a more relevant study by Soren (2009), it was evident that various aspects of the museum and the perceptions of the visitors were all crucial in

creating the experiences that visitors have (Soren, 2009). Kim Lian Chan (2009) also shared similar thoughts on personal, social, and physical contexts and how they underline visitors' experiences. The authors asserted that in order for a visitor's experience and satisfaction to be remarkable, the museum environment in terms of social and physical contexts should align with the visitor's personal expectations (Kim Lian Chan, 2009). Thus, based on these studies, the personal context relates to individual perceptions and motivations which are related to each visitor. These identity-related motivations significantly define the personal context of a visitor, including different personal elements, such as knowledge, regarding the destination that motivate an individual to visit a certain tourist destination.

On the other hand, the physical context is based on the museum attributes that visitors are bound to interact with during their visitation. The whole setting of the museum, along with either the product or service offered in the museum, significantly underline the physical context of the museum. Finally, Falk (2012) considers the sociocultural context as a recognition of a museum's wider learning ecosystem that can exist in any community (Falk & Dierking, 2012). In this sense, museums play the role of implementing their function within these larger learning systems so as to create sociocultural integration.

More importantly, there is wide ranging research that has studied museum visitors, most of which looks at different categories of visitors and their motives toward visiting museums (Falk & Storksdieck, 2010). For instance, in his study on "Three Methods for Understanding Museum Audiences," Housen (1987) asserts that visitors' knowledge and perceptions before actually going to visit a museum are based on various factors, including attitudinal information, demographic data, and more importantly, all the information about the museum visitors have gathered over time (Housen, 1987). However, Housen admits that obtaining information about visitors' development is difficult considering that it deals with the extent of their comprehension, and their perceptions about the destination they are visiting. Essentially, visitor attributes, including psychographic and demographic attributes, have been explored in the literature (Packer, 2008). Empirical studies have investigated visitor motivations and their importance, linking it to museum-going behavior displayed by visitors. The psychographic attributes have been described using models of visitor types which exemplify differing visitors' needs and motivations (Housen, 1987; Packer, 2008).

John Falk links these visitor motivations to discernible museum visitor identities (Falk & Dierking, 2000). Furthermore, he contends that gaining prior knowledge, in combination with

demographic characteristics, can dictate how visitors will interact with the environment at the museum. This interaction is based on the information they already know, which contributes to determining their later experience during the actual visit. Similarly, research by Storksdieck and Falk (2010) on “Science Learning in a Leisure Setting,” reported that after interviewing different museum visitors to determine their pre-visit motives, identity-related aspects were the strongest influencers of museum-going visitors.

Falk and Dierking (2012) has considered five distinct identities that he associates with visitor motivations: Explorers, Facilitators, Professional/Hobbyists, Experience Seekers, and Rechargers. First of all, he describes Explorers as curiosity-driven, always interested in learning more when in a museum. Secondly, he describes the Facilitators as those who are socially motivated, with visits that are immensely focused on enhancing others experience in the museum setting. Thirdly, the Professional/Hobbyists are those whose motivations are closely tied in with experiencing the museum content as adjunct to their hobbyist or professional passions. The fourth identity, the Experience Seekers, includes those whose goal is mainly to have experienced the museum. Finally, the Rechargers are those who seek a spiritual, contemplative, and/or restorative experience during their visit to the museum (Falk & Dierking, 2012). The exact definitions according to Falk and Dierking are as follows:

- “Explorers are curiosity-driven with a generic interest in the content of [the museum]. They expect to find something that will grab their attention and fuel their learning.”
- “Facilitators are socially motivated. Their visit is focused on primarily enabling the experience and learning of others in their accompanying social group.”
- “Professional/Hobbyists feel a close tie between [the museum] content and their professional or hobbyist passions. Their visits are typically motivated by a desire to satisfy a specific content related objective.”
- “Experience Seekers are motivated to visit because they perceive the [the museum] as an important destination so their satisfaction primarily derives from the mere fact of having ‘been there and done that.’”
- “Rechargers are primarily seeking to have a contemplative, spiritual and/or restorative experience” (Falk & Dierking, 2012, p. 47).

According to Packer (2008), the factor of attitude is also essential to understanding visitor perception before visiting a museum. Packer divided attitude into two main categories, including the pre-attitude and post-attitude aspects, a classification that gives a clear categorization of visitors’ experiences. However, most studies have focused more on the post-attitude aspect, frequently defined as ‘satisfaction’ in many studies. Thus, there are only a

limited number of studies to be found regarding the pre-attitude area and defining the various motives which lead to visiting museums.

One example is Falk and Dierking's (1994) research in which they argued that attitude was clearly a possibility to visiting museums. They summed up their findings by asserting that visitors will often be pushed by their attitudes and internal perceptions to visit a certain museum (Dierking & Falk, 1994). They also gave an indication on pre-attitude by stating that museum visitors will most likely be influenced by their expectations as a part of normal personal context. The authors' assumptions are significant to this study, specifically the perspective that visitor expectations influence visitor experience and that post-visit memories are linked with the pre-visit expectations; therefore, visitors' expectations are a crucial factor contributing to their actual experience and post-visit memories (Loomis, 1993).

Sheng and Chen, in their 2012 study, "A Study of Experience Expectations of Museum Visitors" extensively explored the different pre-visit aspects that influence visits to museums. They conducted their research using interviews and surveys of sampled visitors who had experiences visiting museums, and those who were planning to visit. They were able to ascertain that a visitor's reference to visiting a museum is based on various demographic factors, including other types of experience expectations such as personal identification, cultural entertainment, and historical reminiscences. This study investigated what motivates visitors to visit a particular museum while widely investigating the motives behind their choice (Sheng & Chen, 2012).

More importantly, satisfactory experiences are one of the motivating factors that are responsible for influencing museum goers to visit museums. This aspect was greatly championed by Packer (2008) who proposed that individuals are more likely visit museums based on positive past experiences. For instance, along with demographic data about the museum, most likely those who revisit museums have done this before, even though it may not be in the same museum they are planning to visit (Sheng & Chen, 2012). Their choices and preferences are therefore based on experiences and satisfaction levels during their past visits to other museums—important influencers on their decision to visit.

Burton et al. (2009) defined museum attributes as the physical elements and environmental context within the museum that are crucial in sustaining a positive interaction with visitors. According to Packer (2008), museum attributes dictate the actual experiences of the visitors.

He also states it is crucial for a museum, in its quest to satisfy various audiences, to focus visitor attention on the different aspects of their institution. This includes such elements as investment in amenities that bring exclusive visitors experience but which benefit both the museum and the visitors. McCall and Weber (2006) reported that it is crucial that the museum and its management monitor institutional attributes, including the physical environment, programming, staff interactions, and many other features that influence the experience of the visitor. The authors further argued that it is essential to draw parallels between the customer's experiences and profit elements which can essentially be affected by both service factors and environmental factors in the museum context (McCall & Weber, 2006).

Likewise, Mattila and Wirtz (2001) highlighted that positive interactions with the physical context (i.e., museum features and elements) greatly impact the perceptions of visitors. Their study examined the context of service experiences through case analyses of different physical environments and their impact on visitors. Their findings indicated that certain museum retail settings—i.e., the music, scent, lighting—and more importantly, customer services, were important in facilitating either positive or negative perceptions (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001). According to Milman (2009), these significant museum attributes can affect visitor experiences, especially at non-museum entertainment spots such theme parks.

Another significant contribution to research on museum attributes and their influence on visitor experience was made by McCall and Weber (2006) in their study on “Predicting Attendance at Southeastern U.S. Amusement Parks Using Accessibility and Amenity-Based Models”. Their findings indicated that the price for parking and admission to the museums was the main influencing factor on attendance rates. In a similar study to establish the correlation of visitor experiences to the attributes of a museum (Milman, 2009) found that various services, as well as comfort factors, including safety, food service attributes, staff behavior, prices, and many other factors were crucial. The author reported these aspects affected visitors and their experiences. According to Bailey, Falconer, Foley, McPherson, and Graham (1997), admission fees are not imposed as a core principle. They assert that fees are often set as a response to a museum's financial requirements. Even though this aspect seems to affect various customers or visitors differently, Bailey et al. (1997) proposed that museum should customize their pricing so as to effectively serve different market segments.

More importantly, regarding the exhibition environment in a museum setting, the labels and the design have been shown to significantly impact the visitor experience at a museum (Jeong

& Lee, 2006). Milman (2009) also reported on the importance of labeling in museums, stating that for visitors to have a remarkable experience at a museum, the design of the labels should allow for optimized readability. This is because if the labels can be read efficiently, they meet the visitors' objective of learning and also create satisfaction in the visitor, which contributes to the visitor experience. Labels should be designed to consider visitors with poor vision and those with color blindness; in addition, they should also take into account several other factors including contrast; the position where they are placed; and the back lighting, letter size, and spacing (Jeong & Lee, 2006). Furthermore, the light of wording in the labels also discourages visitors. Therefore, if labels are concise and clear, as well as readable and understandable, then this will have an impact of the visitors experience. In fact, even the arrangement of the exhibits and displays, as well as the layout applied in the exhibition and the museum spaces, influence the experience that visitors will have in a museum (Milman, 2009).

Sometimes, visitors at a museum find it easier if there are directional aids in the museum setting. These directional aids are crucial as they not only create satisfaction among the visitors, but also contribute greatly to the experiences the visitors will have during their navigation of the museum. First time visitors can find it difficult to navigate a museum and a lack of any navigation aids can make the situation even worse. According to Packer (2008), those visitors who had previous bad experience are not likely to visit a museum again.

As stated by Milman (2009), not all visitors come to museums to learn or for educational purposes; some come into the museum to spend time away from their daily schedules. It can also be argued that visitor experience is based on some of the fascinating features of a museum. Although the main function of the museum is to offer educational opportunities to those who seek them (as argued by most scholars), visitor experience is also enhanced through other features including entertainment at the museum. Indeed, according to Packer (2008), visitors nowadays want to explore and learn for fun, not just learn for education's sake. Therefore, learning is not the sole objective of visitation to museums, but rather is a part of what visitors want to experience along with having fun, socializing with other people, and exploring every aspect to their fascination.

Therefore, museums may try to incorporate visitor entertainment in their museum settings (N. Kotler & Kotler, 2000). The work of Kotler and Kotler (2000) has tried to outline the concept of entertainment as an integral element in museum setting attributes. They claimed that leisure potential can be attained through market repositioning, which is defined as a process through

which the museum essentially redesigns its facilities, making it competitive by utilizing other leisure activity organizations. This way a museum can not only draw the most visitors but also meet the needs of those visitors who consider leisure and entertainment as a primary part of their museum expedition experience. Kotler and Kotler (2000) also argued that through entertainment, museums are able to encourage repeat visitation, while at the same time draw customers to their exhibits.

However, even when museums strive to improve their physical setting and attributes, including their entertainment value, to enhance visitors' exploration and experiences, museum objectives for enrichment through learning or education should still be maintained. According to Kotler and Kotler (2000), the educational aspect is what defines the full functionality of museums. For instance, one can enjoy a ride in a park surrounding a museum; however, it won't be acknowledgeable as a museum experience if the museum does not stick to its institutional mandate of preservation and cultural development, which are core concepts. The museum attributes should be designed to ensure that visitors can enjoy the actual visit while also benefiting from learning via the exhibitions. It is this combination which fulfils a museum's mandate.

Another essential attribute to be considered is hospitality and other quality services as offered to the visitors by museum staff. Milman (2009), reports on these attributes as most important to visitors' extraordinary experiences. He asserts that many visitors will tend to come back the same museum only if they were treated with hospitality by the staff and admitted with honor. In a more similar study, Gainer and Padanyi (2002) researched "Applying the Marketing Concept to Cultural Organizations: An Empirical Study of the Relationship between Market Orientation and Performance". Their findings indicated that those institutions who had focused extensively on their market clientele enjoyed high visitor numbers and thus financial advantages. This was because these organizations had efficient and well-organized customer services, and their hospitality was key in attracting visitors (Gainer & Padanyi, 2002). Therefore, it's quite imperative that a museum's attributes should demonstrate focus not only on the exhibits displayed but also on the visitors' treatment based on the services offered during admission into the museum, the exploration available to them, and the ways in which staff communicate with them. In addition, the environment or the ambient conditions of the museum—i.e., comfort elements, temperature and noise levels—also influence the visitor experience either negatively or positively (Gainer & Padanyi, 2002).

In a study by Guo, Sun, Schuckert, & Law (2015) on “Online Feedback and Attraction Management: An Exploration of the Critical Factors in Effective Operations” some of the critical factors which visitors and organizational management seek were identified through the information provided by online of visitors. The study involved an qualitative-based content analysis approach with over 4,800 traveler which were analyzed using NVivo software. The findings of the study provided guidance for the organizational attraction managers on how to deal with negative comments on a social media platform. The study concluded that the attraction industry, where people are able to provide feedback on where they have traveled is essential for any tourist management, since they are able to learn from the posted and thus improve their services (Guo, Sun, Schuckert, & Law, 2015). These findings are quite relevant to this current study, especially in regard to the pre-visit elements of a museum visit, which were shown to be indicated through the online.

A more relevant study by Desmet and Hekkert (2007) on “Framework of Product Experience” significantly displayed how product experience enhances the human-product interaction, thus increasing the overall experience of the consumer. This study came identified three essential and distinct frameworks characterizing product experience: the experience of meaning, aesthetic experience, and emotional experience. These three levels were seen as essential and enhanced the relational aspect of the humans-to-products interaction. This was found to contribute significantly to how human experiences are built and how humans interact with products. This study exemplified an important aspect of museum exhibits in how they contribute to visitor experience through the three significant components that were proposed (Desmet & Hekkert, 2007).

2.4. Visitor’s memories and learning outcomes

Essentially, memories of visiting a museum are based on the experiences visitors have had during their previous museum visitations; this is mostly linked to the visitors’ interactions with the museum attributes (Packer, 2008). Jeong and Lee (2006) found that visitors were more likely to return to that museum where they had an opportunity to explore as well as learn more, depending on how enabling museum attributes were. They identified museum attributes as the most crucial aspect influencing visitor experiences. Learning is therefore an essential factor, and is considered as part of the post-visit experience. For example, Falk and Storksdieck (2010) asserted that the consequence of any science museum visit is most likely learning about science.

However, the authors stated that the concept of learning as a consequence of museum visit is not well understood. Furthermore, they explained that learning in a museum is quite different since it is based on free choice learning which has not extensively been explored in the literature. Falk and Dierking (2000) explained that visitors come to a science museum with different ranges of understanding or knowledge—i.e., some come knowing a little bit, while others know more or have greater relative knowledge. However, all visitors come to the museum to confirm their understanding as well as improve their knowledge.

According to Liu (2008), a museum is a place to tell and listen to stories while also learning on your own. She was able to ascertain that participation in museum activities could impact memories, as visitors appear to learn a lot while exploring information they have not known before. To be more precise, Liu points out that when visitors interact with the museum aspects or attributes, an experience is created and the resultant memories about the visit will influence their future visitations (Liu, 2008).

Uriely (2005) suggested that the visitor experience was a unique experience, distinct from normal daily life experiences. Through analysis of how visitor experience has evolved, he was able to develop a more concise description of visitor experience at the time of the study where visitor experience was based on subjectivity (Uriely, 2005). In subsequent studies, researchers began understanding that visitor experience is based on a person's interpretation. Thus, the aspect of visitor memories about past museum experiences started being investigated as an essential factor in understanding the overall visit experience. Larsen (2007), in his study on "Aspects of a Psychology of the Visitor Experience", explored the aspect of museum experience based on visitor's memories of their museum experiences by conducting thorough review of the literature on the subject. He agreed with the fact that visitor experiences are influenced by certain factors, including their expectations, as well as the events that are essentially constructed in the visitor's memory. However, he asserted that these memories exist due to actual experiences during a visit, and therefore new experiences create a basis for new expectancies and preferences. Visitors experience at a museum take the form of a cycle: the pre-visit attributes may be impacted by the post-visit memories of previous visits, which therefore create expectations and preferences for subsequent visits (Larsen, 2007).

The past travel experience to certain destinations has been shown to increase visitors' intention to revisit these destinations (Weaver, Weber, & McCleary, 2007). It is thus imperative to consider that first time visitors will most likely have limited knowledge regarding the

destinations to which they are willing to travel, while those with previous experiences of their destinations will most likely have significant memories of their experiences with the destination's attributes (Larsen, 2007). Therefore, memories and prior knowledge about a museum destination can greatly influence visitor rejection or acceptance of a museum as a destination. According to Weaver et al. (2007), once visitors visit a destination, they will most likely consider it safe to visit. This is because humans tend to be freer with places they know than with places they only hear about or have limited knowledge about (Larsen, 2007). Also according to Weaver et al. (2007), this feeling of safety factor is the most differentiating feature of whether a visitor will choose to visit a new place or revisit a previous destination. All these aspects narrow down to the past experiences visitors have had with a museum or destination. According to Liu (2008), it is logical to assume that if a visitor had bad past experiences or was treated badly during a visit to a museum, he or she will be more reluctant to return to the same museum; of course, the contrary is true as well.

In contrast, Oppermann (1996) did not see a major link between past experiences (i.e. post-visit experiences) and the ability to determine visitors' expectations for future visits. Even though he agreed that past experiences are crucial in determining the subsequent visits, Oppermann identified a more solid basis for determining the likelihood of future visits. For instance, he referred to the fact that visitors begin at significantly different levels of travel motivations and expectations, but these levels seem to change over time during the visitor's life cycle (Oppermann, 1996). Therefore, it can be argued that a visitor's cumulative past experiences and memories about a destination are crucial to determining the motivations for future travel or visits. This is contrary to most studies which do not focus on the visitor's cumulative experience but rather on the immediate past experience as the determinant for the future visitations.

2.5. Empirical studies pertinent to this study

There have been significant studies that have researched different aspects of visitor experience through application of TripAdvisor as a social media tool to analyze varied visitor satisfaction levels and experiences. A recent study by (Ferguson, Piche, & Walby, 2015) empirically relied on the comments of TripAdvisor to analyze the penal spectator comments and their perceived effect on Canada's penal history museums visitors. Another more relative study by Owens (2012) entitled "TripAdvisor Rates Einstein: Using the Social Web to Unpack the Public

Meanings of a Cultural Heritage Site”, explored both positive and negative public perceptions of the Einstein monument. TripAdvisor was considered an efficient social online element that provided readily available data for the study.

The growth of consumer-generated content has gained ground significantly as an influencing factor in purchase decision-making in general, and more specifically, in the tourism and hospitality industry, including museum visitation. Thus, TripAdvisor is identified as one of the efficient consumer-generated content platform (O'Connor, 2008). In addition, TripAdvisor has also been used and mentioned in qualitative studies. For instance, O'Connor (2010) signifies the importance of user-generated content linked to the hospitality industry in his study on “Managing a Hotel's Image on TripAdvisor”. The author was able to interview staff at a number of hotels from a London market, and the findings disproved the belief that user-generated content provides falsified, demonstrating that such claims were unfounded with regard to TripAdvisor, the platform used in the analysis. It was evident that most of the provided by visitors were based on actual experiences at the destinations.

Another study, by Jeacle and Carter (2011), considered TripAdvisor important as the most trusted platform for visitors to provide which are then used in ranking hotels. This ranking and feedback provides important information to other potential visitors on the best performing destinations in the hospitality sector (i.e., hotels, restaurants, etc.). Furthermore, the hotels are able to improve their services and thus increase the quality of their overall service management and delivery, based on the provided by consumers.

Another crucial element in the tourism sector is the destination image. Gartner and Kotler (2004) define destination image as (a) the sum of people's beliefs, (b) impressions about a particular destination, and (c) the result of attempts to process a large amount of data about a specific travel destination. Kladou and Mavragani (2015) linked destination image to visitors using the on TripAdvisor, and found out that the destination image as portrayed by visitors in their was an important contributor to increased visits to a particular destination. This was after a content analysis of the visitors' perceptions in regard to destination image.

3. CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research process. The chapter explains the methodology of the research, data collection, analysis strategies, and the study setting.

3.1. Research method

This chapter introduces the research methods that are used in collecting data relevant for this study. This research adopted a content analysis method in its collection of data. This approach has been used as a qualitative research technique. The qualitative content analysis approach may take any of these essential methods which include: directed, conventional or summative. According to Hsieh & Shannon (2005), sometimes all the three techniques may be used in the interpretation of the in depth meaning of the text data. The basic principle applied in the content analysis method involves direct extraction of coding categories from the text data and building on these codes which are subsequently used in the analysis and interpretation of the final results (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Furthermore, in directed approach a theory is used to form a foundation with which the framework of the whole study follows, in this approach the relevant theory will offer guidance to the initial codes and the rest of the study will essentially stick to this theoretical framework (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). On the other hand, the summative approach, involves comparison and counting approaches, where the keywords or the content is compared and counted followed closely by the interpretation of the principal research data.

Additionally, these approaches are combined in order to ensure efficient content analysis especially in qualitative studies. The qualitative content analysis method is important for this study considering that it has been used for a long time to investigate consumer behaviour which eventually helps in understanding the visitor experience. Relatively, this research study attempted to analyse what may be termed as consumer behaviour especially for visitors of a museum based on their experiences. According to Graneheim & Lundman (2004), qualitative content analysis method significance is based on its ability to clarify who said something through which channels and who was being addressed. Based on Graneheim & Lundman study on "Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness" they assert that the use of this tool in consumer-based researches is very important and thus it acts as an essential tool for determining and analysis of online due

to its ability to examine actual content of communication in any context. Therefore, the approach is more preferred in analysis of experiences of the visitors to museum. This is through efficient data collection, proper decoding of the data and finally interpretation which yields validated results.

Furthermore, the study has also used thematic analysis method approach. This method is most appropriate when dealing with qualitative data. Common themes are gathered into groups based common characteristics. Those main themes are then divided into main categories.

3.2. Study setting

George Eastman Museum being one of the renowned oldest museums and a vital tourist attraction site in Rochester, it has a number of attractions that visitor come to see as well as interact with. The study chose this site, since it is renowned for hosting the oldest photography in the world courtesy of its founder George Eastman a key personality in the photography history. George Eastman personality is one of the greatest attraction features that lure most visitors to this particular museum. There are also artefacts from the early days of photography which are exhibited here. Furthermore, there are beautiful historic gardens and houses that play multiple functions including displaying of arts, exhibits as well as kids' activities. George Eastman's mansion is designed in a way that is unique as compared to the other ancient buildings, thus attracting most of the people to take photographs there. The museum also has a gorgeous Dryden Theatre that accommodates around 500 people who visit to see some of the ancient documentaries on filmmakers and photographers.

3.3. Data source

There are plenty of social media websites that allow visitors to rate and write about a certain attraction especially in regard to travel sites. For this study, TripAdvisor was the most preferred website for qualitative content analysis based on its online reputation and therefore, the author relied on their data. TripAdvisor; an online-based website that makes comments about an attraction available to the public, is travel site that provides visitors with the necessary information regarding the destinations that they want to visit. Places like hotels and restaurants, flights, cruises and museums or any available theme parks and other attractions that considered necessary for travel. Furthermore, TripAdvisor popularity in the visitor to visitor makes it an essential selection. One important factor that differentiates it from the review systems of other

sites is the fact that it uses and records the views on a specific review system. Secondly, its framework for rating is well designed, which makes it easier for the visitors to report or give their opinions and experiences about a certain service during their visits. TripAdvisor review framework allows for both the negative and positive comments. According to Downe-Wamboldt (1992), any negative or positive comment that has been made by actual, potential, or more importantly former visitor about a service or a product, that is in the public domain are both crucial to the respective companies and the subsequent customers.

The study primary methodology approach is based on qualitative content analysis. Therefore, the study used TripAdvisor because of its readily available data on the research study subject. Furthermore, George Eastman Museum is a known museum in Rochester, New York area that attracts a multitude of visitors and thus it can be used to answer the question posed in this research study. This is through content analysis of the customer as posted by the visitors who have had diverse experiences in George Eastman Museum. In comparison with other social media website, TripAdvisor was the best option for the researcher to collect data from. The website has an improved rating system compared to other social media websites. This makes it an important tool for providing the right set of data which will eventually lead to valid results after interpretation.

The site allows the researcher to obtain relevant data since it offers a platform where visitors can provide about the places they visit. The study used the information via comments posted by visitors on the TripAdvisor website regarding George Eastman Museum. Through comments and ratings, visitors are able to evaluate George Eastman Museum and thus providing efficient data for use in the study. The site has a well-defined structure and a system that allows visitors to use a rating scale to show their satisfaction with their visit. Its specific design is meant to promote concept of electronic word of mouth society through enabling people to share their insights about a product or service.

The rating system is based on a five point scale, where (1) denotes poor services or experiences while (5) show excellent service or experiences the visitors have had. The visitors assign ratings through the independent that they post on the website describing their experiences in George Eastman Museum. Visitors also express their views and experiences about their visit to the museum and share with other visitors their experiences. This provides crucial and primary data from the first person who is the museum visitor.

3.4. Data collection strategy

The information collected was from 520 online from visitors who visited George Eastman Museum and reported their experiences through online at TripAdvisor website. The researcher began monitoring and collecting the data from July, 2014. The data collected at the time were 420, and then the researcher collected another set of data on March, 2016. The total number of data collected by then was 520. Initially, data collected was recorded in Microsoft Excel manually. The data was then sorted and gathered according to the standard language which was English. that were in other languages were excluded due to the possibility of an error during decoding into English language considering that all the research was supposed to be done and presented through a standard language for the research which was English. After sorting and ensuring all the data had been presented accurately, the data were converted to qualitative analysis software NVIVO 11 to complete the data analysis.

3.5. Data analysis strategy

Coding of data is essential during the data collection phase. According to (Creswell, 2014), a coded data enables easy data analysis at the following stage. Content analysis of comments was examined before each code was assigned. The codes were later on combined so that they could form broader groups. Creswell steps were used to form the initial codes from the data collected. Theses are:

Step 1: prepare and organise the data for analysis

Step 2: reading through the data to get a sense of the information

Step 3: a detailed analysis through coding where the data is organised into subcategories

Step 4: use the coding process to come up with a description of the setting which may include people, places or museum attributes

Step 5: represent each particular description and the themes in the qualitative study.

Since the research was qualitative, the first step involved the organization of the data before the researcher could carefully assess the . Open coding was used in the process, which yielded 12 primary codes. The codes were categorized into three main codes as follow; "About the Eastman", "History and Personality", and "The Visitor's Experience".

4. CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study and their analysis. Then the discussion section of the chapter discusses these results based on the literature review.

4.1. Analysis of reviewers' characteristics

Understanding the different aspects that underline the museum visitor's experiences i.e. the museum attributes; the different museum contexts under which these experiences are observed, the dimensions of the negative and positive and the visitor's memory and learning were important as far as this study was concerned. Thus, based on a content analysis research approach, the study relied on the essential and relevant data collected from the social media website TripAdvisor to understand the different views and experiences expressed through the visitors' comments. George Eastman Museum was chosen as because it is one of the main Rochester attraction sites, and the study focused on comments from its visitors.

Furthermore, the secondary data of this study were collected from TripAdvisor website. Therefore, the following table presents an overview of the overall comments posted by George Eastman Museum visitors and their characteristics based on the website analysis.

Table 4-1 TripAdvisor Results

Traveler rating	Traveler Type	Time of year	Language
Excellent (n=366)	Couples (n=148)	Jun-Aug (n=161)	English (n=541)
Very good (n=140)	Families (n=119)	Sep-Nov (n=145)	Chinese (n=5)
Average (n=28)	Friends (n=99)	Mar-May (n=136)	French (n= 4)
Poor (n=6)	Solo (n= 43)	Dec-Feb (n=99)	Russian (n=2)
Terrible (n=1)	Business (n=27)		German (n=1)

The figure indicates four different aspects of reviewers to the George Eastman Museum. This was obtained directly from the visitors while different elements of visits were categorised so as to highlight the different visitor dynamics. For instance, the traveller rating was based on a five point scale (excellent, very good, average, poor and terrible) based on their experiences at the George Eastman Museum. It was evident that most of the travellers rating were excellent with 366 and only one rating for terrible. This shows how most visitors had good experiences

with the museum services and its attributes. Furthermore, the traveller type was also indicated with the categories including families, couples, solo, business and friends. Couples had a high number with 146 while families followed closely with 119. This indicated that the museum was an important destination for families and couples as compared to businesses and individual visitors. Another important aspect that was determined was the chronological aspect in terms of the times at which the visitors came to the museum. The distinct months in a year included March to May (134), June to August (161), September to November (145) and December to February (99). This was crucial in understanding the time of the year when there is high visitation to the museum. The last section indicated the language of the visitors to George Eastman Museum. English was the prominent language with 539 as compared to other languages.

4.2. Analysis of personal, physical and social dimensions

This section analyzes the results based on the interactive experience model exemplified by the personal, physical and social contexts, which corresponds to the first research question

The personal context aspect to the museum, and the motivations that push visitors to come to the George Eastman Museum was one of the research questions of this study. Comments identified for this aspect were examined based on identity-related motivations. Therefore, the visitors were categorized as follows: experience seeker, explorer, facilitator, professional/hobbyist, and recharger. In addition, there were many visitors who were not able to be assigned a category due to the fact that few museum visitors commented on the reasons for their visit. The experience seeker category contained the highest number of visitors, 76, based on evaluation of the visitor comments. Some of the comments for this category included:

“Spent a day here not long ago while touring the city. Not much to do in Rochester so this seemed like a good way to spend the day.. Pretty disappointing.”

“Why did I wait so long to visit the George Eastman House? I wasn't raised in or near Rochester, NY so I missed out on the field trips to this museum. My adult daughter was looking for something to do one Saturday morning and she suggested the George Eastman.”

“During my travels, I love taking tours of unique places and this is one of the best. They give a wonderful history of the invention and use of film to take photographic pictures and the history of the Eastman Kodak Company. It is amazing all of the inventions...”

In addition, the explorer category was the second most frequently assigned category, with 48 visitors. Sample comments include:

“We were in Rochester for a meeting and the Eastman House was a short walk from our hotel. The house itself is quite impressive and we were fortunate to observe a wedding taking place in the garden. The fee is reasonable and discount coupons are sometimes...”

“My wife and another couple visited the George Eastman House on a cold February afternoon. It was a pleasant way to spend a couple of hours. I have visited several "mansions" of American capitalists, and have always enjoyed them.”

“Wonderful museum for the history of photography and Eastman Kodak. Great part of a walking tour of old Rochester. While there don't miss Mount Hope cemetery and the Genesee Falls.”

Finally, the facilitator and the recharger had the least amount of assigned visitors. Some of the comments from the recharger and facilitator category included:

“I have visited the George Eastman House on a few previous occasions, but hadn't been there in a while. It was the perfect winter afternoon activity. The current exhibits were fascinating, especially the on the history of technicolor in the movies. There was a flower exhibit in the house itself, which brought a badly needed breathe of spring to a winter day. The house is beautiful even without the flower show, it really gives you a feel for Rochester and photography during that early period.

We ate at the cafe. It had a nice menu and was affordable. Didn't buy anything in the gift shop, but they offered some unique items.”

“We have been to George Eastman house several times, bringing out of town guests or coming to see the spring blooms. Every time there are more and more things to see. The photograph exhibits are wonderful and informative. In warmer weather, it is nice to wa”

Unfortunately, a majority of the visitors were unassigned, as can be seen in the chart below.

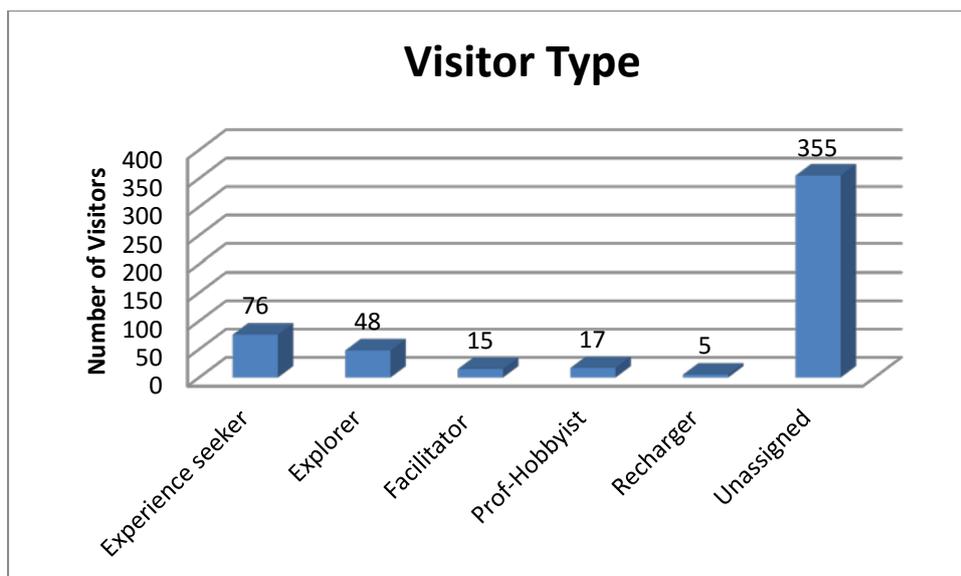


Figure 4-1 Visitor classification frequencies

Using a five-point rating scale, with 5 being the highest score and 2 being the lowest score, and certain major themes expressed in the visitor comments were identified for each rating level as part of the analysis. These were based on Trip Advisor rating scale. Comments of visitors to the museum contained similar themes across all rating levels, including comments about the mansion, the museum exhibits, and George Eastman’s personality. Sample comments for these themes included:

“What a beautiful property. The house and grounds have been micely preserved and more than adequately showcase the residence of one of this country's prominent inventors, supporters and philanthropists. The location offers docent guided or self guided tours”

“The George Eastman House is lovely, a true window into a gilded age of prosperity and luxurious living. The Museum is fascinating with ever changing exhibits and the standard history of photography too.”

“The mansion is still being restored and there are some displays of photographs...Most of the displays and mansion are focused on George Eastman and his interests, family and history. If you are interested in his life then you will enjoy.”

While audio tours and general experience with staff had the least score with some of the comments illustrating this aspect i.e.:

“Beautifully maintained and very helpful staff! Everyone was willing to guide us and tell us important details about the house.”

“Fantastic!!!! Great for history buffs!! George was quite an interesting person. I liked that you could go on a self guided tour using your cell phone. Very unique.”

Other common themes illustrated in the charts include the Dryden theatre, the gardens and grounds, and the museum as well as the exhibits. Each specific chart for the above named themes was centered on the visitor’s comments and their experiences at the museum.

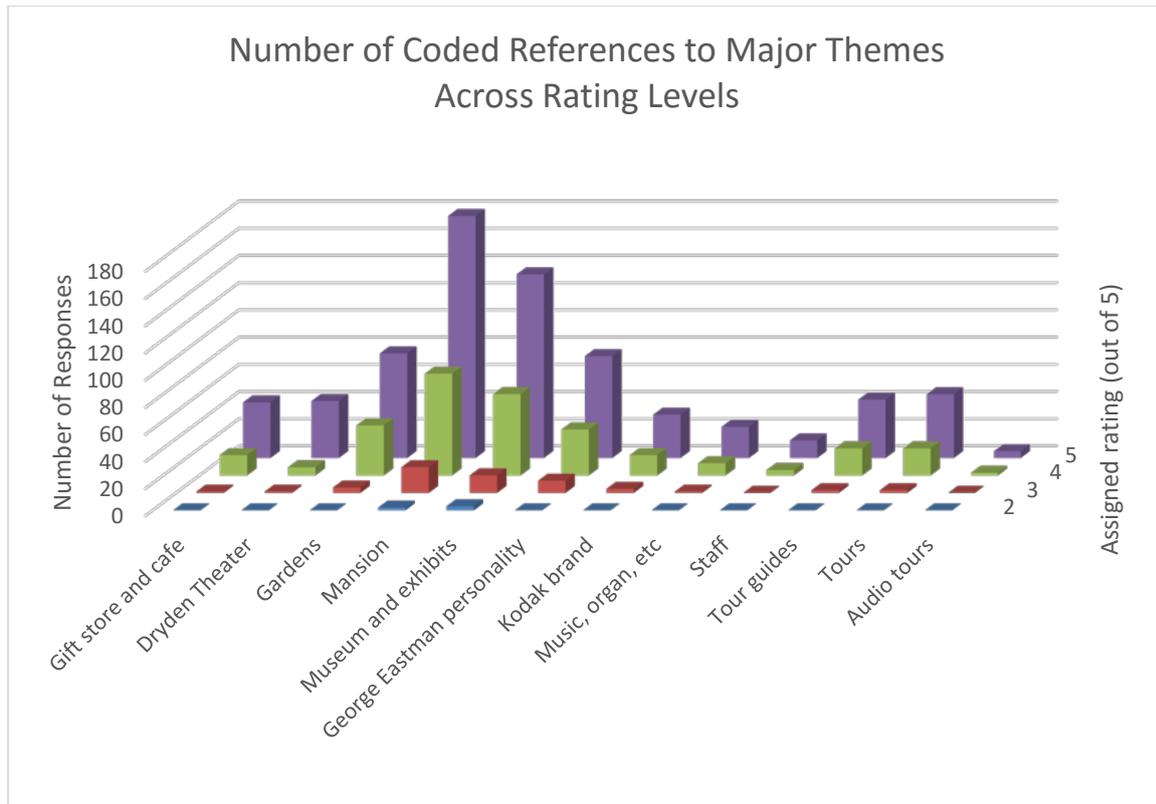


Figure 4-2 Coded comments to major themes

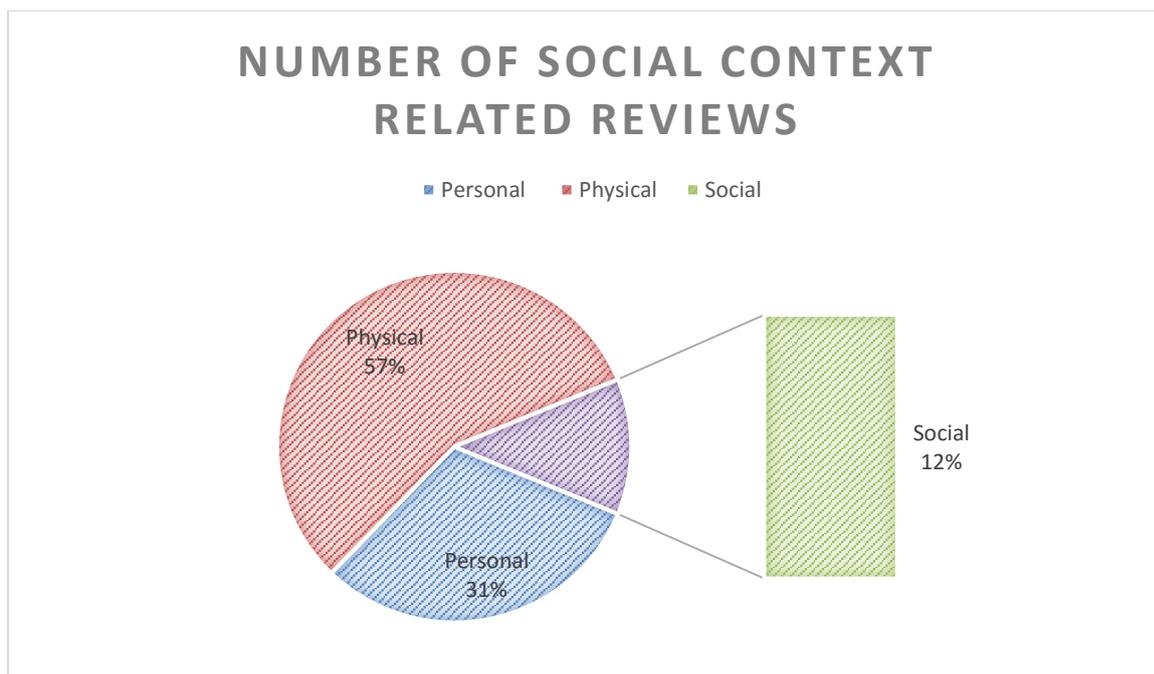


Figure 4-3 Social context related findings

As indicated in the figure above, a number of visitors expressed social context related elements as part of their visit experience. Comparatively, the physical element had 57% which was equivalent to 294 out of 520. On the personal context, there was 31% that was based on 161 out of 520. Finally, the social context had 65 out of the 520 and thus signifying 12%. These numbers were important in indicating the social related contexts based on the from TripAdvisor. However, to put the figures into perspective, here were some of the comments or that were obtained from the social media site.

“What a great place to visit. We thought we'd only spend 2 or 3 hours here, but ended up spending most of the day. Our tour guide through the house was excellent. We also took the garden tour and he too was very good. The gardens and grounds surrounding the house are very nice and the inside of the home is marvelous. We ate lunch at their deli and the food was very good and the staff there super friendly. The property also contains a gift shop and other museum areas covering photography and film which are interesting to stroll through. Just an overall great day and worth every penny of the admission charge.”

“I took some out of state family to see this place. We were all very impressed with the whole experience! Our curator was awesome! I don't remember his name, but he had a long gray ponytail and was a former teacher. He did an excellent job and made it that much better! Beautiful house and very interesting facts that I didn't know till we went. Thank you for a great experience!”

“My wife and I knew this house was big, but looks can be deceiving, especially from the road! The exhibits are incredible and do an amazing job outlining George

Eastman's history and his place in photography and film. I highly recommend this for anyone searching for a way to enjoy some history and there's even a hands-on exhibit for the kids!”

4.3. Analysis of positive and negative experience dimensions

This section analyses the results based on the positive and negative dimensions of the , which corresponds to the second research question.

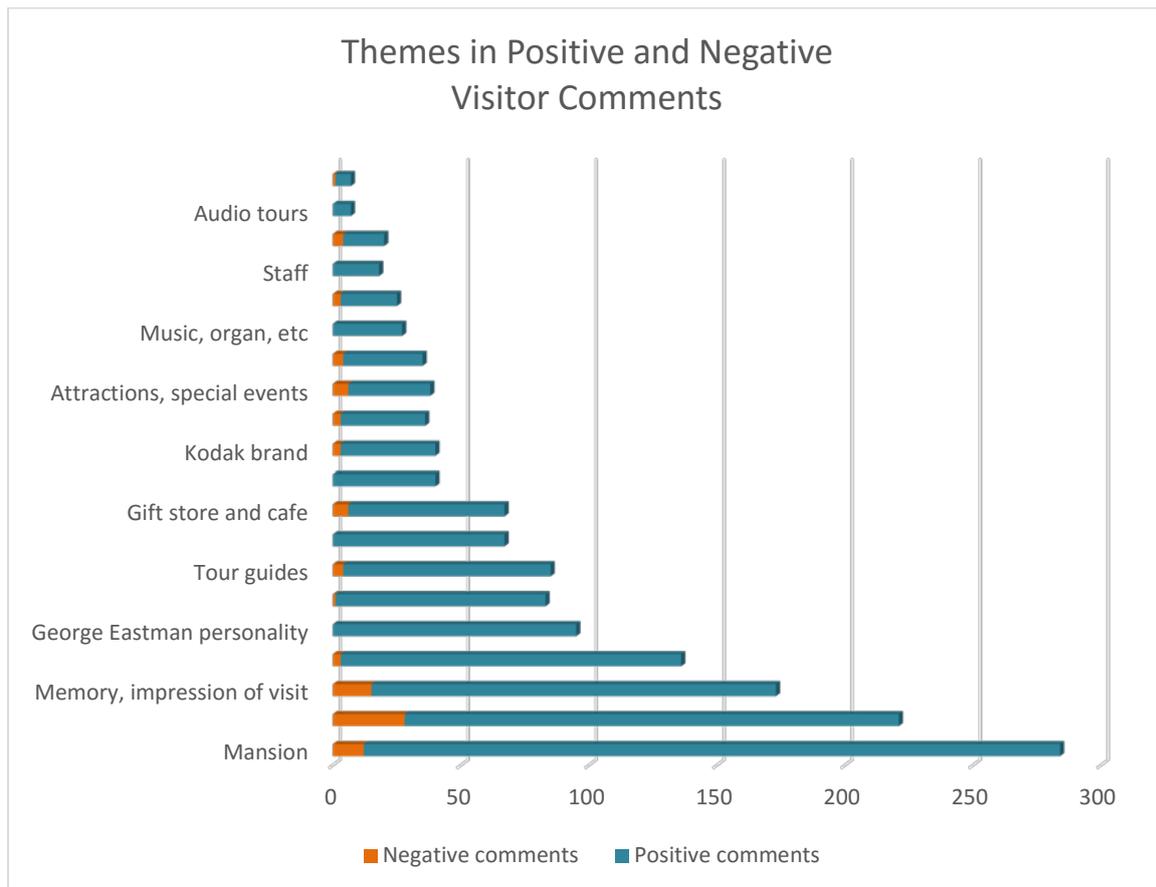


Figure 4-4 Themes in positive and negative visitor comments

The positive and negative comments exemplify the visitor’s perceived experiences and satisfaction through interaction with the mentioned themes. The interaction builds significant experiences which remain in the memories of the visitors and therefore they are able to comment based on their interaction with the themes. Although they were not able to comment to all the themes, through content analysis approach this study was able to determine most of the themes which were depicted in the comments by the visitors. Basically, the study identified certain major themes (Gift store and café, Dryden theatre, Gardens, Mansion, Museum & exhibits, George Eastman personality, Kodak brand, Music, staff, Tour guides, Tours, Audio

tours) that were depicted in the overall comments analysed. It was clear that some of the comments had either a higher positive commentary or vice versa and this was significant to draw conclusion on certain themes that were of major concern as far as the study of George Eastman museum is concerned.

Most importantly, in the themes displayed there were both negative and positive aspects that were expressed by the visitors in their comments. Based on the visitor's comments, analysis showed that the mansion theme had a high number of visitors who expressed their positive attitudes and experiences in regard to the this theme. Comparatively, on the lower side were the "takes you back, pull you in", "tours," "audio tours" and the "George Eastman personality" themes, which generally had no significant negative comments by the visitors. Furthermore, museum and exhibits had the highest negative comments as more visitors indicated their dissatisfaction with some of the museum exhibits displayed this was closely followed by the "memory and impression" theme in the visits. While comparing to the positive comments on all themes, it was clear that most of the themes received relatively a higher overall positive feedback based on the comments analysed by the visitors. This indicates that the general perception of visitors and their experiences in regard to the different theme at the museum were above average as shown in their comments. Most importantly, research facilities, audio tours and staff themes had the least negative and positive commentary on average when combined, on the other hand, the themes representing memory or impression of visit, museum and exhibits and finally mansion had a combined high average of negative and positive comments.

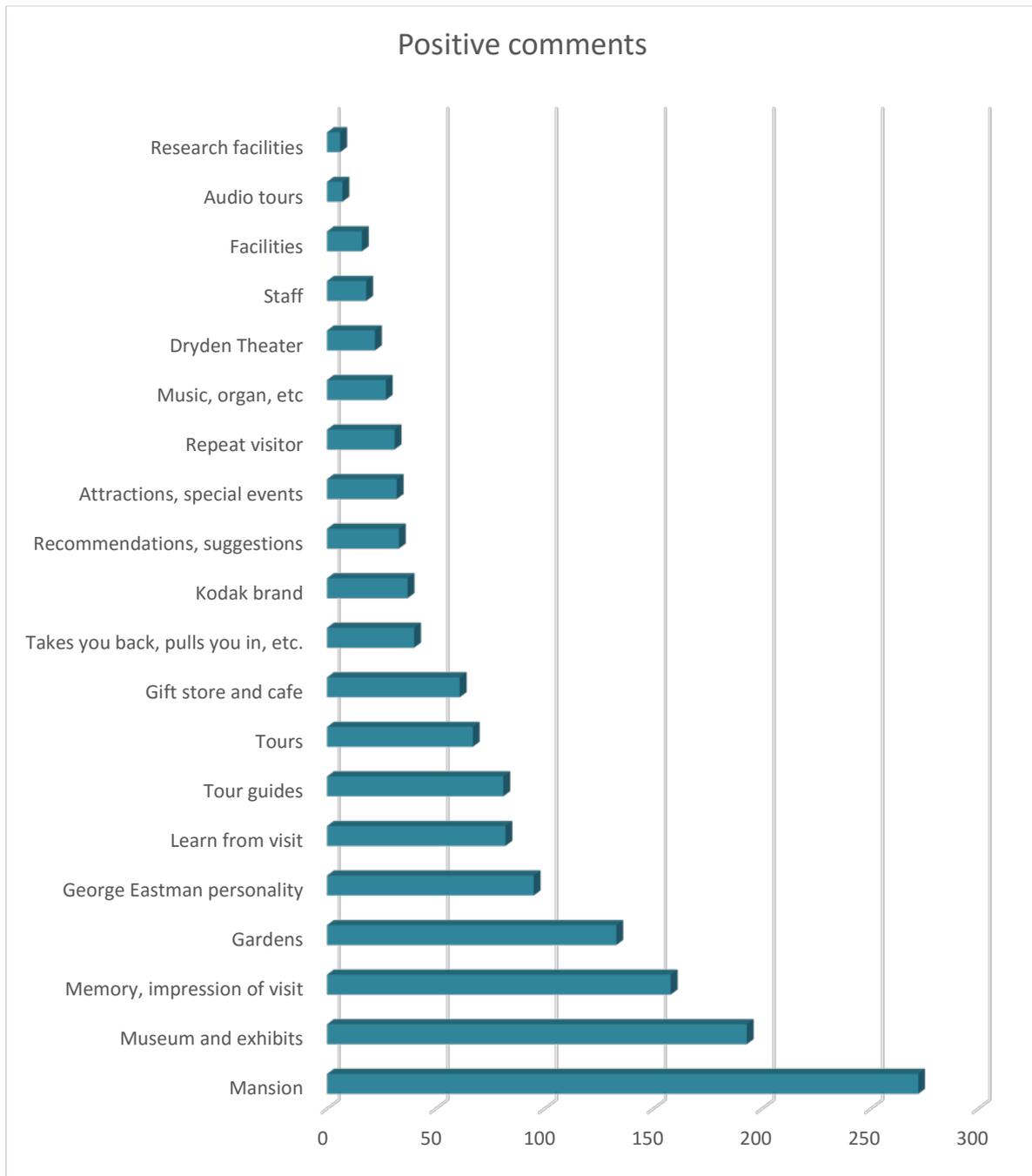


Figure 4-5 Positive comments

Considering the positive comments, there was a gradual increase in the themes based on the comments that were analysed from research facilities to mansion themes as shown in the chart above. It's clear from the chart that mansion and museum exhibits were some of the crucial attributes and themes that visitor found a great deal of satisfaction as they interacted with George Eastman museum. Essentially, based on the analysis, visitors to this museum were more satisfied with the overall museum attributes and most of the physical elements at the

museum including the museum exhibit the mansion and the overall historic nature and site of the museum. Furthermore, other themes which had the highest positive comments were those associated with learning activities and overall guidance in the museum including tours, tour guides and the learning aspect facilitated by tour guides and the exhibition design. On the contrary, few of the themes had a low positive visitor comments including the themes regarding facilities i.e. research facilities and the staff hospitality. In general, the positive comments were high in most of the themes in the comments that were analysed.

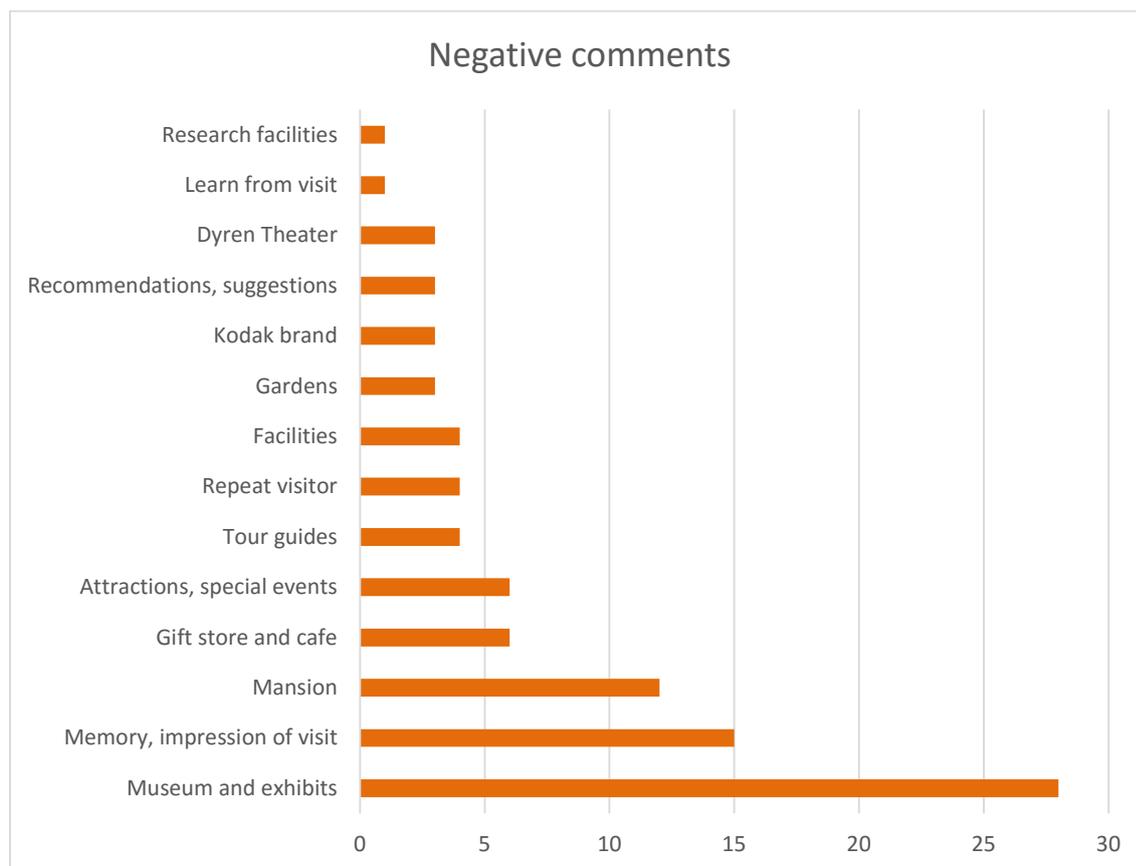


Figure 4-6 Negative comments

The negative comments on the themes specified in this study were based on the different aspects which the visitors were not satisfied with and therefore had negative comments about them. The “museum and exhibits” as well as the “memory and impression of the visit” were some of the themes with the highest negative comments. These could have been due to the poor design of the exhibits as well as the poor hospitality which were offered by the staff at the museum. On the other hand, the “research facilities” and “learn from the visit” themes had the least negative comments. This might be attributed to the extent of organization of the museum in ensuring that the visitors are able to learn effectively as it is the primary role of the museum.

The word cloud illustrates that George Eastman, whose name was adopted by the museum, is most prominent in the memories of the visitors whose comments contained the three themes listed above. Furthermore, the house as a historic site also demonstrates a relatively high prominence in the memories of these visitors. Some of the comments regarding these two aspects include:

“We wanted to know more about Eastman after visiting his beautiful, but understated house. The decor is elegant and simple. We were interested in the organ that played every morning in the solarium.”

“The George Eastman House is a place to take your out of town relatives. It is a gorgeous mansion, has gorgeous gardens, and many many historical facts about Eastman Kodak (which is very nearly dead in Rochester unfortunately) and film history.”

Besides these two themes, other key aspects are apparent as factors in visitors' memories, including learning, the tours, experiences of taking beautiful pictures, and more. Some of the general comments based on these other aspects which created beautiful memories included:

“We found this museum very interesting...Didn't think I'd like it but I did. Enjoyed learning the history and walking around the Eastman home...”

“This is a beautiful home to visit. Our docent was a former teacher and his love of the Eastman home was evident in his tour...The focus of the tour is the home and I left wanting to know much more about George Eastman the man..”

“This house is very intresting to visit.I love the staircase, ... The gardens are beautiful in the spring and summer. Many people have wedding pictures taken there. You don't have to just like camera's to visit here, there is something for all ages.”

This study was able to exemplify important themes that were displayed in the George Eastman museum. For instance, the tables below indicate different themes that have been displayed at the museum and which were indicated in the comments that were analysed. To be precise, different comments were more pronounced i.e. the George Eastman personality, photography history and the general category.

Table 4-2 George Eastman related learnings

George Eastman related learnings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You learn a lot about George Eastman and his family • Lots of memorabilia and insight into the man, George Eastman, and his life. • Learn about the man, what he did, & how he lived. • I knew very little about George Eastman before visiting here but I left with a greater appreciation of his contributions as an inventor, businessman and philanthropist. • Learned a lot about George Eastman (interesting man) • You'll learn about George Eastman and his impact on Rochester. • The history of George Eastman is carefully explained throughout the house and you walk away with a strong appreciation of the his role in upstate New York's economy as well as the indelible mark he made on the photography industry itself. • It was remarkable to learn about all the ways this philanthropic man influenced the city of Rochester. • I enjoyed and learned a lot about this very generous man. • Provides ample opportunities to learn about Eastman's wide ranging influence on photography. • I had no idea how progressive he was as an employer. • Who knew that "Kodak" was a word he invented because it was impossible to mispronounce and had two of his favorite 'aggressive sounding' letter, K, in it; that he gave millions to the Tuskegee Institute and the Hampton Institute, two historically black institutions, that he never visited; that, in an unusual move for the time, hired a woman secretary that served as his right hand woman for 40 years; and that he committed suicide in his bedroom, leaving a note saying that he had done all he could do. These and numerous other facts brought George Eastman and his house to life. • Great place to learn the history behind this amazing man's accomplishments and contributions to Rochester. • I also learned how philanthropic George Eastman was throughout his life - he seemed to be a forerunner to our modern day philanthropists • You will learn so much about this remarkable man, his family and the Kodak company. • I had no idea that George Eastman was so influential in many developments related to Kodak. He also was friends with other historically notable people such as Thomas Edison, Louis Pasteur and Calvin Coolidge. His interests ranged from hunting in Africa to music. • I love going here because there's so much history to learn about the man who brought KODAK to the world. • learned a lot about George Eastman, his philanthropy and how the Community has benefitted from his legacy. • I didn't know much about George Eastman. I left having had a wonderful, informative tour of his house and discussion of his life. It made me come home and want to find books about him to learn more. I always feel that an experience is worthwhile when it fascinates me enough to want more.

Based on this theme it was quite evident that George Eastman had a great personality and is well known in the history for achieving great successes. Most of the visitors to the museum admitted that they learned a lot about George Eastman. Some of the visitors did not know George Eastman but they have to learn about him after visiting the museum. Essentially, the trend that was displayed in the comments by the visitors indicated how the museum management had undertaken various steps to ensure that it was able to display George Eastman personality in the best way possible. This was an important element as far as the museum is concerned considering that the museum derives its popularity not only from the varied exhibits and unique structures but also from the name “George Eastman,” after which the museum is named. Furthermore, the museum also displays the man’s achievements during his time and the accomplishments he was able to attain with one of the most predominant being “Kodak” which he invented.

Table 4-3 Photography related learnings

Photography related learnings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learned a lot about early photography. • We learned lots about both Eastman and the history of pocket cameras. • We had a wonderful time just strolling through the museum and learning all the great history of photography and film. • The Eastman House is also a great place to learn about the history of film in the US. • You'll learn a lot here and take home a better understanding of photography and the development of how we got where we are now. • It was cool to learn about the history of photography and George Eastman as a person. • An informative trip back to the recent past of chemical photography. • A visit to Eastman House provides insight into historical photography from the standing exhibitions and special events. • Learn more than you could imagine about early photography and the first Kodak cameras while visiting a beautiful mansion and lovely gardens. • The history of film and photography are two things I knew very little about and found fascinating while touring this site. • It is a great place to learn about how photography has evolved over the last 100 years. • There is much to learn about the development of dry-plate processing, the collection of cameras throughout history. • It offers an opportunity for everyone, to acquire an interesting understanding of how the first cameras were designed and developed, an educational experience that provides insight to one of the greatest contributions ever made to our society. • I learned a lot about the evolution of photography but also about the Kodak empire and the man behind it. • This is where a photographer can see the history of photography and how it evolved into a consumer vs expert activity. • To be totally honest, I found this part more limited than I expected, though I do I think I happened to catch a bad window when two new exhibits were being set up. I guess they've chosen to have rotating exhibits rather than a bigger permanent display, which is probably great for locals, but was disappointing as a one-time visitor hoping to learn more about.

The photography theme was also displayed. This was based on the association of photography with George Eastman considering his early contribution to the photography world. However, the most important aspect that was seen in comments about photography was its history and the development of different photography and film technologies as displayed in the comments.

Table 4-4 History related learning

History related learnings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history is wonderful. • The history here is amazing. • We learned not just about Mr. Eastman and his life but about Rochester in its heyday. • Enjoyed learning the history and walking around the Eastman home. • It showed us some of the history of this city of Rochester and what a great man Mr. Eastman was. • You learn a lot about the history of photography and how he influenced its development. • I learned a lot about life in earlier times.

The historical element was also an important theme that was displayed in the comments by the visitors. Mr. George Eastman himself had an exemplary history, which is also exemplified in the museum elements including the exhibits displayed. It is evident that the museum has showcased the historical features and elements in the best way possible either through the attributes in the museum or through the narration of history of George Eastman who was a prominent figure in earlier times.

Table 4-5 General related learnings

General related learnings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned so much. • Lots to learn. • Great education value. • Took the guided tour and learned some fascinating information. • I took the tour and I was amazed about all the stuff I learned. • This was an education and eye opener. • Beautiful house and very interesting facts that I didn't know till we went.

Looking at all the themes in combination, the visitors had exemplary experience in their overall visit at the museum and the interaction with other elements of the museum. Most of the comments indicated that visitors had more to learn at the museum as most of them admitted to have learnt a lot.

4.5. Discussion of results

The visitor experiences are quite linked to the destinations they travel to and how they are treated as well as their interactions with whichever exhibits they will find. However, focusing on the museum visitation and more specifically on George Eastman Museum, the study was able to obtain relevant research data on visitor related experiences through the TripAdvisor. Based on John Falk (2012) categorization of museum visitors; experience seeker, explorer, facilitator, prof- Hobbyist and recharger were the most relevant to this study. A significant portion of the study's findings were able to adopt this categorization regarding identity-related motivations to visiting the museum. While a large number of the visitor's comments that were retrieved from TripAdvisor did not express their purpose of visit, the substantive number of visitors who expressed their visit purpose based on the identity-related motivations indicated that these motivations were strong influencers of their visit. Based on the 5 identity related categorization, the experience seeker category had the highest number of visitors comments. John Falk (2012) considers experience seekers to be those visitors who seek to have new experiences during their visit at the museum. Furthermore, Oh et al., (2007) also considers experience economy to be the driving element behind organization operations. This is in line with the study findings indicating that most visitors to this museum were experience seekers.

This study results were significant and quite relative to Housen, (1987) assertion that the visitors perceptions is shaped by their extent of comprehension and logic through the experiences they will have at the museum. According to the current study, it was quite evident that most visitors are driven by the museum exhibits and the overall museum environment. The museum characteristics offer some of the best aspects for those visitors who are regarded to be in experience seeker category.

The most crucial aspect that was observed among the visitors comments in TripAdvisor were linked to the visitor perceptions and motivations in regard to visiting George Eastman Museum.

For instance, the visitors expressed their motivations to be linked to their attitudes, interests and perceptions of the museum based on their visit. The relevance of this study can be linked to the psychographic motivations including visitor's attitudes, interests and perceptions of the museum based on their visit. Packer (2008), through his empirical study on museum motivations effectively displayed the psychographic nature of the visit motivations especially by museum tourist. This is a strong element that was not only showed by John Falk (2012) but also through other different studies that have been reviewed in the literature regarding the visit motivations. For instance, Bond et al., (2015) asserted that visitor experiences was more based on personal or each individual perspectives of the environment they are visiting. Furthermore, visitor experiences were related to the services that offered by the museum to the visitors as asserted by N. Kotler & Kotler (2000).

In addition, most visitors to the George Eastman museum, exemplified eWOM as crucial in shaping their visit perception to the museum. The significance of eWOM to visitor experiences was also asserted by López & Sicilia, (2014). Albarq, (2014) agreed on the influence of eWOM on visitor experiences as well. Therefore, the current study was in line with the other studies that have been carried regarding visitor experiences in the hospitality a tourism sector.

During the actual visit, there were different museum attributes that visitors were able to interact with, and this form a major part of their experiences in the museum. Based on the coded themes in reference to the actual interaction of the visitors with the physical context of the museum, it was evident that museum environment including its exhibits showed a higher percentage in the comments. This was in line with a research study by (Milman, 2009) who ascertained that the exhibits and their arrangement was crucial to the visitors satisfaction. This means that when the visitors are able to comprehend every detail that is attached to the exhibits, they are able to satisfy their objective of learning which might be their main goal. Furthermore, through better organization of labels it makes it easy for every museum visitor to read and understand the information on the exhibits. Another important aspect that was seen in visitors comments based on the findings of this study was the George Eastman Museum personality. According to (Gainer & Padanyi, 2002) the way visitors are introduced to the core aspects of the museum matters a lot. They asserted that hospitality and the friendly nature of the personnel at the museum greatly influences visitor experiences, however they also agreed that personality of the museum management was important. This is one of the important aspects that underline visitor's perception towards the museum. It is quite evident that George Eastman as a person

was very influential and his accomplishment as well as his overall character has been passed on to the Museum management and their style of interaction with the visitors.

After the visit, the visitors will usually have memories that underline their overall experiences they had in the museum. These memories may hold some of the positive and negative aspects they had during their actual visit. Essentially the study findings showed that George Eastman who the museum has been named after, was the principal factor in the visitors' memories. This could have been attributed to the fact that the museum has detailed important achievement of George Eastman, therefore, most visitors found this experience overwhelming during their visit. Based on (Packer, 2008) assertion, visitors will most likely have memories of the museum they visited if they were able to experience or positively interact with the museum elements, they had never interacted with before. For George Eastman museum this element was achieved through profiling of George Eastman the man who the museum upholds his success. Therefore, visitors comments were mainly based on the memories they had at the museum including what they learned and the mansion as an historic element which were also ascertained by (Falk & Storksdieck, 2010) who considered a museum as a science learning environment.

In addition, social media was depicted as an important channel where visitors could express their after visit experiences. This study's findings were in line with (O'Connor, 2010) assertion on the relevance of user generated content especially from TripAdvisor and how it was a true reflection of visitor experiences. The memories visitors have after visiting the museum may be shared to others who haven't visited the museum and can be either negative or positive. TripAdvisor acts as one of the platform with which visitors share their experiences about the places they visit. Jeacle & Carter (2011), considered TripAdvisor as an important and the most trusted platform which visitors provide about places they visit while sharing their experiences as well.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter summarizes the finding of the study, its implication and recommendation for future studies.

5.1. Summary of research findings

The study research findings were able to determine and identify the personal context, social context and physical contexts of visits to George Eastman Museum. In the personal context, most visitors expressed identity related motivations with those seeking for experience or so called “experience seekers” having the highest with at least 76 reviewers. This was based on John Falk categorizations that involved experience seeker, explorer, facilitator, prof-hobbyist, and recharger. In addition, the explorer category was less represented in the online while the recharger category had the least score in the overall.

In the social contexts, the sociocultural elements were identified, where sociocultural influence was one of the determinants of visitors’ experiences with about 12% indicating the social context of the obtained. The physical contexts were expressed through dominant themes which in the study included mansion, the museum exhibits, and George Eastman’s personality. On the positive and negative dimensions, mansion theme indicated a higher positive response in the while the museum and the exhibits showed relatively negative dimension in the that were analyzed. Lastly based on a visualization approach via a word cloud the memories and learning outcomes were efficiently analyzed. The findings showed that “Memory/impression of visit;” “Takes you back” (their experience of being drawn back into the past or into a personal memory of previous times, etc.); and most importantly, “Learn from the visit”, were the most predominant themes in memorial and learning outcomes.

5.2. Implications

The study will be beneficial in understanding the overall context of George Eastman Museum. Through the study, it enables the researcher understand different visitor perceptions about the museum. Furthermore, through application of existing theoretical concepts regarding visitor experiences as asserted by John Falk in the interactive experience model, the study seeks to understand the different perception of visitors to George Eastman museum which will be useful

for the museum management. More importantly, the study was able to apply the interactive experience model in the online review context. The applications of this model to this context is limited, thus providing more insight in regard to a museum context. Due to the imperative advantage of the study especially in regard to the George Eastman Museum, the provided insight into the managers of the museum to understand visitor's perceptions about the museum. Furthermore, being one of the studies on the visitor's experiences especially in the museum context using online, it creates an important insight for further studies that will even adopt a larger sample to its case.

5.3. Recommendations for further research

Although the study was able to achieve its objective, there is still a need for further research on the subject. Even though the study achieved an important milestone, future studies need to use a bigger sample base and not just one source. With a bigger sampling criterion, it is easy to obtain more powerful results that can better provide a crucial analysis on visitor's experiences at the George Eastman Museum. Furthermore, future research may consider all visitors to the museum and find a way to get their comments even with those who are non-native English speakers and those who do not comment on social media sites. This could take a more versatile research approach methodology including interview and survey that incorporates a wider sample base regarding visitor's experiences.

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