



Exploring the Visitors Experience and Perceptions of Hyperreality at Cultural Attractions

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Abstract

This research develops a new and comprehensive understanding of *'travels in hyperreality'* in the tourism studies, and in relation to visitors' immersive experience and cultural attractions. The term hyperreality is explored within the context of multiple possible realities which are contingent upon the agency of heritage and arts interpretation, visitors experience and visitor subjectivities. Instead of focusing on developing future applications of emerging technologies, the research stresses the role of individual visitors' subjectivity in the hyperreality at cultural attractions. The research aims at finding out the interrelationship between the visitors' subjective experience versus the immersive attractions from the visitors' perspective. By applying the qualitative research methods, the research reveals that the meanings of *'travels in hyperreality'* has been constructed by both objectivity and subjective; the organization and the tourists. Four themes have emerged from the current research that refers to the representation, the imagination, the sensations and the interactions. The visitors' multi-sensor domains are stimulated by their interactions and their encounters with the surrounding environments and individuals onsite that brings them the authentic experience as *'becoming part of the scene'*. Most importantly, the finding stresses the importance of the visitors' creativities and subjectivities as the co-creators of the hyperreal productions, which relates to their subjective imaginations and their understandings that add the final link to achieve the immersive experience as *'being there'*.

Keywords: Hyperreality, immersive experience, co-creation experience, multi-sensory stimulation, authenticity, emerging technologies.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Hyperreality is an important element of the simulation (Uriely, 1997) in theoretical tourism-focused accounts of postmodernity (Yi *et al.*, 2018) but has been relatively little-researched despite critical apprehensions of the social world having become the central orthodoxy of contemporary tourist studies (Hannam and Knox; Jansson, 2018; Williams and Lew, 2014). As several researchers have suggested, tourism works through dreams and fantasies and thus the concept of hyperreality is tailor-made for the tourist destination and attraction developments (Lichrou *et al.*, 2008; Steiner, 2010; Buchmann *et al.*, 2010). The essence of hyperreality in tourism is the sphere of '*more real than real*', and in which the spectacular representation blurs the line between reality and dreams. It convinces visitors to believe '*it is real*' even though they know their surrounding environments are fabricated and simulated (Dremmond *et al.*, 2018; Aniculaese, 2014; Flyverbom and Reinecke, 2017). The hyperreal representation appears to be more realistic than the reality itself, which is similar to the ancient Chinese transformation tale of Zhuangzi, an ancient Chinese philosopher who sees a butterfly in his dream during his nap and he becomes the butterfly that appears in his dream. In his dream, the feelings of becoming a butterfly are so real to him that makes him wonder if it is the fact that he is the butterfly who dreams about himself turning into Zhuangzi (Herhir, 2011).

In terms of the hyperreality in tourism sector, there has been an increasing amount of literature on exploring the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions (Yung and Lattimore, 2017). Much of the current literature pays particular attention to emerging technology applications, which have made apparent improvements to visitors' immersive experience that has been referred to the '*hyperreal*' experience. Researchers claim that the emerging technology applications have become the core driving force that attract tourist visits to such attractions (Urry, 2002; Pitman, 2004; Smith, 2007). In addition, most of the prior studies suggest that the emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality and computer-based virtual environments could separate the illusionary fantasy from the physical reality that bring visitors the most immersive experience (Hobson and Williams, 1995; Nechvatal, 2001; Guttentag, 2010; Huang *et al.*, 2013; Trojan *et al.*, 2016; Wan *et al.*, 2007). However, several researchers have stressed the importance of the immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions from the visitors' perspective, which they have criticized that there have been too many articles focused on the discussions of the future of the immersive technologies in tourism studies, yet there are too few studies make efforts on exploring the nature of visitors' immersive experience (Tavaloli and Mura, 2015; Guillet and Penfold, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2016; Huang *et al.*, 2013; Kim *et al.*, 2015). The interrelationships between immersive experience and the '*hyperreal*' representation remain ambiguous and require further exploration. Especially, the gaps include:

- **The definition of the hyperreality in the tourism sector:** The question of what is hyperreality in the tourism sector needs to be answered, and the hyperreal representation is not well defined. In terms of the research in the marketing sector, most research studies have focused on the destination marketing in virtual communities and the social media networks. While in the tourism sector, related research studies are conducted based on the second-life type of the virtual worlds (Guillet and Penfold, 2013; Huang et al, 2016; Huang et al, 2013; Kim et al., 2015).
- **The role of the emerging technology applications:** As previous literature stresses that the emerging technology has become the future of the tourist destination developments, which can increase the numbers of visitors to visit the attractions and can make improvements on the visitors immersive experience (Jung and tom Dieck, 2018; tom Dieck et al., 2016; Dueholm and Smed, 2014; Tavakoli and Mura, 2015; Jansson, 2018). The questions of ‘Are visitors seeking for the immersive experience or the immersive productions?’ and ‘Is there any other possibility that can deliver visitors a fully immersive experience outside of a focus on developing the latest technologies?’ are required to be further explored.
- **The potential audience:** Prior studies have suggested that the post-tourists have become the potential audience who are seeking for the digital experience at the hyperreal attractions (Smith *et al.*, 2010; Urry, 2005; Smith, 2007). However, there is inadequate knowledge and too few empirical studies to prove that post-tourists are the target audience at such hyperreal attractions, and their identities, motivations, travel intentions, and their relationships to the category of the post-tourists need to be further answered.
- **Multi-sensory dimensions and the immersive experience:** According to Lau (2015), the simulation-based environments can stimulate and navigate the tourists’ multi-sensory dimensions that refer to the visual, audio, tactile, olfactory and taste-related senses. In addition, the emerging technologies can trigger visitors’ multi-sensory stimulation that can provide them the fully immersive experience (Brockmann, 2012). However, the questions of the interrelationships between the visitors’ immersive experience and the multi-sensory stimulation still remain on the surface.
- **Authenticity and immersive experience:** The hyperreal productions at cultural attractions can reshape the tourists’ authentic feelings that bring them the most immersive experience as ‘the feeling of presence’ (Vince, 2004). Nonetheless, there is insufficient knowledge about how visitors perceive the authentic experience at the hyperreal attractions at the present stage (Siqala, 2016). Most importantly, there needs to be developed an answer about the relationship of the visitors’ immersive experience and the authenticity, and how multi-sensory stimulation has influences on the subjective authenticity.

- **Individual visitors' subjectivities and the co-creation experience:** Previous studies have revealed the importance of the visitors' subjective experience during the co-creation process, which they can turn their encounters onsite into their own personal stories. However, the questions of how they create the co-creation values during their experience onsite require to be further explained.

Therefore, this research aims at making contributions in the field of visitors' experience and perceptions of hyperreality at cultural attractions, particularly exploring the interrelationship between the visitors' subjectivities and the hyperreal productions. Additionally, the research is subjective and is based on the qualitative methodological approach, which will focus on gaining an insight of the visitors' immersive experiences that are associated with the concepts of multi-sensory stimulation and authenticity at the simulated environments.

1.2 The Aims and Objectives of the Research

Based on the previous section, the aim of the research is to explore the visitors' experience and perceptions of hyperreality at cultural attractions. Particularly, the objectives are:

- To rethink the concept of hyperreality in the tourism sector in response to recent societal and technological developments.
- To identify the role of representation/emerging technology applications at hyperreal attractions, and to situate these within the context of the use of e.g. such as life-sized manikins, live performances, artificial replicas and architecture, etc. to establish the production of visitors' immersive experiences
- To identify the tourists' characteristics, motivations and expectations prior to visiting hyperreal attractions
- To explore the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience and the multi-sensory stimulation and the authenticity at the hyperreal attractions.
- To establish the role of visitors' subjectivities in relation to the hyperreal experiences, and to understand the role this plays in shaping their overall experience
- To make focused and specific recommendations and suggestions for the case-study sites and such attractions in general.

1.3 The Research Design

The research is exploratory and interpretative in nature, which follows a case study design with an in-depth analysis of the collected data from the interviews and observations of the conducted fieldworks. The attractions that have been selected for the case studies include the Tang Paradise Theme Park and

the interactive live performance ‘The Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’ in China, the Brunel’s SS Great Britain in the UK, and the ‘Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality’ at the Dali Museum in the US. The reason for choosing the sites for the case studies is based on the research criteria (see in chapter 3.4.1) which they have applied diverse techniques that bring visitors the immersive experience as ‘being there’ that has been associated with the research objective of exploring the possibilities for the hyperreal attraction development in the future. In terms of the research activities onsite, it has been divided from the aspects of the organizations and the visitors. From the organization perspective, the managers and staff onsite will be interviewed to find out their aims and purposes, developing processes and their internal evaluations on their hyperreal productions at the attractions. From the visitor perspective, the onsite observation and interviews have been conducted in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the visitors’ immersive experience and perceptions of the hyperreal productions at the attractions.

1.4 The Significant Findings of the Research

The current research redefines the term hyperreality at cultural attractions, which is constructed by both the objectivity and the subjectivity. The objectivity refers to the representation and the physical environments onsite, whilst the subjectivity relates to the interpretations that the developers deliver to the audience, the staff and the live actors onsite, and the visitors’ subjective experience onsite.

From the organization perspective, the current research suggests the producers rethink the role of the emerging technology applications to have a comprehensive understanding of their audience (motivations, preference, digital productions). The current research has found out hyperreality will become the future trend in the tourism industry, yet the organizations are required to reconsider the role of emerging technology applications at such hyperreal attractions. The case studies of the research reveal that the latest digital productions such as virtual reality could not provide visitors with the an immersive experience that evokes their multi-sensations. The current study finds out that the latest digital productions such as Virtual Reality could not fully evoke visitors’ senses to bring them the most authentic and immersive experience at the current stage. In contrast to prior studies, the research reveals the emerging technology is not the core driving force that attracts tourists to visit the attraction.

From the visitor’s perspective, the case studies discover the importance of the individual’s subjectivity as the co-creators, which they can turn their encounters into their personal stories. But it still relies on the quality of the representation and the attitudes of the staff at the attraction. The surrounding environments and activities onsite decide the levels of the visitors feeling of immersion. The findings stress the importance of the visitors’ subjectivities and their imaginations that add the final link to a fully immersive experience that highlights the co-creation values from the visitors’ perspective.

In terms of the visitors’ immersive experience, the research demonstrates the crucial roles of interactions during their visit onsite that refers to the interactions with their surrounding environments and other

individuals onsite. The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience and the multi-sensor domains that suggest the immersive experience is a dynamic process. The visual effects have built up the atmosphere and the themes of the attraction that arouses visitors' subjective imagination as the first step of the immersion process. The simulated sounds effects that enhances the atmosphere, which leads the visitors into the hyperreal world. The simulated olfactory triggers visitors' memories that enhances their authentic feelings and experience, whereas the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments and humans onsite allows them to actually '*being there*'. Most importantly, the research reveals the visitors' subjectivities add the final link to the hyperreal experience that highlights the co-creation values. However, cultural differences have influences on the visitors' personal realms that decides whether they can fully immerse themselves as the co-creators at the hyperreal attractions.

1.5 The Limitations of the Research

The thesis does not engage with providing a comprehensive understanding of the hyperreality in the postmodern theories. As the research has found out, the simulation at the cultural attractions are constructed by both the objectivity and the subjectivity, yet it could not represent the ontology and epistemology of the contemporary world that requires more rational empirical studies to prove for the future studies. In addition, the current four case studies are focusing on the landmarks and the popularly-spreading tourist attractions, which most of the visitors are the traditional types of tourists but with post-tourist's characteristics. Therefore, the research suggest that future studies should make more efforts on finding out the extraordinary experience and the post-tourist's intentions at the rural attractions and the abandoned spaces that are separated from the modern societies. Furthermore, the visitors' food and the taste sensor have not been included in the current research and these need to be further explored to find out their interrelationship with the other senses, subjectivity and the immersive experience. Most importantly, the theme of the cultural difference between Western and Eastern locations has emerged from the visitors' attitudes towards immersive experience and their experiencing of such sites. However, because of the small scale of the number of informants, the current case studies makes the results need to be further examined with the quantitative research methods such as questionnaires and surveys.

1.6 Research Motivations

One of the reasons to develop the current study is because of my personal interests, I am always obsessed with the illusion and fantasy of the imagery world that makes me prefer the image representation of the world rather than the words. When I go to a heritage site, I am always wondering what it used to be in the history that I find myself being connected with the imaginative atmosphere of the site.

Chapter 1 Introduction

I have perceived the concepts of hyperreality and emerging technologies applications in tourist attractions during my postgraduate study at UWE, which makes me decide to explore in the field as an academic researcher. After I have read a decent amount of literature that relates to the hyperreality at cultural attractions, I have found out that developing the immersive productions have become the central roles in the current tourism industry without providing an in-depth understanding of the immersive experience from the visitors' perspective. The questions of how the individual visitor perceives it and turns it into their own personal hyperreal experience are remaining on the surface, which motivates me to find out the audience interpretations and subjectivities at the hyperreal attractions in depth.

This research could bring of the awareness of the hyperreality in cultural sites (art galleries and heritage sites) to both visitors and organizations. With regard to the visitor experience, this research is intended to help the visitors to find out more creative and fantastic experiences in the hyper-reality that might contribute to something of an escape from stressful life. For myself, the research could help me to understand how the visitors perceive the concept of hyper-reality from a deeper perspective. However, due to the previous experience and my personality, I bring certain bias to this study. Although I will ensure my research objectively, the bias may still have effects on the view and understand of the data that I collect and the way I interpret my experiences. My role in this research includes both representing as a visitor and a researcher, the experiences as a visitor may cause me to lean toward the visitor side without objectively thinking. In order to keep the results and analysis objectively, I will involve with both organizations (secondary data, documents, organization point of views) and site visitors to keep my data validate.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has been divided into nine chapters. It starts with a brief overview of the current research in Chapter 1 and ends with the conclusions drawn from the research in Chapter 9. Chapter 2 seeks for proving a comprehensive review of the visitors' immersive experience at the '*hyperreal*' attractions by embedding the related existing knowledge to the subject that includes both theoretical frameworks and the empirical studies from the previous research. Chapter 3 is concerned with the methodology applied for the research. Chapter 4 to Chapter 7 present the findings of the case studies, which have been structured with sections exploring from the organization perspective, the visitors' perspective and the observation findings. Chapter 8 interprets and discusses the research findings in relation to the previous research studies discussed in Chapter 2. The outline of the thesis is organised as follows:

Chapter 1 Provides a brief overview of the current research that includes the backgrounds, research aims and objectives, the research design, the significant findings and the limitations of the research, research motivations, as well as the outline of the thesis.

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 The literature review covers the previous studies of the immersive experience and the digital productions at the cultural attractions, which also has embedded the existing theories and empirical studies on the concepts of the sensations, authenticity, hyperreality in postmodern theories and the co-creation experience.

Chapter 3 Explains the research methodology, which has been associated with the ontology and epistemology, the research design and the research process.

Chapter 4 demonstrates the findings of the virtual exhibition ‘Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality’, which reveals the role of the emerging technology applications at the tourist attractions.

Chapter 5 presents the findings at the attraction Tang Paradise Theme Park that entails the visitors’ imaginations and subjectivities of the immersion process.

Chapter 6 covers the results from the attraction Brunel’s SS Great Britain that stresses the importance of multi-sensory stimulation from the visitors’ interactions with the physical environments onsite.

Chapter 7 includes the findings of the interactive live performance ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’, which focuses on the visitors’ co-creation values through their interactions with the individuals (live actors and other visitors) onsite.

Chapter 8 discusses and compares the significant results of the current research with the previous findings in the Chapter 2.

Chapter 9 draws upon the entire thesis, which gives a brief summary and critique of the findings from the current research, and areas for further research are identified.

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the visitor experience at the hyperreal attractions that have been developed at the present stage, the theories and empirical studies that are related to the subject will be covered in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on exploring the visitors' immersive experience at tourist attractions. Much of the current literature pays particular attention to the emerging technology applications that have made improvements to visitors' immersive experience, which has been referred to the '*hyperreal*' experience. However, the relationships between immersive experience and the '*hyper-real*' representation remain ambiguous and require further exploration. As Yung and Latimore (2017) suggest, there is a need to gain an insight into visitors' immersive experience at such '*hyperreal*' touristic attractions. Therefore, this chapter seeks for proving a comprehensive review of the visitors' immersive experience at the '*hyperreal*' attractions by embedding the related existing knowledge to the subject, which has been divided from two perspectives that include the visitors' experience and the '*hyperreal*' productions. The first section aims at gaining a brief overview of the visitors' immersive experience that has been divided as before, during and after, following by the discussions on the digital productions that have been developed from the organization perspective. Based on the gaps and critiques from the existing literature, the last section draws upon the solutions that suggest on revisiting the original concept of the hyperreality in the postmodern theories, which aims at gaining a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the immersive experience versus the hyper-real attractions in the tourism studies.

2.2 The Visitor Experience

The section reviews the visitors' immersive experience based on the existing literature, which seeks for gaining an insight of the visitors' perceptions and understandings that relate to the concept of hyperreality. The first sector focuses on providing a comprehensive review of the visitors' experience in hyperreality, following by exploring the potential visitors who are interested in the digital experience that has been divided as the phases of before, during and after. The '*before*' sector covers the concepts of the potential visitors' profile, motivations, and travel intentions. Following by the '*during*' sector that refers to the concepts of authenticity and sensations that are associated with the process of immersion, and the '*after*' sector focuses on the subjects of the visitors' immersive experience that relates to the emerging technology applications.

2.2.1 Hyperreality in tourism

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) define experience as a constant flow of fantasies, feelings and fun. Hoch (2002) adds the point that individuals could acquire knowledge and develop skills through experience. Furthermore, experience is associated with the stimulations to the sense, the mind and the feelings (Aqapito et al., 2013).

Chapter 2 Literature Review

In terms of the tourist experience, it has been described as a series of sensory souvenirs that stimulates the five senses and emotions of the visitors. Glodstein (2010) defines it from three perspective that includes:

- Tourism experience is composed by visitor behaviour, perception, cognition and emotion that are either expressed or implied;
- Tourism experience is produced by the process of visiting, interactive activities such as learning and enjoying while visitors are in an environment away from home;
- Tourism experience is internally produced by individual visitors based on their backgrounds, values, attitudes and beliefs.

Hughes (1995) argues that the tourist experience works through dreams, fantasies and hyperreality. Similarly, Lichrou *et al.* (2008) perceive tourism as a vehicle that creates hyperrealities and simulations as the images of the attractions. The concept of hyperreality is tailor-made for the tourism that makes the hyperreality will become a major trend for future destination space development for the visitors to explore (Steiner, 2010; Buchmann *et al.*, 2010). The key function of hyperreality in tourism is the symbolic value, which performs a particular destination image that gains the international attentions (Steiner, 2010). The spectacle effects from the hyperreal representation mask and separate the dreams and fantasies from the underlying brute reality (Flyverbom and Reinecke, 2017). From the postmodern perspective, the hyperreality in tourism plays the same role as the contemporary world is situated in, which is constructed by hyperreal objects, symbols and spaces (Ong and Jin, 2017). When the reproduced and simulated spaces replace the traditional type of museums, it can provide the tourists the opportunity to become active co-creators of the stories and interpretations at the attraction. Instead of being passively separated by the glass and hushed silence from the '*dead museum*', the tourists are becoming part of the scenario through the increased involvements and interactions with the sites and people (Ozel and Sokmen, 2017).

Hyperreality is a status that blurs the real and unreal, which works as an outcome that viewers cannot tell if they are in the reality or the imaginary world (Hehir, 2011). As several researchers explain hyperreality is experienced through the mental process and everyday life of human being that is constructed by imagination, ingenuities and fantasies (Redhead, 2011). In addition, Rodaway (1994) concludes that the hyperreality is the contemporary experience, which participants could have the different understandings of the contemporary reality based on the messages they have received from the mass media and high technology consumer societies. Furthermore, hyperreality illustrates a way of knowing which explores the limits of understanding through a process of exaggeration. Eco (1986) demonstrates that experience 'for real' can be achieved from the imagination and enjoyment attained from the fabricated 'fakes'. Eco also argues that hyperreality providing an extraordinary experience that can make visitors feel more inspired, more excited, more beautiful, more interesting and more terrifying than what they have encountered from everyday ordinary experience.

The essence of the hyperreality in tourism is the concept of ‘more real than real’, even though the visitors know it is a totally fake and reproduced artificial simulation (Drummond *et al.*, 2018). The visitors are aware of the divide between the illusion and the reality, and they accept what they have perceived in the display (Aniculaese, 2014). According to Flyverbom and Reinecke (2017), the visitors know their surrounding environments are set up, fabricated, scripted and simulated, yet they still embrace and immerse themselves into it. The authenticity is not an issue at such attractions, because these themed landscapes are served as simulated perfection and idealisation to represent the symbols of the nature and culture in reality. The aim of recreating these artificial replicas is not for accuracy and authenticity, but for creating a space that allows the visitors to immerse themselves in and dive into as the co-creators (Ong and Jin, 2017). Most importantly, the authentic experience emerges from the visitors’ imagination and stories based on their multi-sensory dimensions. A simulated environment can become the real one when it meets visitors’ all sensory levels (Waysdorf and Reijnders, 2016).

Carl *et al.* (2007) define the hyperreality in tourism as a mixture of the physical place and digital enhanced applications that provides visitors an environment to become part of the scene in the story. According to Drummond *et al.* (2018), in such hyperreal attractions, visitors will get the feeling as if they were transported into the illusionary world and become part of it, where the medium itself disappears that the visitors are left with the presence of the moment. Ong and Jin (2017) underline the importance of individual subjectivity of hyperreality in tourism, which refers to the individuals’ experience in the mental process such as imaginations or fantasies. Apart from the simulated designing process, the visitors’ emotional feelings and interactions with sites could become part of their own interpretations at such hyperreal attractions. As Wohlfeil (2018) states: ‘*a real simulation is made by these visitors*’, which the essential part is to let the visitors add the final link to the simulation process that allows them to create and produce their own personal meanings and stories.

Smith *et al.* (2010) stress that post-tourists are the potential audience for such hyperreal attractions, such as the romantic cities Las Vegas or Dubai, theme parks, Santa Claus Land and the virtual environments-based attractions. Therefore, the related literature about the post-tourists and their travel intentions will be further demonstrated in the next section.

2.2.2 Before Visit

This section seeks for providing an overview of the existing knowledge about the potential audience who are enthusiastic about the digital experience at the ‘*hyperreal*’ attractions, which is associate with the embedded knowledge of the post-tourists’ profile, motivations and travel intentions. Based on the existing literature, post-tourists are expecting to obtain a more entertaining and thrilling experience without concerning about the authenticity of such simulated environments based attractions that will be further indicated in the next sector.

Visitor Profile: The post-tourist

According to Urry (2002), post-tourists are interested in digital experiences, emerging technology applications and virtual representations. Unlike the traditional tourists, post-tourists are defined as a group of '*pastiche tourists*' or '*college tourists*' who chose their travelling destinations by their special interests' without questioning about the authenticity of the fabricated and simulated attractions (Hollinshead, 1998; Smith *et al.*, 2010). Additionally, post-tourists are the target audience of the digital productions and experience, such as social media, internet, mobile applications and software programmes (Feifer, 1985; Smith *et al.*, 2010). Pitman (2004) distinguishes there are two types of post-tourists, which refer to the sightseers and the vacationers. Sightseers seek for novelty, while the vacationers is perceived as the groups of visitors who are looking for change but not necessarily novelty. The sightseers also refer to the gazers who perceive the simulated realities are more 'real' than the original reality itself, but arguably hyperrealism can be understood as a symbolic image of the attraction based on the individual tourists' gaze. The hyperreality is created by the gazer, from the moment when the tourists are planning for their trips through the mass media, the information they perceived has become abstract that shapes their expectations of the attractions through their imaginations. To extend the definition and characteristics of the postmodern tourists, Smith (2007) identifies the typical profile of a post-tourist as:

- relatively young, aged between 18 to 45 with high disposable income
- compulsive consumer with time pressure
- individualistic/ independent tourist, escapist on holiday but work-obsessed at home
- prefer more about entertainment rather than education or self-development
- Avoid popular attractions and hotspots
- experience collector who enjoy luxury and thrilling experience but in a controlled and safe environment
- addicted to the emerging technology and media, attracted by the cult of celebrity

Motivations

Wickens (2002) classifies there are five factors that motivate the post-tourists to visit the hyperreal attractions, which include placing a strong emphasis on the local culture, searching for sensual and hedonistic pleasures, wishing for a romantic experience, seeking for sunshine and hot climate, and enjoying the familiarity provided in a destination to which they return on an annual basis. In addition, nostalgia is an essential element that drives the post-tourists to visit the hyperreal attractions. As A. Nilnoppakun (2015) puts it, the emotion of nostalgia represents the post-tourists are celebrating clamant nostalgia and taking recourse to history so as to critically comment upon the unreliable and disconcerting present. Thereby the nostalgic visualization plays as a symbolic image, which transfers the post-tourists' emotions into '*an intense but fragmentary and transitory aesthetic experience*' (Barrett, 1997). Moreover, Triantafyllidou and Siomkos (2013) indicate that seeking for nostalgia

experience such as travelling to the past has become the outcome of the post-tourist experience that is proposed to develop tourist's behavioural intentions.

Expectations

In contrast to the traditional tourists, post-tourists are desperate for entertaining activities because they perceive the tourism as a series of games (Urry, 2002). Besides, post-tourists are attracted by the virtual and simulated environments at hyperreal attractions, which makes them concern less about the authenticity between the reality and fantasy. In post-tourist's defence, inauthenticity could not become an issue for them to visit such attractions, because the truly authentic places and cultures are impossible to find. Rojek (1993) concludes that the post-tourist expect more innovative and imaginative elements on the representations of the tourist sites. Additionally, the post-tourists become enthusiastic about the escapism and diversity of the entertaining experiences. Furthermore, in comparison with the traditional destinations which are filled with crowded tourists and chaos, the replica monuments and simulation or virtual environments are more appealing to the post-tourists.

Smith (2007) considers the post-tourist as a 'new' variety of the leisure tourists who are seeking for escapism, entertainment and fun. In the respect of the expectations, the post-tourists are not only craving about the excitement or thrilled experience, but also comfort and security that requires the travel destinations to make more efforts on elevating the appearances at the attractions in order to enrich the post-tourists' experience. Rojek (1993) suggests that there are four categories of tourist sites might be attractive to the post-tourists. To start with the blackspots, which includes the commercial development of the sites of atrocity, such as graves, war zones or massacre. In addition, Rojek proposes that the nostalgic, hyper-real and entertaining versions of history could bring more post-tourists to the heritage attractions in the tourism industry. Furthermore, post-tourists are interested in visiting literary landscapes where are related to the authors and their fictional works. Moreover, post-tourists are attracted by the theme parks with the combination of globe culture, emerging technology and media. Despite of there are varieties of emerging technology applications have been applied at tourist attractions, Smith *et al.* (2010) point out how the tourists perceive them need to be further explored.

2.2.3 During Visit

This section aims at exploring the factors that have impacts on the visitors' feelings of immersion, which relates to the concepts of sensations and authenticity. Tourism destinations are dynamic and have multiple identities, which are shaped by the individuals' perception and cognition (Dias *et al.*, 2017). The visitors' experience whether normal or extraordinary can transfer live to construct the subjective reality (Agapito *et al.*, 2013). The visitors' overall experience and their perceptions on the attractions are influenced by the social, physical environments and the active interactions onsite (Rahman *et al.*, 2015). The tourist experience is associated with the unconscious sensation and the conscious perceptions during their visit (Volo, 2009). Sensation is crucial to effect and enhance on the visitors'

authentic experience during their visit onsite. As Agapito *et al.* (2014) state, sensation works as an important tool to influence the individuals' mental perception and cognition. Senses are the core foundations for the individuals to collect information, develop and understand meanings, and stimulate actions. The mental simulation generates visitors' cognitive activities, attitudes, behaviours and memories, which makes the feelings of authenticity further intensify the visitors' 'immersive experience' (Dias *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, the existing knowledge of sensations and authenticity will be presented in the following sections.

Sensations

According to Ackerman (1992), the multi-sensory is composed by sight, sound, olfactory, taste and tactility that relates to the visitors' immersive experience and metaphorical exploration (Rodaway, 1994). Each sense works as the medium to transfer the message, which receives the information gathered from the individual's surrounding environments, and then selects, filters and constructs the information into particular messages. Additionally, the sensuous experience is in the connections between the individuals' previous experience and expectation that are reliant to their internal realms and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the internal realms have impacts on the individuals' perceptions of their surrounding environments, which shapes their learning memories, emotions and desires. When considering the individual's perception on the surrounding environments, Agapito *et al.* (2013) describe it as '*half of the beauty of a landscape depends on the region and the other half on the men looking at it*'. The first meaning relates to the relationship between the individuals and their surrounding environments that can be described as the reception of information through the multi-sensory. While the second one refers to the mental insight, which is the individuals' subjective explorations through their interactions with the surrounding environments. Therefore, perception involves with both sense organs and subjectivity, which are shaped by a geography and cultural environment (Rodaway, 1994).

Researchers make efforts on the sensory dimensions of experience in diverse domains. In the aspect of philosophy, Taylor (2013) expresses that the individual's conceptions of the world are directly derived from their experiences instead of their innate thoughts. Also, Boqdashina (2004) disputes the knowledge is obtained from the multi-sensory of the individuals' interactions with the external world. The academics divide the multi-sensory dimensions in a hierarchy with sight, followed by hearing, smell, taste and touch (Martens, 1999; Wearing *et al.*, 2010). While from the perspective of neuroscience, individual's consciousness is perceived by the external sensory stimuli (Pearce, 2005). The perception is the result of the mapping skills of the brain which produces a concept. According to Pearce, individuals recall their experiences by their perceptual images that could reshape and reconstruct of the past events. As Craig (2003) demonstrates, the sensory signal is not only affected by the external environment, but also the internal aspect which is called the interceptive system that contains the proprioceptive sense, the vestibular sense, the visceral sense and the internal milieu sense. Furthermore, Rodaway (2001) points out that olfactory and tactile are the most intimate senses, while

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hearing and sights belong to the distant senses. He also claims that the relationships of the five senses are cooperation, positive, hierarchies, sequences, threshold and reciprocity.

In response to the design of tourist experience, Carbone (1994) states there are two elements could enhance the visitor experience: mechanics (five senses) and subjectivities (derived by individuals). In advance, the technical performance component and the artistic performance component should be considered when the developers design the tourist experience. The technical performance refers to the technical skills, settings and interpersonal performances. While the artistic performance relates to the use of themes, features with multi-sensory performances and unanticipated value performances (Ellis and Rossman, 2008). Inspired by the previous researchers, Morgan et al. (2010) develop the tourist experience conceptual model as the personal realms, the influential factors, and the phasic nature of the tourist experience. Firstly, the personal realm refers to the individual's motivation, expectation, satisfaction, knowledge, memory, perception, emotion and self-identity. Secondly, the influential factors relates to the physical environment, social aspects, the products and services. Thirdly, the phasic nature of the tourist experience is associated with the distinct phases of the experience as 'before, during and after'.

Taking into the account the factors that have influences on the visitors' overall experience, there are internal component and external component. In the aspect of internal factors, Singer (1966) demonstrates the individuals create the multi-sensory images within themselves. In particularly, the multi-sensory images are constructed by the historic imagery and fantasy imagery. The historic imagery pertains to the individual's memory of an event which has already happened. On the contrary, the fantasy imagery is not produced from the individual's prior experience, but from the configurations of the individual's conscious awareness and imagination. According to MacInnis and Price (1987), imagery process is a container of keeping multi-sensory memories and producing mental pictures. The mental pictures are generated not only with the visual component, but also with the sounds, smells, tastes and touch elements. Furthermore, Goldstein (2010) identifies the tourist attractions relate to the tourist cognitive component and their affective component which influence on the outcomes of tourist satisfaction. Most importantly, the overall perception of experience is affected by the tourist subjectivity that includes the individual's personality, cultural background, knowledge and self-identity (Morgan et al., 2010).

In comparison with the internal factors, Bitner (1992) demonstrates the external factors refer to the tangible elements, such as the environmental factors, the sensory stimuli and the design (layout, representation, artefact, symbols, signs and themes). In addition, the surrounding environment and the human interactions (actors/actress performance and employee interactions) have huge impacts on the visitors' overall experience (Agapito et al., 2013). Furthermore, the surrounding environments contain

both physical and virtual elements, and the tourist experience is determined by the emerging technology stimuli and multi phases design (Nickerson, 2006).

When considering about the relationship between the hyperreality and the senses, the ‘hyper-realisation’ of sense is defined as the separation out of the individual sense modes that transfers into specific features or roles. This transformation of the senses is based on the process of symbolisation, association, abstraction and reassignment. In this circumstance, the reality that the visitors perceived has become abstract and has been transformed by the simulated environments. As Samuels (1987) describes, this is a new order of sense and reality: a reality that has been designed; a reality has no original reference because it is self-referential; a reality that is more real than real, where all the senses are transferred into desire and a continuous unfulfilled hedonism. Based on Baudrillard’s hyper-reality, Rodaway (1994) comes up with a number of key characteristics of hyper-realisation of senses: The first is hyper-sensuous, which is the sensory experience of ‘*more real than the original experience could be*’, which is the experience beyond the reality. The second one is called hegemonic, which is a continuously experience and the continuously experience, which have been influenced by the previous experience that have encountered repeatedly, and even dominate the perceptions of all other experience in other spaces. This type of experience has replaced the standard of the original one. In advance, the third one is consumerist, which is the sensory experience constitutes of establishing images and themes, and it relates to the hedonistic and involvements at this phase.

Table 1 Related research of sensation studies in tourism

Author/Authors	Contents/Findings in the research	Methodology
Dann and Jacobsen, 2003	Smellscapes Aroma development-the experience and memory of the past and the present.	Conceptual framework
Gibson and Connell, 2004	Sensory experience- ‘tourist ear’ Authenticity Music shapes tourist space both aurally and physically Music enhances local identity	Conceptual framework
Quan and Wang, 2004	Food experience in tourism Food consumption support the visitors’ peak and overall experience	Conceptual framework
Rahman et al., 2015	Categorize senses from four perspectives: motivation/perception, brand images, interpretation and engagement, experience quality value and satisfaction of visitors	Conceptual framework
Zhang, 2017	Heritage/sensation The experience can beyond the sense of sight. The combination of the senses can shape visitors’ consciousness of the past and the present.	Conceptual framework

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Valente et al., 2018	Multi-sensory in virtual environments Propose a model Pervasive Virtuality	Conceptual framework
Bogicevic et al., 2019	Sensation/ Mental imagery Perceptual experience manifest in the form of sensory picture-a single sensor or a combination of visual, olfactory, gustatory or haptic stimuli	Conceptual framework
Everett, 2008	Sensation/Food tourism Increasing demanding on the co-creation experience from visitors and producers. A dimension shift: from visual to taste. Food represents a place identity and provide immersive experience to visitors Multi-sensory activities are needed	In-depth interview, participant observation
Hoven, 2011	Multi-sensory dimensions/ Great bear rain forest/rural tourism Extension beyond the sight: active interactions with the site stimulate the sensory experience. The importance of tactile: building up connections and enhancing the sight Sounds: un-noticed	Documentary
Agapito et al., 2012	The role of human sense in tourist experience in rural areas Senses hierarchical responses: visual, hearing, taste, smell and touch	Survey
Agapito et al., 2014	Sensation/countryside/rural tourism Themes generated from multi-sensory stimulation	Self-administered survey
Xiong et al., 2015	Multi-sensory image Visual sense plays the dominant part Multi-sensory increases understanding of the attraction through cognitive image, feelings/emotions and travel intentions	In-depth interview
Dias et al., 2017	Sensory experience arises in the combination of up to three senses with sight Visual sense-most mentioned Smell-the lowest	Narrative approach, interview and observation
Agapito et al., 2017	Sensation/Memories Diversified sensory impressions Sensation recalled in the post-visited phase, enhancing tourists' behaviour and intentions toward destination. Sense of sight increases the reflection on the tourist experience and add meanings to it significantly	Two phases Self-administrated survey Second survey online

Bogicevic et al., 2019	VR/ mental image/sensation Individuals senses stronger in VR applications. VR stimulates tourists to daydream about the attractions before they visit. The types of the creative tourists	Experimental, Questionnaire
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Based on the *Table 1*, studies on conceptual framework reveal the importance of other senses except the sight, and the combination of all the senses could arise visitors' emotional feelings and overall experience (Dann and Jacobsen, 2003; Gibson and Connell, 2004; Quan and Wang, 2004; Rahman *et al.*, 2015; Zhang, 2017; Valente *et al.*, 2018; Bogicevic *et al.*, 2019). There is one study (Valente *et al.*, 2018) suggests that the emerging technology applications such as virtual reality should not only focus on one simple ocular dimension, but the combination between the surrounding environments with multi senses where the visitors are able to touch the physical objects, feel the hot air steam and interact with other people to fully immerse themselves into the hyperreality. However, the challenge is the emerging technology applications could not satisfy all the sensory dimensions to the visitors at the same time while they are experiencing it at the present stage (Bogicevic *et al.*, 2019).

In terms of the empirical studies of sensation in tourism, several studies stress the visual sense plays as the domain part in tourists' experience that has influences on visitors' feelings about their surrounding environments, which makes improvements on their overall experience (Agapito *et al.*, 2017; Agapito *et al.*, 2012; Xiong *et al.*, 2015; Dias *et al.*, 2017). However, other studies reveal the importance of other sensory domains, such as the tactile or the tastes. According to Everett (2008), food represents a place identity and provide immersive experience to visitors, which requires multi-sensory activities to provide visitors the most immersive experience in tourist attractions. While Hoven (2011) finds out beyond the ocular sensory dimension, tactile builds up the connections with the sight. In addition, sounds and the smells are the least mentioned and noticed (Hoven, 2011; Dia *et al.*, 2017). But the emotional feelings and the immersive experience arises in the combination of up to three senses with the sight (Dia *et al.*, 2017).

According to Agapito *et al.* (2017), there is a lack of empirical studies to validate the theoretical literature on the bodily experience and the interactions with the activities on site. Bogicevic *et al.* (2019) emphasize that current academic literature provides a limited understanding of the tourists' sensation and perceptions subjectively. In addition, there needs more qualitative research methods to provide a deep understanding of the role of human sense in tourist behaviours. Agapito *et al.* (2013) stress that future research requires a holistic approach to find out the interrelationship between the sensory dimensions and the tourist immersive experience. Furthermore, current tourism studies are centred on a Western view-ocular attributes that requires more researchers to make efforts on exploring all human senses and finding out the relationships between the five senses and the visitors' authentic feelings that

have impacts on their immersive experience (Pan and Ryan, 2009; Dann and Jacobsen, 2003; Ellis and Rossman, 2008).

Authenticity

As Yung and Latimore (2017) demonstrate that the concept of authenticity plays as an important role in the tourism sector, especially in the simulated environments, this section will focus on the subjective perspective of authenticity and related research in the tourism sector. Firstly, it covers the conceptual frameworks and debates of authenticity from the objectivist, constructivism and postmodernism perspectives. Then related empirical research of the authenticity in the tourism sector will be presented in the following sector.

Mac Cannell (1973) first applies the term staged authenticity, which refers to the hosts of sights and events make the toured objects appear real that leads the tourists difficult to explicate the authenticity. While Reisinger and Steiner (2006) suggest the concept of authenticity should be abandoned, because there are too many definitions that makes the term too complicated to be understood, which should be replaced by more explicit term such as genuine, actual, real and true. Cohen (2007) criticizes about Reisinger and Steiner's theory mainly because they have not considered the problems of possible alternatives meanings of these terms. Brown (2013) proposes that the authenticity could be considered from two perspectives; the tourist gaze of authenticity and the authenticity of the toured object itself. Cohen and Cohen (2012) give a more comprehensive review of authentication: the process of authenticity, which includes both cool authenticity and hot authenticity. The cool authenticity refers to the objective, official, original, genuine or real objects that based on the scientific knowledge instead of the replicas. While the hot authenticity refers to the high degree of the individuals' personal commitments to the environment, which is dynamic and based on belief rather than proof.

Wang (1999) suggests that the authenticity can be understood from the perspectives of objectivist, constructivism and postmodernism approaches. From the objectivist aspect, authenticity is determined by an external objective criterion that is based on the elements of original and genuine (Relph, 1976). However, Zhou *et al.* (2018) reveal that the toured objects should not be considered as static collections in museums, because the meanings and values are not determined by the museum experts, professionals and authorities, but the audience and tourists. Wang (1999) also emphasizes that the authentic experience the tourists have perceived from the 'original' toured objects may not be the real. Furthermore, Berger (1972) argues that the meaning of the 'original one' comes from the present culture.

From the constructivist perspective, all cultures are continually invented and reinvented, and the authenticity is derived from the visitors' interpretations and interactions with the physical reality (Cohen, 2007; Zhou, 2018). It is the result of how individuals perceive the reality differently from various perspectives and understandings based on their personalities and cultural backgrounds (Wang, 1999, Berger, 1972; Rosette, 1994). Based on the constructivist position, the meanings of authenticity are

given by the individuals, which represents the symbolic meanings of the sense of identity, meaning and attachment. But on the contrary to the postmodernists, the sign and symbols are still the mirrors and reflections on the physical reality (Bruner, 1994).

From the postmodern perspective, inauthenticity should not be considered as an issue in the contemporary society, because there is no original object can be used as reference, whereas everything stays on the surface for the entertaining purposes (Pretes, 1995). It is ‘the end of the tourism’ - where it is difficult to find the boundaries between the reality and the symbolic representation (Urry, 1990). However, Wang (1999) disagrees with Urry, instead of burying the concept of authenticity, the existential authenticity provides an alternative route for tourism despite the postmodernists refuse to explore the theoretical possibilities in advance. Steiner and Reisinger (2006) suggest the existential authenticity could be considered as the subjective experience, because it is dynamic that changes from moment to moment, which is similar to the tourist moment that emerges in unexpected situations (Cary, 2004). By applying Heidegger’s framework, Steiner and Reisinger (2006) propose that the reality itself is meaningless, and the meaning is given by the individuals and how they live in order to experience the authentic existence as being. The tourists and tourism have been acknowledged as human activities, which individuals create and explore their own interpretations and meanings through experience. The authenticity has no relation to the physical reality anymore, which only requires the individuals be true to themselves and not affected by the mainstream cultures. On the contrary, inauthenticity is constructed by the reliance on public shared views, popular shared attractions and object authenticity. Especially at the heritage and cultural attractions, the authenticity is the moment of self-discovery and finding identities from the individuals’ understanding of the history and the past (Wang, 1999). Moreover, Knudsen *et al.* (2016) apply Heidegger’s essence of Being to identify the power is come from the fantasy, and authenticity is a particular powerful fantasy in tourism.

Table 2 Related research of exploring the authenticity in the tourism sector

Author(s)	Topics in the research	Methodology
Yi <i>et al.</i>, 2018	Testing the hypothesis of the relationships between perceived authenticity and destination loyalty in heritage attractions.	Quantitative: questionnaires
Halewood and Hannam, 2001	Exploring the tourists experience and perceptions of authenticity in ‘living history societies.	Qualitative: Case study-semi-structured interviews and ethnography
Ram <i>et al.</i>, 2016	Exploring the relationships between authenticity and place attachment of heritage tourists and testing the hypothesis of the relationships between place attachment and authenticity.	Mixed methods: qualitative-interviews primarily, and quantitative-self-report questionnaires
Yi <i>et al.</i>, 2017	Testing and verifying the existing theories of existential authenticity.	Quantitative: questionnaires
Hughes, 1995	Finding out the impacts of commodification and postmodern on the construction of authenticity.	Qualitative: Case study

Zhou et al., 2018	Exploring tourists' perceptions and experience on negative authenticity in cultural attractions in China.	Mixed methods: quantitative-questionnaires for validating dimension, and qualitative-unstructured interviews to support the validation of the dimension.
Chhabra et al., 2003	Finding out the visitors' perceptions of Scottish Highland Game in the US	Quantitative: survey
Buchmann, Moore and Fisher, 2009	Understanding the authenticity in the film tourism: Lord of the Ring	Mixed methods: questionnaires, on site observation and group interviews
Jansson, 2002	Spatial phantasmagoria/ symbolic authenticity	Qualitative: interview

According to *Table 2*, there are researchers choose deductive approach to test and verify the relationship between perceived authenticity, objective authenticity, and existential authenticity by using quantitative questionnaires and surveys (Yi et al., 2018; Yi et al., 2017; Chhabra et al., 2003). While Buchmann, Moore and Fisher (2009) employ mixed methods in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' perceptions on authenticity at the hyperreal attraction '*Lord of the Ring*' in New Zealand, which reveals the existential authenticity could not exist without the objective authenticity, because the perceptions and experience have to rely on the physical objects or material reality. From the constructivism perspective, they demonstrate the combination of objective authenticity and existential authenticity can provide the tourists the most immersive experience and the moment of authenticity. Zhou et al. (2018) explore the authenticity by using the mixed methods as well to explore the negative authenticity, which they discover that even though the events or objects truly exist with the characteristics of the violence and superstition that obeys the modern culture and value, the tourists will perceive it as an inauthentic experience, because the tourists only choose what they want to see. Despite there are various research studies focus on visitors' perceptions on authenticity in cultural attractions, Yung and Latimore (2017) suggest that the concept of authenticity and representation in the simulated environments and virtual worlds is still needed to be comprehensive developed.

2.2.4 After Visit

This sector focuses on discussing the benefits of the immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions that can bring to the visitors based on the existing literature. Back in 1987, Eco has already explored '*travels in hyperreality*' that he describes the feelings of immersion as the '*spiritual lift*', which allows the visitors to step into the recreated three dimensional painting actively as the co-creators.

Table 3 Eco's travels in hyper-reality

Name of the attraction	Themes/layouts on site	Findings
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Museum of the city of New York	Diorama and glass case	more effective, more vivid than the paintings
	The New York museum provides the visitors a three-dimensional statue, which reproduces Peter Stuyvesant as portrayed in the painting. The designer wants the visitors to feel an atmosphere and to plunge into the past.	
Wax museum 'believe it or not!'	Wax figures	Nostalgia, sensationalistic, truth is mixed with legend, the result is oneiric.
Between San Francisco and Los Angeles: Seven versions of Leonardo's last supper	Wax figures, three-dimensional creation/taped video in deep and emotional tones	Most extraordinary spiritual experience, spiritual uplift and celebration of the glories of the art, touched by the artistic greatness, spiritual emotion which makes the original work almost invisible.
The palace of living art-Leonardo drawing: Mona Lisa in a three-dimensional wax world	original and re-produced painting, wax museum, three-dimensions, life-sized in full colour	satisfied, sensational moment, does not need the original anymore
The city of robots: Knott's Berry Farm	reconstruction of the 'objective' past according to the original	The visitor finds himself participating in the fantasy because of his own authenticity as a consumer, in other words, he is in the role of the cowboy. Hallucination erases the distinction between historical reality and fantasy (the confusion between the copy and the original).
Disneyland	Simulated/hyper-real environment	illusion, and stimulates the desire for it, daydream demands, technology can give us more reality than nature can, more real than the reality

According to *Table 3*, the simulated-based environments can provide their audience the most extraordinary feelings of '*being there*' that has exceeded the original objects or attractions as, which refers to the '*more real than real*' moment. Such as the experience the visitors can get at the Disney World, although the little fairy or the mad hatter do not exist in the reality, the way of how visitors perceive the scenes and the performance from the actors/actresses make their feelings and experience become '*more real*' than '*real*' (Fjellman, 1992). Additionally, the purpose of developing such hyperreal attractions is to encourage their audience to become part of the scene as the co-creator actively, which can enrich their experience and unleash their creativities instead of being critical or logical (Rodaway, 1995).

In terms of the empirical studies, the existing literature stress that the immersive technologies stimulate visitors' passion and creativity, which make improvements on their understanding and personal learning experience through '*becoming part of the scene*' (Jung and tom Dieck, 2018; He *et al.*, 2018; tom Dieck *et al.*, 2016; Huang *et al.*, 2013). However, Paquet and Viktor (2005) argue that most of the visitors prefer to see the original objects from the reality rather than the fabricated virtual world. Moreover, most of the visitors are questioning about the authenticity of the virtual environments, and they consider it as a playful engagement or as similar to online games for entertainment (Cheong, 2001). For instance, Prideaux (2002) obtains limited and negative respondents from his research of the virtual reality as a substitute for real travel, because the samples reject the concept of virtual reality in his research. Similar to Prideaux, Mackellar (2014) finds out that the virtual holiday travel could not replace the reality despite the inconveniences and the environmental dangers to destinations. Furthermore, the experts pay more attention on designing the immersive technologies rather than the immersive experience for the visitors, which arises the questions of how the emerging technologies have impacts on the postmodern tourists from the visitor perspective; who have the potential to be the post-tourists, or what are the post-tourist's perceptions on the hyperreal attractions (motivations, expectations, acceptance, etc.) are still remaining on the surface (Guttentag, 2010). The next section will focus on the hyperreal productions of the tourism research, which include the well-spread emerging technology applications and the related empirical studies.

2.3 The Hyper-real Production

According to Yung and Lattimore (2017), immersive technology application is becoming the future of the tourism, which includes the emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. Several studies in marketing suggest that the VR/AR applications have raised awareness of branding and have attracted more tourists to visit the virtual attractions (Cheong, 1995; Berger *et al.*, 2007; Guttentag, 2010). In the recent years, emerging technology applications such as Virtual Reality and

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Augmented Reality have become a widespread trend among the cultural and historical attractions the tourism industry (Guttentag, 2010).

In terms of the Virtual Reality, it refers to a computer-generated three-dimensional environment-the virtual simulation, which the users can navigate and possibly interact with that stimulate their five senses(Lau, 2015). As seen in the previous section, the hyperreal experience relates to the blurring of boundaries between the imagination and reality, which the users cannot tell the authenticity of their experience (Gutiérrez *et al.*, 2008; Vince, 2004). In addition, the levels of immersion in the virtual environments have influences on the users experience that is associated with the feelings of authenticity (Guttentag, 2010). Furthermore, the 'feeling of presence' is the sense of user being in a virtual environment without considering about the actual location where he/she is (Cheong, 1995).

Due to the reason the quality of virtual environment affects the touristic immersive experience, the virtual environment is crucial to the digital system. According to Kaplan (2013), when reproducing a model of the representation at the simulated environments, there are two primary approaches: laser scanning and photogrammetry. Laser scanner is the process of recording data sets and defining an object's geometric shape and colour, while photogrammetry involves with the acquisition of such data from photographs of the original objects. Virtual environments can also be produced online such as Second Life or the Sims (Chen *et al.*, 2012). For example, in the Sims/Second Life, users can play as an avatar to create their own life in the virtual environments. As EA releases several of expansion packs of the Sims, there are historical monuments, bars, theme parks that users can visit as avatars in the game. Not only the places avatars could visit, but they can interact and communicate with other players. Even more, the virtual environments are designed with multiple purposes, such as the Second Life is created for entertainment and social involvement. It also makes potentially valuable efforts in relation to the preserving of heritage and the reconstruction of sites which may have already been ruined or destroyed (Chen *et al.*, 2012).

Furthermore, not only the virtual environment from the visual perspective is crucial, but also the audio, tactile, smell and taste elements are equally important as the visual sense in the digital system (Guttentag, 2010). Unlike the visual, audio or tactile, the smell and taste applications in the virtual environments are quite difficult to deliver to the users. Nevertheless, researchers have developed olfactory displays that can record and reproduce a wide variety of aromas, such as citrus smells, by mixing up to 96 different aromas components to improve the experience of the 'feeling of presence' (Brockmann, 2012).

A user's perception on the authenticity of virtual environments is another factor that has impacts on his/her digital experience. The authenticity at the hyperreal attractions is associated with the quality of the digital productions and the visitors' subjectivities. From the organization perspective, the quality of the digital productions refers to the levels of the 'feeling of immersion' development and the technology latency. From the visitor perspective, Wang (1999) points out that the virtual experiences are inherently

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inauthentic if one evaluates them with an objective, criteria-based apprehension of authenticity known as ‘objective authenticity’. Additionally, when considering the virtual reality from the postmodern perspective, authenticity in the virtual environment is a context-based, relative and subjective phenomenon (Cohen, 2012). Furthermore, Bruner (1994) argues that the authentic experience is decided by the visitors’ characteristics such as their social and cultural backgrounds, educational levels, tourism styles and past travel experiences.

Table 4 Related research on conceptual framework and the future of the emerging technology applications in the tourism industry

Author(s)	Conceptual Framework
Hobson and Williams, 1995	The future of the Virtual Reality application in tourism—a new horizon for the tourism industry.
Nechvatal, 2001	The benefits of the immersive technologies bring to the tourism industry: giving tourism passion and inspiration.
Guttentag, 2010	The future of the Virtual Reality applications in the heritage attractions for the virtual experience.
Cheong, 1995	The threat of Virtual Reality and immersive technologies: How far it can deliver the experience that it promises to?
Berger et al., 2007	Presenting the 3D based platform: ‘Itchy Feet’ to the tourism industry.
Huang et al., 2013	How the emerging technologies can deliver the immersive experience to satisfy the audience expectations.
Mersaros et al., 2016	Proposing a new virtual tour platform: NosefeRatu for educational purpose in the tourism industry.
Trojan et al., 2016	The future of the Virtual reality and Augmented Reality applications for the tourism industry.
Lee and Jeong, 2012	Examining the E-servicescape on consumer’s flow experience by using Stimulus Organism Response Model.
Kim and Hardin, 2010	Extending Bitner’s work of virtual world social networks in marketing.

As *Table 4* shows, the direction of the consideration of the visitors’ digital immersive experience in the tourism sector leans heavily towards proposing the future and the potential benefits the technologies could bring for the tourism industry, which particularly include the implications and developing the analytical frameworks. However, Cheong (1995) argues the developed technology applications cannot fully satisfy the visitors’ multi-sensory stimulation at the present stage, which raises the questions of can immersive technology applications fully deliver the immersive experience as the organization has promised to the visitor?.

Table 5 Marketing and business-related research on emerging technology applications

Author(s)	Topics in the research	Methodology
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Wan et al., 2007	Examining the hypothesis of advertising effects on choosing travel destinations—VR advertising has great influence on the theme park type of attractions.	Quantitative-surveys: the tourists' attitudes and perceptions are tested based on scales.
Guillet and Penfold, 2013	Capturing global audience data through avatar in Second life for the purpose of learning hotel co-branding.	Online survey
Huang et al., 2016	Examining the potential customers' behaviours in the 3D environment world by suing the Technology Acceptance Model and Self-determine theory.	Self-administrated online survey with 186 participants
Huang et al., 2013	Examining tourist experience in marketing by using the Technology Acceptance Model and Hedonic Theory	Online survey-rated Likert scale from 1-7
Kim et al., 2015	Electronic communications/ Consumer behaviour intentions.	On-site survey
Breukll and Go, 2009	Training staff for scenario study in virtual environment in the hospitality sector	Secondary data from different levels of companies
tom Dieck et al., 2018	Exploring the visitors' intentions concerning VR adoptions in the Lake District National Park marketing sector	Qualitative: interviewing 35 participants on site
Luo and Zhang, 2016	Finding out the process of internal trust based on the Theory of Interpersonal Relationship both online (virtual environments) and offline	Mixed methods: qualitative interview approach primarily, and the quantitative research approach secondary
Huang et al., 2012	VR/ New business opportunities: Investing flow theory and the concept of involvement in understanding the impacts of virtual experience of second life on visitors' travel intentions	Online surveys
Lalicic and Weismayer, 2015	Examining the relationships between passionate users and their reliance on technologies for travelling	Self-administrated questionnaires

Table 5 refers to the empirical studies that are associated with the VR/AR applications in tourism and destination marketing, which demonstrates the numbers of research studies have focused on using quantitative research methods to test hypotheses and existing theories. The findings from the studies in *Tables 4* and *Table 5* generally suggest that visitors provide positive feedbacks on their digital experience at such virtual attractions, while the common deficiencies and drawbacks refer to the technological issues and the difficulties of using devices alongside with a lack of awareness of the immersive productions' platforms.

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In terms of visitors' experience and perceptions on the immersive products in tourism, *Table 6* presents the most common representations at the simulated attractions include the Augmented Reality mobile applications and Virtual Reality headset devices. *Table 6* also indicates that most of the studies have applied quantitative research methods (questionnaire and surveys) to conduct deductive research in order to verify hypotheses and existing theories. A smaller number of studies have conducted empirical research utilising an inductive approach by using qualitative interviews and on-site observation to understand and explore visitors' perceptions on the emerging technology applications from multiple perspectives (Jung and tom Dieck, 2018; tom Dieck et al., 2016; Dueholm and Smed, 2014; Tavakoli and Mura, 2015; Jansson, 2018). Dueholm and Smed (2014) consider the authenticity is in relation to the quality of the technology applications from the organisational perspective, and they have discovered that the museum experts and managers are concerning about the issues of objective authenticity. Additionally, most of the findings indicate that the visitors have positive feelings and experiences while they are interacting with the device and settings on site. In common with the findings of the research in marketing, the major challenges for the immersive technology applications are technology-related difficulties and ease of use.

Table 6 Related research of visitors' perceptions and experience relating to emerging technology applications in cultural attractions

Author(s)	Topics in the research	Methodology
Jung and tom Dieck, 2018	Wearable Augmented Reality device has a positive influence on the toured objects and visitors' personalized learning experience	Qualitative: semi-structured interviews in 44 art galleries in the UK
tom Dieck et al., 2016	Understanding visitors' perceptions and points of views on Augmented Reality in museums.	Qualitative: Interviews with 28 visitors in art galleries.
Chu, Lin and Chang, 2012	Visitors perceptions of Mobile Guiding in tourist attractions	Quantitative: 101 online survey from the M-Guiding application
Dueholm and Smed, 2014	Understanding the organizations' perceptions of authenticity of emerging technology applications in heritage attractions.	Case study: semi-structured interviews with managers on site, and observation on site.
Jung et al., 2015	Testing the tourists' perceptions of AR applications in tourist attractions by using Delone and Mclean's Model.	Quantitative: questionnaires
Tavakoli and Mura, 2015	Exploring the travel intentions, behaviours and journeys of Iranian women in simulated environment-Second Life.	Qualitative: Virtual ethnography, and in-depth online interviews
Singh and Lee, 2009	Student's perceptions of learning in 3D virtual environments—opening the possibilities for future tourism and hospitality courses.	Quantitative: questionnaires

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Han et al., 2014	Finding out the users' attitudes and behaviours of playing screen golf by applying theory of planned behaviour.	Quantitative: questionnaires
Huang et al., 2010	Testing the visitors' learning and flow experience in Second Life.	Quantitative: survey
He et al., 2018	Testing the hypothesis of the role of AR for enhancing the tourist experience.	Quantitative: questionnaires via online link
Jung et al., 2018	Cross-cultural testing visitors' perceptions of AR applications in heritage sites in both South Korea and Ireland by using the theories of aesthetic and hedonic characteristics.	Quantitative: 145 questionnaires in South Korea and 119 questionnaires in Ireland
Chung et al., 2015	Using the hypothesis to find out the role of AR in heritage attractions.	Quantitative: survey
Jansson, 2018	Rethinking post-tourism in the age of social media	Qualitative: interviews the urban explorer as an example of the post-tourist
Jung and tom Dieck, 2017	Multiple approaches to emerging technology applications can achieve the co-creation value in cultural attractions	Case study: conceptual model of co-creation value

In the related research in marketing sector, most research studies focus on destination marketing in virtual communities and social media networks. While in the tourism sector, related research studies are based on the second-life type of virtual worlds (Guillet and Penfold, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2016; Huang *et al.*, 2013; Kim *et al.*, 2015). The findings from both fields indicate that visitors are motivated and attracted by the immersive experience and the emerging technology applications at such virtual attractions, while the only deficiency is the technique issues of the digital productions. The questions of if there are other possibilities and techniques to achieve the feeling of immersion at the hyperreal attractions that can provide visitors the most immersive experience still need to be answered. Furthermore, Yung and Latimore (2017) point out that it is still in the exploratory stage in the field at the moment, which requires more substantive conceptual frameworks and theory-based research that are associated with the immersive experience from the visitors' perspective. They recommend further research should make more efforts on gaining an insight of the visitors' perceptions on the immersive productions, such as their personalised experience and subjectivities on the subject. Most importantly, the definition of simulated environments and hyper-reality in tourism studies are vague and indefinite which needs to be further explored (Yung and Latimore, 2017). Thus, the following section suggests on revisiting the original concept of the hyperreality in the postmodern theories to get a comprehensive understanding of it, which could provide possible options for the future research to explore the meanings of 'travels in hyperreality'.

2.4 Hyperreality in Postmodern Theories

Buchmann *et al.* (2010) reveal that the concept of the hyperreality is tailor-made for tourist attractions, yet the previous section stresses that there is an insufficient understanding of hyperreality versus the visitors' feelings of immersion in the tourism studies at the present stage. The section focuses on providing a brief overview of the original concept by revisiting the postmodern theories, which include the simulation theories of Baudrillard (1994) and the major debates based on that theory.

'The simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth-it is the truth what conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true' (Baudrillard, 1994).

According to Baudrillard (1970), individuals in contemporary consumer societies are living within the postmodern condition, which everything has been deconstructed, de-centred, and has become transparent. Hyper-reality in the postmodern condition refers to an independent reality constituted through representation without reference to an original, and which makes it difficult to confidently define the real and the imaginary. Representational practices and their ubiquity blur the boundaries between an apparently objective reality and so-called 'fake' versions of reality. Representation within such an understanding is considered to have historically been like the reflection and the mirror of a reality and to relate to an objective reality. Within the postmodern condition, representation becomes a new kind of reality without any depth or original, and there is a corresponding death of the subject so that the only thing that exists is information (Timothy, 1991). In addition, Baudrillard (1994) points out that the social relation has been controlled by the 'code', which makes the real and illusion blur into the same operational totality - reality can be reproduced based on the mode of simulation and code over and over again. Furthermore, Ahponen (1990) argues that the technological culture, information and the code make everything meaningless because everything has been reduced only to the universal exchange principle of information. Trifonova (2003) describes the characteristics of the postmodern concepts as impersonal, dissolute, vague, unstable, meaningless and fragmented and having the impact of creating a resistance to subjectivity and to the human perceptions of individuals.

Revisiting Baudrillard's earlier works to understand this denial of the individual and of subjectivity is an important step in grasping why he and subsequent thinkers consider reality to be a simulation and a representation without reference to an original. In his *'the consumer society'* ([1970] 2004), he has been influenced by a Marxist critical account of capitalism. Consumption becomes the major routines of the masses' everyday life, and the consumers are influenced by the signs and images of the advertising of the product rather than the actual product itself. This apprehension of consumption leads the masses to become part of the simulated process as cogs in a machine. The consumption leads the masses become part of the simulated process as cogs in a machine. Berger (1972) points out that the reason behind the over-purchasing behaviour is the process of publicity. Publicity images are everywhere, which makes the masses desire the glamour in these images and believe that consumption could make them become

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richer or happier someday. Furthermore, Berger demonstrates the purpose of the publicity is to make the masses feel insecure and unsatisfied with the present condition of themselves. At the same time, purchasing makes them believe that they will have a better future. As he describes, *'The more impersonal they are, and the greater the illusion of the power...publicity is just a dream'*. According to Baudrillard (1994), the entire society is built on consumption and the displays of commodities as consumers become passive and are controlled by the system of sign values that constitutes rules, codes and social logic. The sign values have become the political economy, and the commodities are served for the social purpose and prestige in the consumer society instead of the individuals.

In his later work of the media, simulation and the end of the social theories, he has pushed the concept of the code and symbols even further (Baudrillard, 2007) so that it becomes the primary principle of social life, where the sign blurs the reality and the representation. He demonstrates that the whole of reality is constructed by signs and representations in advance meaning that the individuals live inside a world which is full of commodity signs, media spectacles, representations and simulations. For Baudrillard, it is the age where the reality and media reverse roles, everything becomes meaningless and access to the real is lost. The massive information dissolves the meaning and makes everything become the same-even though there is considerable diversity in the postmodern era. As the media reproduces the interests and tastes of the masses, massification arises leading to unidirectional and passive experience for the mass audience.

In Baudrillard's most controversial work: simulation, hyperreality and high-tech social theory, everything has become visible, explicit, transparent, meaningless and unstable, and the object functions as a pure sign rather than the original commodity itself. In his theory the orders of simulation, the present reality has become the hyperreality, which has been simulated, programmed and filled with information. Instead of unreal, the hyperreal for Baudrillard means more real than real, which can be reproduced repeatedly. There is no definition, no subject and object, and the history has been destroyed and deconstructed, the only thing left is a meaningless game of ruins. In his later work, he comes up with the conclusion that human beings have lost control of their objects, which makes the world is dominated by the objects rather than subjects.

Part, though by no means all, of the attraction of the work of Baudrillard is the nihilistic nature of his provocations. Kellner (1989) gives credits to his sign values theory, because it explains the fundamental constitution and importance of the commodity in the consumer society. Kellner admits that Baudrillard's theory of simulation might be the first radical high-tech new wave of social theory and social science fiction theory. Furthermore, Kellner demonstrates that Baudrillard's theory calls attention to the new concepts and theories about the media society that people are living in.

However, alongside these genuine insights, a major problem with the consideration of simulation and postmodern theory is denial of individuals and subjectivity (Timothy, 1991; Kellner, 1989; Trifonova,

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2003; Callinicos, 1989; Ahponen, 1990; Bruner, 1994; Laughlin, 1957; Murphy, 1996). As Trifonova (2003) puts it, Baudrillard's simulation could be only considered as an ontology and not as an epistemology. There is no associated analytical tool (Kellner, 1989) and no real empirical depth. Also, Simulation is a human project, and the inhuman point of view cannot prove the truthfulness and objectivity. Instead, the virtual and illusion do not replace the real, they enrich the reality and make the sign represent the moment of the real. Hyperreality is the suppression of reality, and the experience is constructed by both subjectivity and objectivity. Furthermore, both object and subject cannot disappear, because the rejection of subjectivity takes place on the foundation of the real (Trifonova, 2003).

Kellner (1989) questions about Baudrillard's simulation and consumption theories from the individuals' creativities point of view. Although individuals are influenced by the massive amounts of information from the social context and from the media, they are still able to make their own choices in terms of purchasing for their own enjoyment, to pursue their own interests, and to create their own meanings. In addition, Baudrillard fails to see any significant subject and object dialectics. It is impossible to negotiate with the world of objects without subjectivity, because it is impossible to gain access to the objects without individuals' perceptions and cognitions. It is a complex interaction, which includes both subjectivity and objectivity from individuals' experience (Kellner, 1989). In terms of the simulation and reproduction, Callinicos (1989) discusses about that individuals still have their own choices and basic needs for food and clothes etc. Ahponen (1990) reveals that without subjectivity, there is no chance of becoming free. The masses have the rights to self-realise and self-regulation that require self-experience and reflection on the physical reality.

Besides questioning about the impersonal nature of Baudrillard's simulation in postmodern theories, there are several researchers actively considering about the relevance and seriousness of his framework (Hollis, 2017). According to Hollis, even Baudrillard's own editor disapproves his work: '*He fails to define the key terms, such as the code and lack of systematic analysis limited view of the world and the reality. He ignores the contradictory evidence*'. In addition, Kellner (1989) describes Baudrillard's sign and symbolic theories as sign fetishism and nihilism, which are both characteristics of the commodities in the consumer society he critiques. Ironically, Baudrillard's theory of simulation is becoming a simulation and hyperreality of criticism in order to compete with other postmodernists (Kellner, 1989). As with much postmodern theory, attempting to avoid metanarratives leads to the positing of new metanarratives, and Baudrillard falls into this trap.

After reviewing Baudrillard's framework and the debates about his theories, what does hyperreality mean then? According to Timothy (1991), hyperreality refers to the combination of time and space, the space means the identity and group spiritual consciousness, whereas the time could be measured as time machine-digital configuration of identical signs. Most importantly, people can create their own hyperreality by creating their own associations, and their different interpretations and understandings.

Laughlin (1957) reveals that the true power comes from individuals' minds and imagination. Representation and technologies serve for people to make their dreams come true. For Laughlin, the hyperreality is the construction of both the human mind and physical reality. He gives an example of the process of taking photos, by starting with interior realities of human minds and emotions which involve the impacts of physical reality on the mind, consciousness and previous experience. Then the photographs that have been taken become more than a record of the object itself but with one's own understanding and interpretation. When considering about the relationship between representation/technologies and physical reality, Murphy (1996) concludes with a question concerning why people focus on the threats of technologies in ethical and philosophical issues rather than more positive outcomes? Instead, Murphy suggests that when art becomes live in simulated environments, it may provide better experience for the visitors. Just as Buchmann, Moore and Fisher (2010) demonstrate, the concept of hyperreality seems to be tailored-made for the tourism, which makes the real and hyperreal experience merge in narrative of tourism and could provide the most fulfilling and authentic experience.

From the debates on the existing literature, the individual's subjectivity plays a crucial role in the process of producing the hyperreality, where they can create their own hyperreal world by using their creativities and understandings. However, it is not the denial of the importance of the simulated environments, because the individuals' subjectivities still rely on their surrounding environments. By applying the constructivism paradigm, where the meanings are given by the individual, yet their reflections have still relied on the physical reality that the research suggests on understanding the term hyperreality in tourism with the concept of co-creation experience. Therefore, the research has embedded existing knowledge of the co-creation experience from both the visitor perspective and the organization perspective that will be further explained in the next section.

2.5 Co-creation Experience in Hyperreality

Tourists are seen as creators and actors rather than as the passive receivers and observers they were perceived to be in the past in both popular and academic understandings. From a cultural perspective, the destination image is made up by the social contexts: the role of it is not just as a physical space, but fluid, dynamic and changeable (Lichrou *et al.*, 2008). Richards and Wilson (2006) highlight the creation and representation of an attraction is a social process that include the attraction producers, the physical environments and the visitors, which the meanings are from the social interactions, sharing and collective memories of individuals. According to Sfantla and Bjork (2012), a co-created experience is the combination by both subjectivity and objectivity, and the co-creation value is composed by both the visitors and organizations. Agapito *et al.* (2013) demonstrate that the process starts with the destination producers creates the experience/stories of the physical environments and human interaction dimensions, and the visitors add the final link by their choices, motives and personalities to create the value. It is the process of visitor's interaction with the attractions to generate his/her own experience

and interpretation (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009). In the process, the visitors become active creators and, together with the producers, create authentic, unique and memorable experience physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and socially (Andrades and Dimanche, 2014).

Namin (2012) emphasizes that the co-creation value is derived from the personalized experience that is unique to each individual visitor. Campos *et al.* (2018) define the co-created tourism experience as: ‘*the sum of the psychological events-a tourist goes through and makes contributions actively through physical or mental participation in activities and interacting with other subjects in the experienced environments.*’ They also suggest that the visitors are the sole creators of the co-creation value, which blurs the traditional distinction between the producer and the visitor. The value is not from product-centred anymore, but from the visitors who can construct their own unique narratives (Campos *et al.*, 2016; Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009). The narratives are generated from the on-site active participations and interactions, and the active involvements on-site can enhance on the higher levels of memorability and self-development (Campos *et al.*, 2016; Campos *et al.*, 2018).

According to Lichrou *et al.* (2008), tourists’ imagination and understanding of the attractions are based on their own cultural backgrounds, knowledge, expectations and fantasies even though they have never been to the attractions before. As Volo (2009) puts it, the tourists can create different stories and experience even when the activities are apparently the same onsite. Ek *et al.* (2008) suggest that tourists should be the co-storytellers by not looking at the objects at the attractions but stepping into them. Several researchers bring out the concept of letting the tourists become part of the performance and create their own narratives based on their own imagination potentials (Morgan, 2006; Richards and Wilson, 2006; Campos *et al.*, 2018). The simulated or themed environments could stimulate tourists’ multi-sensory experience, fantasies and emotional feelings, which allows the tourists to play different roles and interact with each other in different scenarios (Mossberg, 2007; Mossberg, 2008).

The active interactions and activities that the visitors experience involve with immediate consciousness perceptions, sensations and emotions (Scott *et al.*, 2009). From the visitors’ perspective, the co-creation process relates to interaction, co-production and engagement (Minkewicz *et al.*, 2014). The interaction refers to sensations and impressions, while the co-production includes active participation, most importantly, the engagement contains emotional feelings and cognitive immersion. Particularly, Ihamiaki (2012) points out that the multi-sensory is the fundamental element in the process of constructing experience where visitors get the first impression of the materials, smells, sceneries and sounds. Mkono (2013) reveals that the sensory dimensions determine whether the authenticity of the visitor’s experience. In museums, the tourists ‘experience becomes more authentic when they actively take part in the activities in comparison with the traditional way of observing it. When tourists work as the ‘co-producer’ during the co-creation process, the authenticity is not dependent on the external references or the contexts in the physical environments, but on the potential experience, imagination

and skills of the tourists (Richards and Wilson, 2006). Emotion and cognition are influenced by the sensory dimensions and active participation, which are especially linked to existential authenticity and perceptions on the symbols of a destination image (Mathisen, 2013).

Table 7 Empirical studies of co-creation experience in tourism

Author/Authors	Contents/Findings in the research	Methodology
Morgan, 2006	Sidmonth Folk Festival Co-creation experience: visitors become part of the story and create their own values.	Nethnography from the Mudcatcafe.com
Kohler et al., 2011	Product development in virtual world Sensation of being there enrich the visitors' experience	Questionnaires
Ihamiaki, 2012	Co-creation with sensation, the role of sensations in co-creation experience	Nethnography: Case study, secondary data on Geocoacher.com
Mkono, 2013	Interactive participation relates to sensory dimensions-hear, smell, watch and taste. The sensory dimension makes the visitor becoming part of the culture	Nethnography: secondary data from online reviews
Prebensen et al., 2013	Participation in the value creation process. The value includes personal service, surrounding environment and other tourists	Survey. 505 respondents
Tan et al., 2013	The creative experience is co-created and reflected by both outer and inner factors	Interview and observation
Bertella, 2014	Wild life tourism Co-creation with animals, Dog tour Tourists are Primarily link with animals, then the humans (tour guides).	Nethnography: Secondary data on Travel Advisor
Tan et al., 2014	Perceptions of creative tourists in Tai Wan, and the creative experience is the combination of inner reflections and out interactions. The types of the creative tourists	Interview and observation
Campos et al., 2016	Co-creation enhances attention and memorability of the experience	In-depth interview
Buomincontric et al., 2017	Testing the model of co-creation experience Tourists are more willing to pay for the co-creation experience rather than products. Tourists create unique value for themselves by co-creating their experience with the organizations. Emerging technology applications help to provide active interactions and immersive experience	Survey
Prebensen and Xie, 2017	Adventure Tourism	Questionnaires in four companies in northern Norway/ Winter experience

	Co-creation is constructed by physical and mental involvement.	
	Mental participation is more important than physical participation	
Anton et al., 2018	The role of the visitors as co-creator of the experience: before, during, after. Active participation boosts the learning, entertainment and the chance of escapism	Survey. 175 valid questionnaires
Harkison, 2018	Co-creation value in virtual hotel Co-creation plays as an active interaction between the organizations and the tourists, and the value is centred in tourists' experience	Interview

Table 7 covers the related empirical studies in the recent years, apparently developing the co-creation experience is decisive for both the destinations and the tourists, and the value is centred in the tourists' active participation that is reflected by both inner and outer factors (Anton et al., 2018; Harkison, 2018; Prebensen et al., 2013; Buomincontric et al., 2017; Morgan, 2006; Tan et al., 2013; Tan et al., 2014). The active involvement onsite enhances on the tourist's memorability and attention of the experience (Campos et al., 2016). Additionally, the co-creation values emerge, which have different meanings and play in different roles in tourists' experiences as before, during and after (Anton et al., 2018). Especially on the during phase, the mental participant plays more important role than the physical participation (Prebensen and Xie, 2017). Several studies also stress the role of sensations in co-creation experience, which enrich the visitors' authentic feelings and enable the visitors to become part of the story (Kohler et al., 2010; Ihamiaki, 2010; Mkono, 2013). By enhancing the 'feeling of the presence' and sensory feelings, emerging technology applications could improve the atmosphere of the themed/simulated environments that let the visitors' imaginations become true, and allowing visitors to immerse themselves into the attractions as the co-creators (Kohler et al., 2010; Buomincontric et al., 2017; Harkison, 2018).

In terms of the methodology of the empirical studies, several researchers make efforts on testing the existing theories on the role of active participation in co-creation experience, which include the co-creation values in different visiting phases and the role of sensation in the active involvements on site (Kohler et al., 2011; Prebensen and Xie, 2017; Prebensen et al., 2013; Buomincontric et al., 2017; Anton et al., 2018). In order to get the in-depth understanding of the co-creation experience from the visitor perspective, several researchers focus on extending the existing theories by using interview, observations and nethnography online (Morgan, 2006; Ihamiaki, 2012; Mkono, 2013; Tan et al., 2013; Campos et al., 2016; Harkinson, 2018). The quantitative approach provides an advanced evidence on proving the importance of co-creation experience and value, which addresses the connections between sensations and active participations from the visitor experience. While the qualitative research approach

extends the existing theories and creates a deep understanding of the co-creation experience from the visitor perspective. Rihova *et al.* (2014) suggest an interpretive and qualitative grounded research methodology should be further developed in relation to co-creation experience and value.

For the current studies of the co-creation experience in tourism, the empirical research is still in an early stage that requires more researchers focus on exploring the subjective phenomena in active participation, because individuals play as the central role in the co-creating process (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009; Campos *et al.*, 2018; Buomincontric *et al.*, 2017; Zhang and Chen, 2008; Park and Ha, 2016). More specifically, Campos *et al.* (2018) point out that the relationship between the active participation and the cognitive/emotional process in co-creation experience such as the visitors' expectations, perceptions, emotional involvement and memorability need to be fully developed. Additionally, studies on sensory dimensions of the visitors' subjective experience during the co-creation process are still staying on the surface at the present stage (Agapito *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, as it has been stressed in the previous sections, the emerging technologies and virtual environments development can provide visitors a platform to become part of the scene actively, yet the dimension is required to be changed to user-centred instead of product-centred. More studies should focus on exploring how the co-creation process has impacts on the visitors' cognitive, affective and their subjective experience as the co-creators in the simulated environments (Harkison, 2018).

2.6 Limitations of the Existing Literature

Based on the related literatures and research in the previous sections, the remaining questions should be narrowed down to three key perspectives in conducting this project. First of all, the definition of the hyperreality in the postmodern theory. As Baudrillard (1994) describes the contemporary reality as a total simulated environment without any referential that only remains the symbolic representation, which he denies all the subjectivity and human agency in the hyperreality. Even though massive information from the media and internet have impacts on the individuals' tastes and interests, which does not mean the subjectivity and individuals do not exist (Kellner, 1989). Ahponen (1990) stresses the individuals could still make their choices, and they have the rights to self-realize and self-regulation that requires their self-experience and their reflections on the physical reality. Most importantly, individuals can create their own hyperreality with their different interpretations and understandings (Timothy, 1991). Hyperreality is constructed by both objectivity and subjectivity, and the representation is served as the medium to make individuals' dreams come true (Laughlin, 1957). However, the meanings and definition of the hyperreality in the postmodern theories still require to be further indicated and explored.

Secondly, what does the hyperreality mean in the tourism sector? Does it mean the representation of the emerging technologies? Or does it mean the visitors' subjective immersive experience at the simulated attractions? Does it still relate to the physical reality, or does it refer the simulation without

any references? The meaning of the hyperreality in the tourism sector require to be answered, and that the definition of the simulated environment is not well defined. In terms of the related research in the marketing sector, most studies focus on destination marketing in virtual communities and social media networks. While in the tourism sector, the majorities of the studies are centred on the second-life type of virtual worlds (Guillet and Penfold, 2013; Huang et al, 2016; Huang et al, 2013; Kim et al., 2015). The questions of if there are other possibilities and techniques to achieve the representation in hyperreality to provide visitors the most immersive experience still need to be answered. In addition, there is inadequate existing knowledge on defining and providing a comprehensive understanding of the term hyperreality in the tourism sector. Furthermore, rather than focusing on the immersive productions as the most empirical studies have at the current stage, the role of the emerging technology applications at the hyperreal attractions requires an in-depth understanding from the visitors' perspective.

Finally, as it has been shown in the previous section, quantitative research methods are the most common approach in studying the visitors' perceptions and experience of hyperreality in cultural attractions (Yung and Latimore, 2017). However, verifying and testing the perception and the visitors' subjectivities by using scales and numbers could not provide a comprehensive understanding of the tourists' experience. As Yung and Latimore have suggested, the concepts of the inside views of virtual visitors' experience, motivations, perceptions, and authenticity are required to be further explored.

2.7 Conclusion

Collectively, these studies highlight the needs for gaining an insight into the visitors' immersive experience in hyperreality in the tourism contexts. To get a comprehensive understanding of the hyperreality in the tourism sector, the current research stresses the meanings and the importance of the individuals' subjectivities and experience in tourism studies. Additionally, the research aims at reconsidering the hyperreality in tourism studies by embedding the concept of the co-creation experience, which refers to the hyperreal productions from the organization's perspective and the immersive experience from the visitors' experience. As the existing literature reveals that the post-tourists are the potential audience for the immersive productions, thus the research seeks to address the characteristics, expectations and motivations of them. In terms of the visitors' immersive experience at such simulated environments, the research seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors that have been associated with the feelings of immersion that include the concept of sensations and authenticity. In particular, the interrelationship of the sensations with the authentic experience and the feelings of immersion will be indicated in the research.

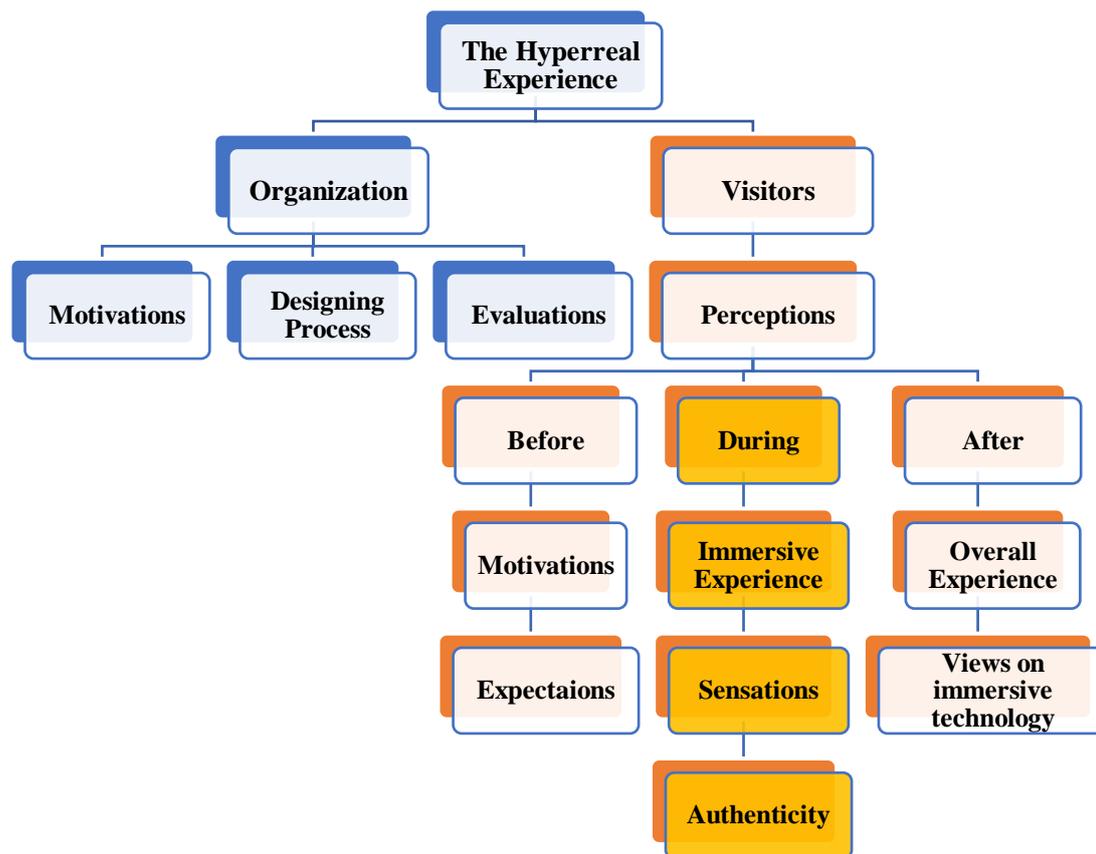


Figure 1 The Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the research, which is divided into sections relating to the perspectives of the organization and the visitors that co-create the ‘travels in hyperreality’. The organizational perspective relates to their motivations for developing the productions, their designing process, and their perceptions and evaluations on the digital representations. From the visitor perspective, the process of creating the hyperreal experience is constructed by the phases of before, during and after. The before stage refers to the visitors’ subjective creative process that includes their travel intentions, motivations, existing knowledge about the destinations and their imaginations (subjectivity). The during process concerns their encounters and interactions with their surrounding environments while they are onsite, which covers the concepts of sensations, authenticity and the immersive experience (subjectivity and objectivity). The last section goes back to the visitor’s abstract experience and perceptions after they have experienced in the hyperreal productions onsite, which refer to their reflections on their overall experience, valuable memories, perceptions of the immersive productions and their future travel intentions. Based on the conceptual framework, the next chapter aims at explaining the methodology and the fieldwork processes of the research.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Over the last few years, various methods have been implied to explore the visitors' immersive experience at hyperreal attractions in tourist studies. As it has been stressed in the previous chapter, most of the conceptual frameworks focus on the future of the tourist attractions in virtual environments, which explains the benefits of the emerging technology applications have brought to the tourism industry. In terms of the empirical studies, the majority of the researchers have chosen the quantitative research methods to examine the hypotheses, which shows the visitors are attracted by the digital productions that motivates them to visit the hyperreal attractions. Fewer existing studies point out the importance of the visitors' subjective experience by applying the semi-structured interviews and observations onsite. However, the interrelationship between the visitors' subjectivities versus the hyperreal attractions requires to be further explored. Additionally, the definition of the hyperreality in tourism studies is still staying on the surface without a comprehensive understanding.

The research aims at gaining an insight of the visitors' subjectivities and perceptions of the hyperreality at the cultural attractions. The contribution of my research is to redefine the concept of hyperreality in the tourism sector that is associated with the context of multiple possible realities which are contingent upon the agency of heritage and arts interpretation, visitor experience and visitor subjectivities. Instead of exploring the future of the emerging technologies, the current research stresses the hyperreality has significant explanatory power in understanding experience and of the complexity of the production of realities. Also, this research aims at gaining an insight into the visitor's role of the co-creation experience at the hyperreal attractions, which has moved beyond simple models of production and consumptions to consider the dynamic constitution of tourist space. Hyperrealities emerge through the complex interplay of tourism organizations, visitors' experiences, and the sets of representations that are attached to cultural attraction sites. In terms of the implications at cultural attractions in tourism sector, this research proposes that instead of focusing on the latest trend on emerging technology applications, there are multiple possibilities to approach the simulated environments and immersive experience for the organizations in tourism industry. In specific, the aims and objectives of the research include:

- **To rethink the concept of hyperreality in the tourism sector:** In order to explore the meanings of 'travels in hyperreality' in tourism sector, case studies have been applied. Four cultural attractions that meet the research criteria have been chosen for the research to explore the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience and the hyperreal productions at the attractions. In addition, the interviews have been conducted both from the organization perspective (hyperreal

production) and the visitor perspective (immersive experience) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the hyperreality in the tourism sector.

- **To identify the role of the representation/emerging technology applications at the hyperreal attractions:** To achieve this objective, firstly, the researcher conducts the observation onsite as a pure visitor, which shapes the themes and the following research activities of the conducted fieldworks. Secondly, based on the previous observation and experience onsite as a pure visitor, an observation form has been listed that includes the representation (Visual, sounds, olfactory, tactile) the interactive activities, and the visitors' reactions. During this stage, the researcher revisits to the attraction with the observation form to record the settings, layouts and the visitors' behaviours onsite. Thirdly, interviews have been conducted based on the previous observation onsite, and the interviewees are asked to share their experience and perceptions of the hyperreal productions at the attractions. Finally, the developers/managers who are responsible for developing the hyperreal productions have been interviewed that aims at finding out their motivations and perceptions of the developed productions, which validates the collected data as the triangulations.
- **Gaining an insight of the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions:** To explore the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions subjectively, it requires the researcher to become the visitor as an insider that refers to the researcher's own subjective responses on the hyperreal productions onsite. At this stage, the researcher chooses the visual methods and observation diaries to deliver her personal experience, because it can express the subjective emotions beyond the textual materials that provides an in-depth understanding of the researcher's encounters onsite as an insider. Additionally, the visual materials make efforts on improving the readers' understanding on the 'travels in hyperreality' in a more intuitive way. Furthermore, based on the previous observation onsite, the semi-structured interviews with the visitors have been conducted that has been divided as before, during and after.

In order to give an account of how the research has been carried out, the chapter has been organised into sections on the ontology and epistemology, my role and motivations on developing the research, research method design, and the procedures. The first section covers the researcher's position and the reasons for choosing the inductive approach following by the explanation of the methods that have been selected for the research. The procedure section describes how the fieldworks have been conducted, which include the sites, the participants, the data collecting process, the data analyses, the validity and reliability, and the researcher's reflexivity and the ethical considerations. The last section will evaluate on the limitations that provides recommendations as the conclusion for this chapter.

3.2 Ontology and Epistemology

According to Crotty (2003), the ontology refers to the assumptions and the beliefs about the existing reality, whereas the epistemology relates to how the knowledge has been acquired and validated from the existing reality. In terms of the ontology, the positivists assume there is one reality exists independently 'out there' as realism, and they aim at examining and discovering the laws that are generated by the universe objectively as the outsiders by choosing the deductive approach to verify and test theories (Bryman, 2008; Guo and Sheffield, 2011). The positivists have relied on the experimentation such as measuring, controlling, predicting and ascribing causality in order to confirm or reject the pre-proposed hypothesis based on the statistic results (Crotty, 2003). During the data collection process, the quantitative data has been gathered through large scale of surveys and closed ended questionnaires (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The positivist paradigm has been criticized by the interpretivists in social research, because social society and phenomenon are complex and dynamic that cannot rely on scales and numbers. (Gage, 2007; Richard, 2003). According to Grix (2004), interpretivists reject there is only one reality, which they believe the contemporary world is constructed by multiple realities that the meanings are given through the individuals' subjectivities and their interactions with the physical realities. The interpretivists aim at discovering the value-free knowledge by understanding the individuals and the phenomenon, and they rely on the themes and the patterns that have emerged from the raw data (Crotty, 2003). In order to gain an insight of the individuals who have been studied, the researchers apply the inductive approach that has been associated with ethnography and case studies. Most importantly, the collected data represents the meanings from the individuals perspective rather than the researchers (Gall *et al.*, 2003). Several researchers are questioning and criticizing about the interpretivist paradigm because the lack of objectivity, yet it relies on the thick descriptions and details to explain the individuals and the phenomenon that have been studied (Grix, 2004; Crotty, 2014; Richard, 2003). Furthermore, the positivist paradigm could not solve the complex and dynamic issues of the social society, whilst the interpretivist paradigm could provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and individuals of the social world (Bryman, 2008)

In the tourism sector, the positivists perceive the reality as objective truth that the world has its meaning prior to (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). The researchers who are in the positivism position are seeking for the accurate and certain knowledge the truth to prove the hypothesis and the existing knowledge (Crotty, 2003). In the quantitative studies, researchers apply deductive approaches such as questionnaires or surveys to verify the hypothesis and existing theories, which the collected data is presented in the form of numbers and statistics (Schwandt, 1996). According to Phillimore and Goodson (2004), the positivists make efforts on objectivity, validity, and rationality to quantitative findings. In

the current tourism studies, various researchers have conducted their research to test the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions by applying the quantitative research approaches.

Table 8 Related quantitative empirical studies in recent years

Researcher(s)	Empirical Study Methods	Findings
Agapito <i>et al.</i> , 2012	Survey	Hierarchal roles of sensations in visitors' experience: the visual plays the central role
Agapito <i>et al.</i> , 2017	Questionnaires/Self-administered survey	The relationships between visitors' multi-sensory stimulation and memories The role of sightseeing
Bogicevic <i>et al.</i> , 2019	Questionnaire	The relationship between VR and visitors ' sensations
Yi <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Questionnaire	Testing the hypothesis of the relationships between perceived authenticity and destination loyalty in heritage attractions .
Yi <i>et al.</i> , 2017	Questionnaire	Testing and verifying the existing theories of existential authenticity .
Wan <i>et al.</i> , 2007	Questionnaire	VR advertising has great influence on the theme park type of attractions.
Guillet and Penfold, 2013	Online-survey	Avatar in Second life enhances on the learning hotel co-branding.
Huang <i>et al.</i> , 2016	Online-survey	Testing the relationship between the 3D environments and visitors' behaviours
Lalicic and Weismayer, 2015	Self-administrated questionnaires	Examining the relationships between passionate users and their reliance on technologies for travelling
Chu, Lin and Chang, 2012	Online-survey	Mobile guiding in AR enhances on visitors experience that has influences on their travel intentions
Singh and Lee, 2009	Questionnaire	Student's perceptions of learning in 3D virtual environments —opening the possibilities for future tourism and hospitality courses.
He <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Online-survey	AR makes improvements to visitors experience at cultural attractions
Jung <i>et al.</i> , 2018	Questionnaire	Cross-cultural attitudes on AR applications between Asian tourists versus the Western tourists

Kohler et al., 2011	Questionnaire	Virtual environments stimulate visitors' sensations that further enhances on their overall experience
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Table 8 presents the quantitative empirical studies of the visitors' immersive experience versus the virtual environments at tourist attractions in recent years. Firstly, several researchers have tested the hierarchy roles of the visitors' multi-sensor stimulus, which they indicate the visual sensor plays as the priority role that has impacts on the h visitors' overall experience the most (Agapito *et al.*, 2012; Agapito *et al.*, 2017). Also, the virtual environments further enhance the visitors' visual sensation that leads to their feelings of immersion (Bogicevic *et al.*, 2019; Kohler *et al.*, 2011). Additionally, Yi *et al.* (2017) verify the relationships between the visitors' subjective authenticity and the heritage attractions by conducting questionnaires, and they conclude the perceived authenticity has a significant effect on the destination loyalty. Furthermore, the majority of the empirical studies have proved the emerging technology applications such as VR and AR have become the major factors that attracts visitors to the hyperreal attraction, because it triggers visitors' the feelings of immersion and allows them to become part of the scene(Wan *et al.*, 2007; Guillet and Penfold, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2016; Lalicic and Weismayer, 2015; Chu, Lin and Chang, 2012; Singh and Lee, 2009; He *et al.*, 2018; Jung *et al.*, 2018; Kohler *et al.*, 2011). However, the 'objective truth' based on statistics and numbers is lack of the contextual details that requires an in-depth understanding of the complex and dynamic phenomenon (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In contrast to the positivists, the interpretivists perceive the meaning and knowledge are given by individuals as a reflection of the physical world (Creswell, 2014). They aim at letting the themes and concepts emerge from thick descriptions and raw data by applying inductive approaches (Crotty, 2003). The 'rich' data collection process is associated with ethnography and in-depth interviews which can provide a comprehensive understanding of the individuals' experience and subjectivities in the phenomena (Bryman, 2008). In terms of the empirical research in the tourism studies in recent years, several researchers focus on the role of individual visitors' subjectivities as co-creators of the attractions (Campos *et al.*, 2016; Tan *et al.*, 2014; Mkono, 2013).

Table 9 Related qualitative empirical studies in recent years

Researcher(s)	Empirical Study Methods	Findings
Everett, 2008	In-depth interview, participant observation	The importance of other sensor domains (food and the taste) beside the visual sensor, which provides visitors an immersive experience as co-creators

Xiong et al., 2015	Interview	The roles of multi-sensory stimulation that make improvements on visitors' understandings and cognitive feelings
Dias et al., 2017	Narrative approach: interview and ethnography	Visual-based multi sensations arise visitors the most immersive experience
Jansson, 2002	Interview	The meaning of symbolic authenticity at simulated environments
Buchmann, Moore and Fisher, 2009	Onsite observation and interview	The importance of constructive authenticity in visitors' immersive experience
tom Dieck et al., 2018	Onsite observation and interview	AR has improvement on visitors travel intentions
Jung and tom Dieck, 2018	Semi-structured interviews	Wearable Augmented Reality device has a positive influence on the toured objects and visitors' personalized learning experience
tom Dieck et al., 2016	Interview	Visitors give positive feedbacks on AR applications at museums
Dueholm and Smed, 2014	Semi-structured interview and observation onsite	Organization perspective: questioning about the authenticity of emerging technology applications at cultural attractions
Tavakoli and Mura, 2015	Virtual ethnography, and in-depth online interviews	Iran women perceptions and positive attitudes on virtual tours in Second Life
Ong and Jin, 2015	Onsite observation, narrative interviews	The meaning of hyperreality and simulacra , and the importance of the visitors' subjective impressions

According to *Table 9*, the researchers explore the visitors' subjective experience by conducting grounded theory approaches in the interpretive paradigm, which they stress the importance of the individual visitors' subjectivities from their research findings. Firstly, several researchers reveal the roles of other sensor domains are equally important as the one ocular-based sensation, which they have found out the combination of the multi-sensory domains can provide visitors with the most immersive experience (Everett, 2008; Xiong et al., 2015; Dias et al., 2017). Secondly, the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience and authenticity has emerged from several researchers' studies, which they demonstrate the constructive authenticity has impacts on visitors' immersive experience the most as the co-creators at the hyperreal attractions (Buchmann, Moore and Fisher, 2009; Jansson, 2002). Finally, previous studies point out the emerging technology applications have influences on the visitors'

overall experience at cultural attractions, and most of the results reveal visitors provide positive feedbacks on the digital productions onsite (tom Dieck *et al.*, 2018; Jung and tom Dieck, 2018; Tavakoli and Mura, 2015). As it has been mentioned in the literature review, the digital productions have become the central focus for research academics to explore over the last decades, yet fewer researchers suggest on rethinking the definition of such simulated environments that can provide other possibilities in the tourism industry. Dueholm and Smed (2014) conduct semi-structured interviews and onsite observation to find out the inauthenticity of the digital productions at cultural attractions from the organization’s perspective. From the visitors’ perspective, Ong and Jin (2015) suggest on rethinking the concept of hyperreality at heritage attractions by applying the qualitative research methods, and emphasize on the role of tourists themselves as the impressionists which represents as symbolic values at such hyperreal attractions. In comparison with the quantitative research methods, the inductive approach makes contributions to subjective meanings within the thick descriptions of the tourist experience in the tourism sector (Miles and Huberman, 1994). However, the limitations of the inductive and interpretive approaches are time-consuming, and the researchers should be aware of avoiding the personal bias and responsive to the data that emerges (Daengbuppha *et al.*, 2006).

Table 10 Comparisons between the two approaches

	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Paradigm Position	Positivist	Interpretivist
Methodology	Deductive Approach: Verifying the existing theories and hypothesis	Inductive Approach: Grounded theory that allows the themes emerge from the collected data
Techniques	Quantitative Methods: questionnaire, Survey	Qualitative Methods: Ethnography, narrative interview
Collected Data	Statistic, scales and numbers, objective	‘Thick’ descriptive data, individual subjective interpretation
Pros/Cons	Objective, efficient/Lack of contexture details and an in-depth understanding	A comprehensive understanding of the events and phenomenon, stands for individual subjectivity, interpretative/ Time consuming, researcher’s personal bias

The current research applies the interpretive and inductive approaches, because emotions and experience are subjective and dynamic, which could not be measured by scales and numbers without an in-depth understanding. According to *Table 10*, the interpretive paradigm provides an in-depth understanding of the individuals’ subjectivities and their experience. As it has been stressed in the literature review, the subjectivity and the objectivity constitute the visitors’ hyperreal experience. From the organization perspective, the quality of the physical environments and the staff performances onsite have influence on the visitors’ feelings of immersion. From the visitors’ aspect, they can create their

personal stories subjectively through the interactions and involvements with their surrounding environments onsite. The positivist paradigm could not provide the richness and comprehensive data to understand the complexity of the visitor experience or a phenomenon. In terms of the quantitative research methods, the informants' emotional experience and feedbacks are evaluated by a large scale of numbers, but the emotions and subjectivities could not be verified by numbers or scales because it is subjective, dynamic and complex. Using a deductive and quantitative method allow the researchers to get massive data, yet the data can only represent the visitors' general information without an in-depth understanding. In comparison with the quantitative research, the qualitative research methods speak for each individual visitor that generates the meanings and gains an insight of the visitor's experience. Furthermore, the theories of the visitors' immersive experience versus the hyperreal productions are still at the exploratory stage that requires future research to make efforts on the subjects from diverse perspectives rather than the examining visitors' attitudes on the digital productions.

After gaining a deep understanding of the hyperreality and simulation in postmodern theories that have been presented in the literature review, I do think we are living in the postmodern condition., where everything has become transparent and has been put in front of the stage, such as vlogs or muk-bang where people share their private daily lives on social media and the internet. At the same time, we are coping with living in multiple lives -- private, public, off-screen, on-screen, waking and dreaming. We are experiencing with multiple identities in space, time, reality and fantasy at the same time (Hollis, 2017). As reality has been filtered and multi-layered, it is difficult to define the real and the truth from what we see. With the multiple identities that we have online, offline, in private and in public, could we tell which one is the real identity of ourselves? The information from the cyberspace plays as an illusion and a dream, just as the character says in the Satoshi Kon's movie *Paprika* (2006) : *'Don't you think dreams and internet are similar? They are both areas where the repressed conscious mind vents.'*

The reality can be perceived as a symbolic representation as Baudrillard claims, yet the major issue on which I disagree with is the denial of subjectivity and individualism in postmodern theories. Similar to the critical thinking on his theory by other academic researchers (Kellner, 1989; Timothy, 1991; Trifonova, 2003; Callinicos, 1989; Ahponen, 1990; Bruner, 1994; Laughlin, 1957; Murphy, 1996), I still believe that the reality is constructed by both subjectivity and objectivity even the current society is in the postmodern condition. From the constructivism point of view, I think the meanings and values come from the individuals' experience by interacting and interpreting with their surrounding environments (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, the representation is a reflection of the physical world, which entails the symbolic simulations and reproductions rely on the physical reality that is constructed by both original objects and subjectivity.

3.3 Research Design

As it has been stressed in the previous sections I perceive the meanings of the world are given by the individuals' experience and understandings as an interpretivist, the current research applies an inductive approach to explore the visitors' perceptions of the hyperreality at cultural attractions. This section covers the qualitative research methods that have been applied in my case studies, which includes the semi-structured interviews and ethnography onsite.

According to Stake (1995), case studies are designed for the researchers to develop an in-depth analysis of a case which contains a program, event, activity, process, one individual or groups. Case studies are also relevant to time and activity, which allows the researcher to collect detailed information during a suitable period of time (Yin, 2014). The reason for choosing the case studies approach in my research is because the theories of visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions are still at the exploratory stage that requires further exploration and development.

As Creswell (2014) suggests that a qualitative research method is an approach to explore and to understand the meanings of individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems, which the researcher makes interpretations of the meanings of data. This research aims at providing a deeper understanding of the visitors' perceptions and feelings of hyperreality at cultural attractions, thus qualitative research methods will be applied and considered. In general, ethnography and semi-structures interviews will be conducted in the case studies.

3.3.1 Ethnography

The ethnography refers to the ethnographer immerses herself in a social space for certain times to gain an insight into the phenomena of the culture and the social groups (Bryman, 2008). The process of observation onsite of the current research has been divided into two stages that relate to the researcher experience onsite as a pure visitor (subjectivity), following by the researcher records her encounters onsite as a pure observer (objectivity).

According to *Figure 2*, the first stage of ethnography involves the researcher's subjectivity and her personal understanding of the hyperreal experience at cultural attractions, which sets up the foundation and shapes the following research activities onsite. Previous studies have stressed the importance of becoming an insider, which allows the researcher to gain an insight into the individuals' subjectivities and their experience. The questions have been raised to how to observe onsite as an insider? The researcher chooses to apply visual methods and personal diaries to express her first impressions and experience at the attractions. The visual methods are associated with onsite paintings and quick sketches that delivers the expression and feelings which the words cannot express, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' experience as an insider. Observation forms have not been applied at this stage, because the purpose of experiencing as a pure visitor is to let the themes emerge

from the researcher's experience and her subjective feelings onsite that shapes the following research activities of the conducted fieldworks.

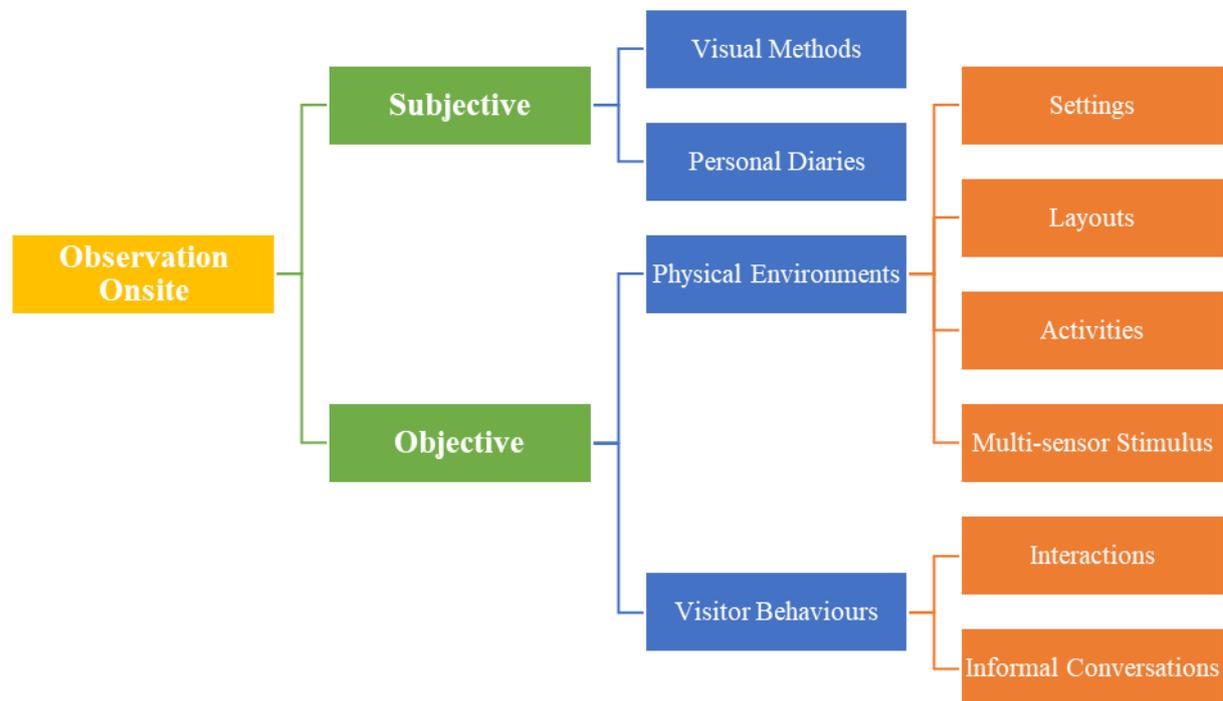


Figure 2 The Observation Strategy

According to Noy (2007), the visual materials move beyond the textual representations and provides the researcher with an insight into the experiential world of tourism as an insider. Spry (2001) stresses that the visual ethnography emerges as a fusion of observation and the first-hand experience, which provides researchers with the opportunities to become the 'active agents' as 'being there'. Pink (2007) suggests that the visual ethnography has provided a potential route to access the dynamic and complex sensations from the visitors' emotional experience onsite as an alternative 'ways of knowing'. In addition, the images are not only representing the records of what the researcher has encountered in activities and events onsite, but also reflecting the relationship between the researcher and the reality that has been called as the 'phenomenological reality' (Pink, 2009). The observers on site are associated with their imaginations and their personal understandings of the representative reality, which entails the ethnographic place has been as co-created by both the place itself and the observers' personal practices (Coleman and Crang, 2002). Visual ethnography provides an optional route to access both tangible and intangible spaces that becomes a bridge to connect the physical environments with the individuals' subjectivities. Furthermore, the visual ethnography such as the researchers' paintings or photographs enrich the collated data that entails the researchers' intersubjectivities as a blend of subjectivities through the process of self-witnessing, which the researchers have committed themselves to the field, realising knowledge from their first-hand experiences onsite (Krieger, 1996). Most importantly, visual

materials construct a representational space, which merges the researcher and the respondents through the intersubjective exchange as the co-creators that cannot be verbally expressed (Scarles, 2010).

The second stage involves the researcher doing observation onsite as a pure researcher to avoid personal bias. The researcher chooses to use observation form based on the first stage and take notes in association with the camera to record the scene and the visitors' behaviours onsite, and the process has been shifted from the intersubjective perspective to the objective perspective. During this stage, the researcher focuses on the contents from two aspects: what the site has provided to the visitors, the layouts, activities, technology applications, etc., and how visitors have reacted and have responded to the settings, which includes taking notes of the visitors' behaviours, their conversations and activities on site. The observation has shaped the questions of the formal interviews that will be explained in the next section.

3.3.2 Interview

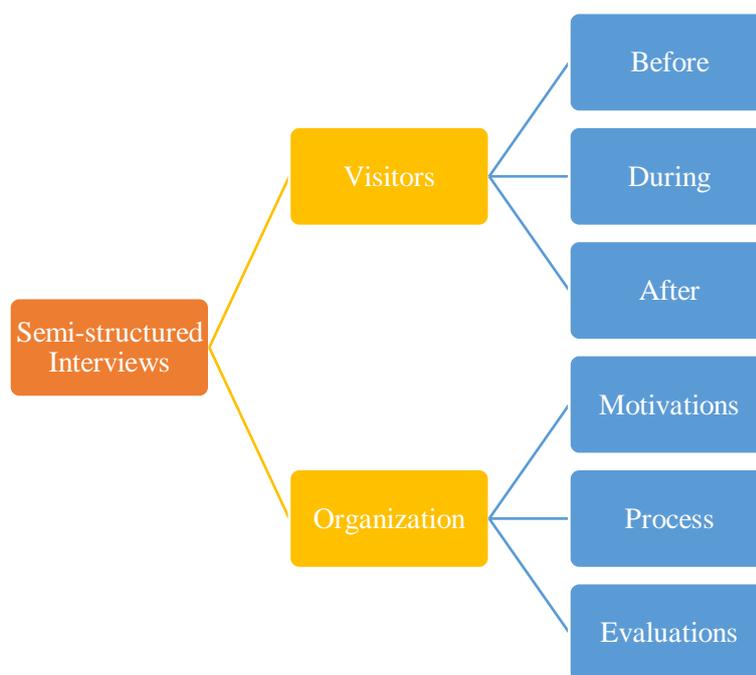


Figure 3 The interview strategy

According to Creswell (2014), qualitative data collection method aims at providing valuable information to understand the informants' perceptions and concepts, which relies on the rich information from the interviews, documents and audio-visual materials. As the research seeks for an inductive approach that allows the themes emerge from the collected data, semi-structured interviews have been conducted onsite because the thick descriptions of the data speak for the individual visitors that have supported the theory generation (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). Based on Figure 3, both organization and visitors have been interviewed in order to get a comprehensive understanding

of 'travels in hyperreality' from multiple aspects. From the visitor's perspective, the questions focus on exploring their perceptions and experience in the phases of before, during and after. From the organizations' perspective, the interview questions aim at finding out their intentions to develop the hyperreal productions at the attractions, the process, and their evaluations on the developed productions versus their existing knowledge about their audience. In terms of the techniques of the semi-structured interviews with both the visitors and the staff/managers onsite, it involves with the face-to-face interview alongside with the journal and audio recording (See the interview questions in Appendix 3). As the different interview techniques have been applied at each attraction, the detailed explanation of the interview data collection process will be covered in the procedure section.

3.4 Procedures

This section provides detailed information of the research process that includes the sites selections for the case studies, the sampling, the data collection process on each site, the data analysis process, the validation and reliability, the researcher's reflexivity, and the ethical considerations.

3.4.1 The Sites

The criteria of the attractions for case studies refers to the reconstructed/simulated environments, cultural attractions, interactive activities, immersive experience, open to the public, researcher friendly (easy to obtain the access) with a massive audience. I started with an environmental scan that included looking through the specialist publications of the top 10 rated attractions in each country and checking on the upcoming events and the hyperreal productions from the attractions' official websites. Based on the information, the attractions were divided into three categories that were associated with art exhibitions/galleries/museums, film tourism and heritage attractions (see Appendix 1). Then, the representations and the visitor experience had been listed according to the visitors' reviews and information online. The attractions that were related to the research criteria the most had been added to the potential lists for the case studies.

After the second turn of selecting and scanning, five attractions had been chosen for the current research that included the Brunel's SS Great Britain and the Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in the UK, the Tang Paradise Theme Park and the Dharma Legends in Famen Temple in China, and the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality in the US. After I had obtained the ethical approvals from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee at UWE, I started to apply for access to each attraction that has been selected. I got access from four attractions except for the Shakespeare's Globe Theatre that they perceived the attraction as a professional theatre which focused on live performances rather than a living museum. Thus, the selected cultural attractions for my case studies including the Brunel's SS Great Britain at Bristol, the Tang Paradise Theme Part and the Famen Temple in China, and the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality in the US.

Table 11 Conducted fieldworks

	Tang Paradise	Dharma Legends in Famen Temple	The SS Great Britain	Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality
Fieldwork conducted date	Winter: Oct/2017 Summer: May/2018 (1 week)	May/2018 (1 week)	April/2018 (2 weeks)	Sep/2018 (1 week)
Location	Xi'an, China	Xi'an, China	Bristol, UK	St. Petersburg, US
Methods and procedures on site	Interview Observation	Interview Observation	Interview Observation	Interview Observation
Representation on site	Replicas, artificial buildings and live performances	Augmented reality, Holographic projection Visitors walk along with the actors while they are watching the performance	Artificial scenarios/repli ca inside of the ship (Next to the historical relic collections in the traditional museum)	Virtual reality (The original painting is at the entrance of the VR experience exhibition)

Table 11 covers the timetable and the research activities onsite of my conducted fieldworks. Additionally, getting access from the attraction and contacting with the staff/managers in China was in differing from conducting the fieldwork in the western countries. In the UK/US, I got access and arranged the interview time with the managers through formal emails, whereas the Chinese tourist attractions relied on social media such as WeChat or WeiBo. Reaching to the organization through the phone or WeChat was more efficient than formal emails.

3.4.2 The Sampling

The samplings of the research include both the visitors and the organization staff on each site. The interviewees were randomly selected at each attraction in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the visitors who come to the sites. The total amounts of the interviewees were 38, which included both males and females within the age groups between 18 to 70. During the interview process, the participants were informed of the research aims and purpose before the semi-structured interviews were carried out. In addition, the visitors' cultural backgrounds, religious, gender and other differences were respected. Furthermore, the name and personal details of the participants were protected and anonymous. In terms of the interviewees from the organization perspective, the total numbers of the respondents were 5 that included the architect at the Tang Theme Park, the director of the visitor experience and the chief operating officer at the Dali Museum, the senior interpretation

officer at the SS Great Britain Trust, and the chief artistic officer of the live performance ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’. The interviews with the staff were conducted at the attraction after I had finished my data collection from the observation and the interviews with the visitors.

3.4.3 Data Collection Process

Ethnography

The processes of the observation include experiencing the hyperreality onsite as a pure visitor, observing the themes/environments onsite as a participant, and observing the participants’ behaviours and having informal conversation with the visitors as an observer onsite. In the first phase, I immersed myself into the attractions as a pure visitor to explore the aura and the atmosphere, and then I started to capture my feelings and emotions through painting alongside with the records of my subjective feelings of the attractions in my diaries. Based on the observation diary at the first stage, I listed out the concepts, attractions and activities that I wanted to explore in-depth, such as the landscape at the attractions, the interactive activities and the live performances. After I had experienced onsite as a pure visitor, I produced the checklists that included themes, representation, and visitor behaviours of the attractions. At this stage, I chose to take notes and use camera to record the scene on site as a participant observer, which had been shifted from intersubjective perspective to the objective records of what I had encountered and found out about the visitors on site. During the second stage, I focused on the contents from two aspects: what the site provided to the visitors, the layouts, activities, technology applications, etc., and how the visitors reacted and responded to the settings, which included their behaviours, conversations and activities onsite.

Semi-structured interview

In general, the visitors had been asked at the exits at the attractions if they would like to take part in the interview, and then consent forms and the briefing sheets were sent out to the visitors that allowed them to get a general background and information of the research (See the consent form and information sheets in *Appendix 2*). After getting access from the informants, the interviews were carried out in a quiet place inside of the attraction. Except for the Dali Museum, the organization had provided a separate information desk for me at the exit of the virtual exhibition that made it more convenient to access to the visitors. Each interview took 8 to 10 minutes with audio recording. However, in comparison with the western tourists, the Chinese visitors at the Tang Theme Park were very hostile to be approached, which they averted their gaze to reduce the chance of talking with strangers. The detailed techniques of the data collection process at the Tang Theme Park will be covered in the following section, to start with one of my failed interaction with the visitors onsite that I had kept in my observation diary:

***Date:** 1/12/17 **Weather:** cold and cloudy **Time:** 11.30am **Location:** in front of the Ziyun Building at the Tang Paradise Theme Park*

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There are fewer visitors on site today, and they seemed quite unfriendly to the strangers. After I got refused by a woman with her families, I found three Chinese female students who sat on the stairs and took a rest in front of the Ziyun Building. At this time, I attempted to have eye contacts with them to see if they gave me responses. They did look back, and then I walked forward to introduce myself and asked them if they were willing to talk about their impression and experience of the park. They ignored me and pretended as they didn't even see me! That was an embarrassing moment that made me want to find a place to hide!

After being refused by the visitors onsite at multiple times, I had changed my strategy as 'being there' to approach the Chinese visitors. Instead of eye contacts and asking them the questions directly, I decided to build up the trust with the informants through interactions and taking part in the activities onsite, such as feeding the deer with other visitors at the royal deer garden, or joining their conversations about the show as the audience while they were waiting at the audience seat before the live performances started. There was one female visitor who rent the traditional Chinese Hanfu at the booth near the Lady's Hall, after I discussed with her about the costume at the booth, she asked me to take pictures of her with her boyfriend, instead of photographing, I drew a picture of her in the costume and gave her as a gift, and then the interview was conducted successfully.

In summer, the numbers of visitors had increased in comparison with the number of visitors in winter. Most of the visitors sat in the pavilion near the centre lake while they were enjoying the great view of the park. To fit for the Tang cultural theme, some of the Chinese visitors wore their traditional Chinese Hanfu to the park. I found two of them taking pictures while I was doing my observation at the Rosy Clouds Pavilion, we discussed the Tang culture and the costume, they were happy about being interviewed. The theatre inside of the Ziyun Building was also a good spot for me to approach the visitors, normally I attended 2 hours in advance before the live performance started, because some of the visitors were sitting inside of the theatre to get rid of the sunburn from outside, I approached them by joining their conversation about the show and popular attractions at Xi'an, once the trust had been built, the attitudes of the visitors had changed that made them were willing to take part in the interviews onsite. But the Chinese visitors paid particular attention to the issues of their personal information leakage, and some of them were not willing to be audio recorded during the interview process. In order to prevent my research causing any disrespect or unpleasant to others, and to see it from the moral perspective, I always tended to show my respect and understanding with no pressures to the interviewees. An expected approach had been applied at the Tang Theme Park that would be further explained in the following sector.

After providing the information sheet and consent form to the visitors, I would clarify to the visitors all the data I had collected would be protected with the ethical code. During the wintertime at the attraction,

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I started my interactions with the interviewees by walking with them inside of the park for an hour. At this stage, I took notes of their reactions and responses to the views and activities onsite once we arrived at the popular landmarks inside of the attraction. Based on their attitudes and the informal conversation while we were talking about during the shared walk, I wrote down particular questions that I was going to ask in the formal interview. According to Sarah Pink's (2009) 'Doing sensory ethnography', walking with others and sharing the rhythm of steps together create a closeness, empathy and sense of belonging with the participants. Lee and Ingold (2006) also stress that sharing route is a form of the place-making, an environment that has been co-created by both the researcher and the participants. Lund (2008) points out the concept of 'being there of participating': by joining the activities with the participants, the researcher can gain better insight into others' understandings of the environment that they are surrounding. Furthermore, Lund refuses the assumption of the dominant role of visual in research practices, and all the senses need to be accounted for, 'It's not about the visual, but the aural environment'.

I chose to conduct the formal interview inside of the Luyu Tea House after I shared routes with the participants inside of the park. Each interview took around ten minutes, and the informants had been asked to share their experience and feelings about the attraction while we were drinking the tea. The semi-structured interview questions were based on the structure of before, during and after. The questions were associated with the hyperreality such as motivations, previous experience, immersive experience, opinions on authenticity, sensations, etc., yet, I developed questions in specific for the interviewees based on our informal conversions from the shared routes. During the process, I did not lead the questions that allowed the interviews to express their feelings and experience freely. Most of the visitors in winter refused to be audio recorded, I took notes as much as possible in Chinese. When the interview finished, I added more details about the interview conversation. By using this approach, it built up the trust and the closeness with the participants. There was one local female resident whom I had encountered inside of the Ziyun Building, and she expressed her negative feelings and experience about the attraction while we were walking inside of the park. During the conversation, she mentioned about the inauthenticity of attractions at multiple times. She told me visitors got the same feelings and experience in different heritage tourist attractions at Xi'an. To prove her views on the attraction, she added my WeChat and took me to other attractions in Xi'an that she was talking about during the interview the next day. Another interviewee sent me the pictures he took at the attraction through WeChat to show the landscape that had impressed him the most in the evening.

During the summertime, I did not choose the approach of sharing routes with participants inside of the park because of the hot weather. To avoid the sunstroke, most of the interviews took place inside of the Ziyun Building or sat in the pavilion near the lake. After sending visitors information sheet and consent form, the interviews lasted about 6 to 10 minutes, the interview questions were as the same as the one

in winter. When I interviewed the visitors with the traditional Chinese Tang style Hanfu, the questions focused on the subjects of 'being part of the scene', imagination, immersive experiences and activities.

The process of data collection in winter took longer time but provide me a deep understanding of the participants, and the experience of sharing routes with interviewees gave me the feelings of 'being there of participating'. While the process of collecting data in was more efficient within six visitors were interviewed in two days. However, without sharing the routes with the informants, the closeness and the bond with participants were decreased in comparison with the fieldworks that I had conducted at other attractions.

3.4.4 Data Analysis Process

The fieldwork at the four attractions enclosed on the date of the 25th September 2018. All the observational diaries, the notes that had been taken during the interviews and the informal conversation were organized and transcribed for 2 months. The Chinese interview transcriptions had been translated into English manually for two weeks. I chose to transcribe the interview transcriptions manually because it is a form of representation that involved with the judgments for the researcher to decide how to represent the data (Gibson and Brown, 2009). Through the procedures of repeated listening and methodical transcribing, which gained an insight for the researchers to shape the way of the representation of the interview narratives (Gibson and Brown, 2009). Transcribing helped me to filter out less important texts and to generate the analytic focus that featuring the particularly relevant concepts and texts to my research.

After transcribing, I analysed the data by both the software NVivo pro 12 and manually. The software helped me to organise the collected data more efficiently. At the early stage, I inserted all the interview transcripts into the NVivo and started to create a case for each transcript. The interviewees' names were encrypted coded, and then I divided the cases into the visitors and the organization in the cases classification section. After I imported the visitors' transcripts into the visitor classification in cases, I created the attribute values of the visitors' information such as gender, age group, educational levels, careers, visitor type (local or traveller), solo/group, which helped me to make comparison of cases with nodes and themes in-depth. Then I ran the query of word frequency and word cloud to let the concepts and themes emerge from the raw data, such as the words experience, real, fake etc. Afterwards, I applied the Tree Map in the word frequency query to explore the connections between different concepts in texts. Based on the previous stage, I generated the conceptual node framework via the project map in NVivo.

According to *Figure 4*, I developed the framework 'travels in hyperreality' from two perspectives, in the visitor experience section, I divided it based on the phases of before, during and after and then I created the nodes more specifically. Based on the nodes that have been created, I started to code the transcripts and to put the related texts and concepts into the node categories Once I had finished coding,

I ran both the hierarchy chart and the matrix coding query in NVivo. The hierarchy chart provided me with general information of the largest contributing segments of multiple levels, while the matrix coding queries helped me to identify the patterns of the coded data. After this step, I got a general sense of which segment that I wanted to explore further in more details, and some of the significant findings had appeared through the coded data.

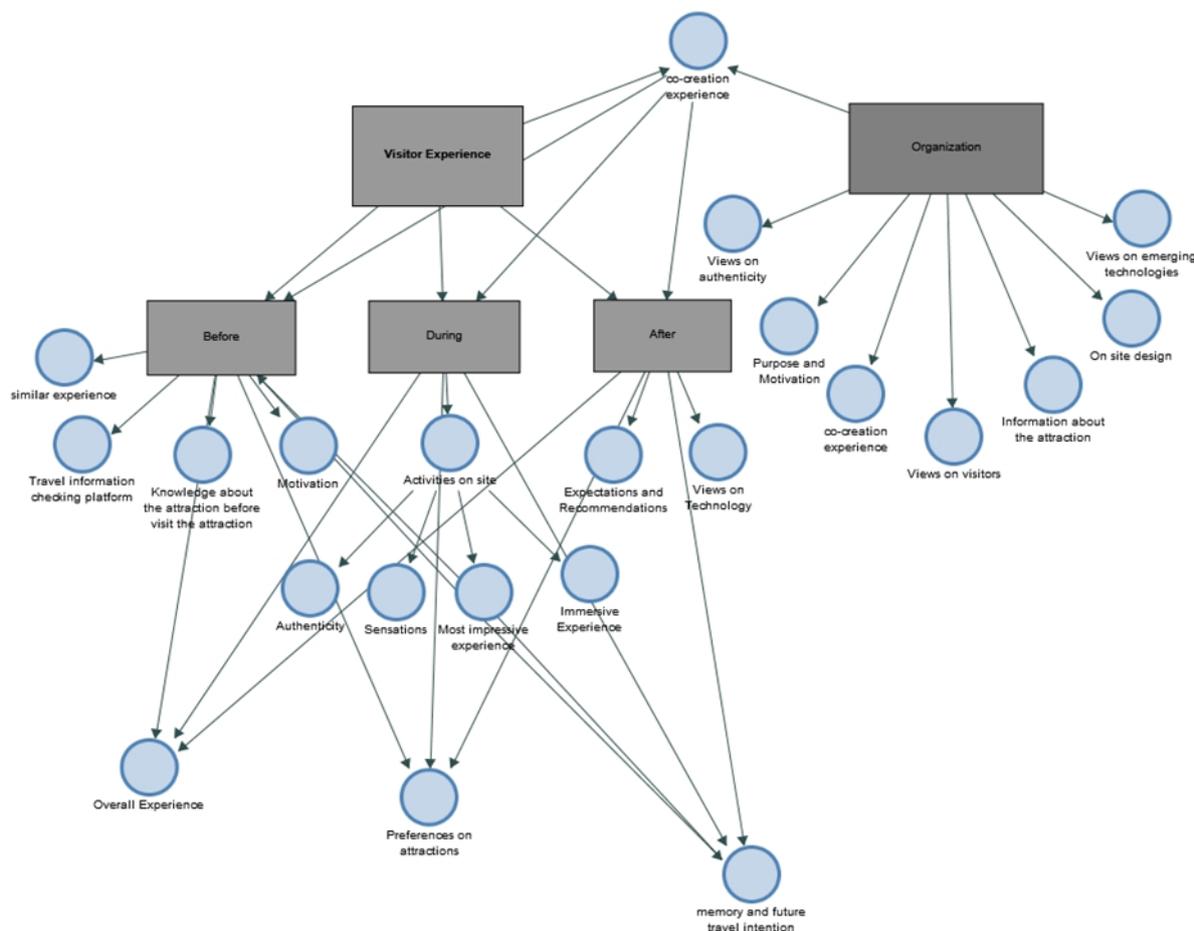


Figure 4 The node map in NVivo

After this stage, I went back to the coded data and to find the similarities between different cases, and put the similar codes into the same category and generated themes such as the emerging technology applications, the interaction with the physical environments, the interaction with the individuals onsite and the visitors. Based on the recoded data, I ran the framework matrix to summarize and to find out the relationship between the cases and the themed nodes. Then I printed out all the charts and forms to compare the relationship between nodes and cases manually.

3.4.5 Validity and Reliability

According to Phillimore and Goodson (2004), proving validity has become a major challenge for interpretivists with qualitative research. Stephen (2013) states validity in qualitative research is researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by certain procedures, and the qualitative reliability

entails researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects. According to Creswell (2014), an appropriate validity strategy in qualitative research is to use the multiple approaches which could enhance the accuracy of the findings. In my research, I had applied multiple approaches to ensure the validity and reliability of my research findings, which included:

- Rich amounts of descriptive documents from experiencing onsite as a pure visitor, for example, the onsite interactions and activities with the organizations and visitors, diary logs, recording, interview transcripts, visual materials and videos.
- Triangulation: the data from observation onsite as a total participant (interview with the participants), the data from on observation as a participant observer (visitor), and interview data from both the visitor perspective and the organization perspective.
- The repeated observation activities onsite as a researcher.
- The findings and the data had been checked by my supervisor to ensure the results objectively.
- There were personal biases of my research, as this research focused on exploring the subjective views of the visitors' perceptions of the combinations of the emerging technologies and cultural attractions (heritage sites and art galleries). It might raise the questions about objectivity that become the weakness of this research, but the questions about the subjectivity and weakness could turn into the strengths and opportunities that provided me with the opportunity to gain an insight of the individual's perceptions and experience at the hyperreal attractions.

3.4.6 Reflexivity

The following section includes my reflexivity of the research, which covers my understanding of 'travels in hyperreality' based on my ontology and epistemology position, and the meanings of the visual methods that has been conducted for the current research. In the first academic year, I thought hyperreality represented the emerging technologies that could substitute the original objects without any referential. I was fascinated by the immersive experience that the newest technologies had brought to the tourism industry. Back at that time, I was influenced by a large amount of academic research that focused on the digital productions in the tourism studies, and I defined hyperreality in tourism as a total simulation within the emerging technology applications. Second life, The Sims, avatars in virtual environments had been separated from the physical reality, which provided visitors a platform to fully immerse themselves in.. My first year focused on exploring the representations and the applications of the emerging technologies without finding any meaning behind it.

In the second academic year, I started to rethink the meaning of hyperreality and simulation, and Baudrillard's original concept of hyperreality and simulation guided me to another direction where I denied all the objectivity and representation from contemporary reality. My understanding of hyperreality represented as subjectivity, which was constituted through our imaginations and illusions without any reference that enabled individuals to recreate their hyperreal interpretations. During the

second academic year, I despised the importance of the objectivity in physical worlds, because the meanings of the objects were given by individuals' perceptions and subjectivities. Authenticity and truth came from the moment of feelings of immersion by individuals that became valuable meanings in contemporary reality. In terms of my understanding of representations and emerging technology applications, they were served as a medium to deliver the subjectivity from our minds.

After I had finished conducting all my fieldworks in the third academic year, I gained my knowledge and had a new understanding of hyperreality, especially in the tourism sector. Baudrillard still had a great influence on me which made me think that we were living in a postmodern condition with the implosion of information. However, I was always questioning about the impersonal and his denial of individuals in the postmodern theory. On the contrary, the individuals and their subjectivities played important roles in constructing society. Different from my understanding of hyperreality in the second academic year, hyperreality was constructed by subjectivity, objectivity and representation. Especially in the tourism sector, hyperreality represented the co-creation by the organizations, the visitors' perceptions and their experience, and the representations onsite. The organization applied the techniques as a storyteller to deliver the interpretations to the visitors, while the visitors combined the perceived message and interactions with their surrounding environments on site to recreate their interpretations as co-creators in hyperreality. In advance, the symbolic representation in the hyperreality entailed the reflections on the original objects and events of contemporary society.

The research is completed by the visitors, the organizations and me. I have gained an insight of the visitors through the visual methods, which provides a platform that allows me to express my feelings and subjectivities as the co-creator of the research. The images that have been presented in the case studies chapters entail the relationship of the surrounding environments and me that construct the hyperreality as I have perceived on-site. In comparison with the collected data from the visitors' perspective, the visual methods provide a comprehensive understanding of the immersive experience from a different perspective that allows the readers to experience the hyperreal world in a more intuitive way. In terms of the improvements for the visual methods, I am planning to apply multiple techniques to represent the surrounding environments that I have perceived during my observation on-site, such as animations and videos with the related music to represent the atmosphere on-site that allows the readers to immerse themselves in.

3.4.7 Ethical Considerations

According to Creswell (2014), the ethical issues during research refer to five phases: before beginning the study, beginning the study, collecting data, analysing the data, reporting sharing and storing the data. In specific, researchers are required to be responsible for their informants to build up the trust with them. Also, the researcher should be authentic and integrity of the research. Furthermore, the researchers

should respect either the individual informants or the organizations who take part in the research activities. In my research, I have developed my ethical considerations as the following five steps:

- Before beginning the study: Firstly, I had submitted the proposal for ethical approval at the University of the West of England. Secondly, I had identified and selected the sites in my case study lists, and I had contact with the organizations with my research purposes and a brief introduction of my research to get the access and permissions from the sites.
- Beginning the study: This phase involved with the research participants and organizations. To start with my study on site, I contacted visitors with informal conversations to let them understand the general purpose of my research. Also, I had provided an assessment of individual participant without giving them pressure. Most importantly, all the participants with different cultural, religious and genders had been respected. Furthermore, I had ensured my research did not disturb the children on site. In terms of the organizations on site, I had followed the rules that did not cause disorder or trouble on site.
- Collecting data: First, I had respected the sites, and I had disrupted as little as possible during the data collection process on site. Second, I had ensured all the participants on site were treated equally. Thirdly, I had discussed the purpose of my research with the participants to explain the usage of the collected data during the focus group discussion and interviews. Furthermore, I did not lead the questions during the interviews that allowed the participants to share their feelings and impressions about the attractions. Finally, private information of the participants was protected and encrypted with the ethical codes.
- Analysing the data: After collecting data for my research, all the data I obtained from the interviews and observations on site were protected in my personal laptop with a password. During the process of analysing the data, I had ensured to present the data from multiple perspectives to make it valid and reliable as well as, and I had reported the results objectively with both positive and negative results. Also, I had developed complex profiles of the participants and assigned with the fiction name for each participant.
- Reporting, sharing and sorting data: Firstly, I had reported the results of my research honestly with evidence, data, findings and conclusions. Secondly, I had avoided plagiarizing other researchers' work. Thirdly, I had made copies of my research and had sent the results to the organizations and participants, but I would keep the raw data and materials (information of research procedures and details of the process) for five years. Finally, I would make sure to publish my work without using the same data, discussions and conclusions.

3.5 Conclusion and considerations

This research aims at exploring how hyperreality has impacts on the visitors' experience at cultural attractions from the perspective of tourists. The fieldworks have been conducted at the cultural

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attractions with multiple forms of representations that have met the criteria of the research. However, there are some factors that have affected the research could be progressed properly. Firstly, this research focuses on a deep understanding of how visitors themselves feel about the combinations between emerging technologies and cultural attractions subjectively. It raises the questions about objectivity that becomes weakness of this research. However, to make sure the validity and reliability of my research, I have applied the triangulation methods from the perspectives of the organizations, the visitor aspects and observations onsite. Besides, the weakness can turn into the strengths and opportunities, which allows me to understand the visitors and their experience more. In addition, because of the limitation of time, there are limited numbers of cultural attractions with emerging technologies that I can explore in the research. More hyperreal attractions/art galleries in diverse cultures around the world will be considered in my future research. Chapter 4 to chapter 7 will cover the analysed findings from the four case studies that have been collected from the application of procedures detailed above.

Chapter 4 The Technology: The Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality

4.1 Introduction and Background

The Salvador Dali Museum is located in St. Petersburg, Florida, United States and has historically been owned by Dali's friends Reynolds and Eleanor Morse as a private collection that holds the largest collections of the Dali's artworks outside of Europe. It has opened to the public as a museum in 1982 to provide a platform to blend the rational with fantastical to its audience. There are eight permanent galleries with 2,400 of Dali's works incorporating oil paintings, original drawings, book illustrations, manuscripts, sculptures and photos. The organization encourages their audience to discover the world from different perspectives and to unleash their creativities through Salvador Dali's artworks, which is based on Dali's understanding of art and artists:

'A true artist is not one who is inspired but one who inspires others---Salvador Dali'.

Salvador Dali (1904-1989), a master of creating optical illusions, who constructs his dreams and imaginative worlds through his artworks to provide his audience with an alternative way to discover the new forms of reality - Dali's surrealism. He inspires his audience by using the visual language that refers to not only the paintings on the canvas but also has been applied through films, sculptures, fashion and photography, architectures and literary works. He has presented his interests through his artworks including the subjects in science, physical mathematics, technology, religious and love. The '*flying vocabularies*' in his abstract art entails a dreamy world that has been processed by his brain with symbolic values, which refers to an expression of the philosophical movements without any relevance to physical objective reality. The surrealist artworks are featuring in the exploration of subjectivities that are associated with the world of dreams, unconscious, memories and feelings. Central to the surrealism is the concept of symbolic meanings that reflects on the relationships between the representations and the reality, and which contains the characteristics of surprise, and unexpected juxtaposition. Dali has conceptualized the symbolic meanings as a metaphor to explain his concepts, such as the elephants with the fragile legs representing the future of strengths (Dali. org, 2019).

To provide visitors a comprehensive understanding of Dali's surreal world, the organization has in collaborated with the team Goodby Silverstein and Partners who develop the virtual reality experience to co-create the production of the '*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*', which allows the visitors to step into the painting to turn it into their own imaginative stories. The production has been developed based on the Dali's original painting Archaeological Reminiscence of Millet's 'Angelus'.



Figure 5 Archaeological Reminiscence Millet's Angelus by Dali, 1935 (Source: the Dali.org, 2019; obtained the copyright with the organization's permission)

I surrendered myself to a brief fantasy during which I imagined sculptures of the two figures in Millet's 'Angelus' carved out the highest rocks...' (Salvador Dali)

Nevertheless, indifferent from the original painting, the product developer has pushed the surrealist features further by combing nine symbols that are related to Dali's works that contain the symbols of the father and son, the towers silhouette, the elephant, the American singer-songwriter Alice Cooper, the ants, the elephant, the lobster and phones, Dali's childhood nurse Lucia, math and science and the girl skipping rope. The meanings of the symbols have been presented in *Table 12* below.

*Table 12*The nine symbols and its meanings

Nine Symbols	Meanings
The father and son	Dali's relationship with his father
The towers silhouette	The peasant couple in the Jean-Francois Millet 's painting 'the Angelus'
Alice Cooper	Dali's friendship with Alice Cooper, and Dali describes him as ' <i>the greatest living artist</i> '.
The ants	Death, decay and decadence
The elephant	Distorted perceptions of space and time that represents the symbol of strength

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The lobster and phone	Juxtaposing two familiar objects to create a new concept: <i>'I do not understand why when I ask for frilled lobster in a restaurant, I'm never served a cooked telephone'</i> .
Lucia	Dali's childhood nurse who influences on his life
Math and science	The spiral shape
The girl skipping rope	Innocence and curiosity, inspired by the shape of a bell tower from a school his sister has attended

The nine symbols have been turned into attractions and scenarios inside of the three-dimensional virtual world, which allows its audience to explore inside of the painting actively as an avatar. The visitors can enrich their experience and gain their knowledge about Dali by stepping into the painting, and the interactive activities with the simulated virtual environments include: exploring inside of the tower; sightseeing Alice Cooper with his songs and listening to the ringing bell of the lobster telephone; appreciating the atmosphere in the desert while the elephants are passing by; feeling the wind and the sand in the desert; stepping up the spiral-shaped stairs to the top of the tower and getting inspired by the tremendous landscape inside of the optical fantasy.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQ2-oJOkTKc>

The video above provides an overall view of the virtual experience in the hyperreal production: Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality. Different from the other attractions in the case studies, the virtual production has separated visitors from physical reality to a computer-simulated optical illusion with symbols that enables visitors to immerse themselves into the Dali's fantasy without intrusions from the outside world. The chapter seeks to address the visitors' perceptions of experiencing in the 'more real than real' world that has no relevance to the physical and objective reality. The structure of this chapter, and the

subsequent empirical chapters, presents the perspectives of the organization, the visitors and the observations by the researcher onsite. In particular, the organization section outlines the process of developing the production to provide a brief overview of the virtual production, which contains aims and purposes, the procedures, existing knowledge about their audience and the in-house evaluations on the production. The visitor section aims at gaining an insight into the visitors' understandings and experience in the symbolic virtual environment, which is presented the visitors' behaviours and responses as before, during and after. The observation section to validate the previous findings from the researcher's perspective as triangulations, which contains the aspects of both objectivity and subjectivity. The conclusion is drawn in the final section to stress the most significant findings of the research and to develop an account of the co-creation experience from both the organization perspective and the visitor perspective.

4.2 Travels in Hyperreality: The Organization Perspective

This section presents an overview of the production of '*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*' from the organization perspective, which focuses on identifying the organization's perception on producing the simulated virtual world for their audience to explore. The section begins by demonstrating the aims and purposes of developing the project, following the process and procedures. Additionally, the evaluations on the project and the existing knowledge about their audience will be outlined as the conclusion in this section.

The participants of the interviews are Pam Whiteaker and Kathy Greif. Pam is the director of the visitor experience at the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg at Tampa, and Kathy is the chief operating officer of the attraction.

4.2.1 Aims and Purposes

The organization has developed the project from two perspectives: to show respect to the original artist and to inspire the visitors. Firstly, the developers pay their tribute to the artist Salvador Dali by developing his fantasy in virtual reality because of his interests in surrealism, symbols and technologies. The organization is in collaborating with the team Goodby Silverstein and Partners to spread Dali's concept and continue his art through different mediums to inspire his audience. The virtual production developer Goodby Silverstein and Partners are the original concept creators of the production and are responsible for producing the '*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*', which they create the optical illusion based on their imaginations and understandings of Dali.

'The purpose was to show through Dali's interest in science, maths ...continuing his art into a lot of different mediums. So, using the new technology of the day, we think it would be the greatest, because he was always looking for new things. We looked to virtual reality because we had a gentleman on our board, Silverstein, and they

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are out of San Francisco, and they offered to develop a virtual reality experience for us using pieces that we have selected... So, what they did was they took a team and actually using the archaeological reminiscence of Millet's 'Angelus' by Dali, they imagined using virtual reality: what it might be like in the mind of Dali behind the scenes?' (Pam, the visitor experience director at the attraction).

From the visitor aspect, the organization aims at encouraging the visitors to appreciate the world and art from different perspectives by embracing the latest technological applications that allow them to step into a painting rather than simply observing the painting passively.

'We wanted to extend the experience of Dali, and to give our visitors new ways of understanding his art and of understanding the extensive medium that he used by creating something modern, so a new way of looking at art and appreciating it' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

4.2.2 The Process

In terms of the interpretation and narratives of the simulated attraction, the producer has transferred Dali's *'flying'* vocabularies into an optical illusion by using the technology of VR, which entails abstract and symbolic aspects that have been associated with Dali's most iconic elements. According to Kathy, the producer has embedded Dali's concepts together to recreate a scene that represents Dali's surreal world for their viewers to experience. According to the interviewee Kathy, some of the symbolic elements have not even existed in Dali's original painting, such as the elephant with the fragile legs and the lobster telephone.

'They wanted to introduce other iconic elements of Dali, like the elephants that are far of the distance, they would bring those, for the user closer to them, we also embedded things like the Alice Cooper hologram, and other items that aren't existing in the original painting. For example, you wouldn't see inside of the tower on the original painting, so we wanted to use our imagination and create our own artwork in a sense by liberating other iconic works of Dali and embedding them into the experience' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

The landscape inside of the virtual environment has been constructed by the nine symbols, and the producer has assigned each symbol into the attraction and scenario of the visual feast that allows the visitors to explore. Also, the organization has set up the panels and handouts at the entrance of the exhibition, which provides visitors with a comprehensive understanding of the virtual landscape that they are going to explore. Furthermore, the simulated soundscape that relates to the themes and meanings of the symbols have been produced to enhances on the visitors' feelings of immersion within a surrealistic atmosphere that has emerged in the combination between sightseeing and soundscape.

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'So, you'll see much I think at least nine symbols that Dali used repeatedly throughout his career that you will encounter on these, and you can push yourself forward to a lot of different things. We also included things like the Alice Cooper we have on hologram, a sculpture or object that has Alice Cooper's brain, and that even included his music as background. it's a visual pleasure of the types of things that Dali used, using it in a new form of technology-virtual reality. We did find that we want to make sure that the visitors knew what they were seeing and why, it would be included in there, so we have one entire panel and handouts that talk about different symbols, and where else they can find them in the work and why it's important'(Pam, the visitor experience director at the attraction).

To inspire the visitors and to unleash their creativities, the producer comes up with the concept of providing a platform that allows the visitors to go inside of the painting. Instead of observing in front of the painting passively, the visitors can appreciate art by interacting with the virtual environments through headsets, and they can point on the locations/spots to explore freely inside of the Dreams of Dali.

'Like I said, that was the concept from very beginning that our partner developed, so they really wanted to go inside of the painting, which was the basis of the concept. So from there, it was just kind of various decisions on how fast you go from one point to another, and which aspect of view would be seen first, and then they wanted to introduce other iconic elements of Dali, like the elephants that are far of the distance, they would bring those, for the user closer to them' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

In terms of the organization's perception on the roles of emerging technologies, Pam stresses the importance of technology applications that have been adopted as a bridge to connect with their audience, where the visitors can embrace themselves with the latest technology to advance their understanding about the collections at the museum. Besides, emerging technology applications such as VR can bring convenience to visitors who are unable to visit, which allows them to easily access to the art collections without any location limitation.

'I think that using technology, technology that becoming available to the visitors is really important as another way to connect with your visitors. Visitors, we were just talking about, who with today's visitors, and if you have visitors especially who have the ability to have the virtual reality in their own homes, why not use that to further explore what they are visually seeing on canvas. So, we embrace that, in fact we are looking at augmented reality as well, and a variety of other things. We even included, we have an audio tour, which is an app that people visit the museum

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can use, it also has the ability to connect them with the library, and a variety of other things. It's just embracing the new technologies now available and allowing the visitors to see even more of what the essence of our collection is' (Pam, the visitor experience director at the attraction).

Furthermore, developing emerging technology arouses the tourists' motivations and interests to visit the attraction. Findings from the organization's perspective onsite show the visitors are attracted and motivated by the technologically-directed digital experience. However, the emerging technology could not replace the original art but serves as an enhancement to the existing collections.

'While more and more, we know from studying of our visitors directly as well as the industry, the museum industry in general, they are very interested in technology and digital experience as a way, an additional way to appreciate art, not to replace the existing original artworks, but to augment the experience. So, we've been experimenting with things like the Dreams of Dali and others. And we are continuing to invest in it because we know that museum visitors are very interested in digital experience' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

4.2.3 Evaluations

The organization gains an insight into the visitors' experience and satisfaction from their own research team and project, and the data has been collected onsite observation, online reviews and surveys. Their findings reveal that most of the visitors give positive feedback on their experience at the *'Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality'*. According to Kathy, the production serves as an innovation that allows the visitors to appreciate art from a novelty perspective but also to introduce them to the inventive representations of the emerging technologies.

'We've been gathering insights on that, and every visitor gives it high rate. For many visitors, it's their first time trying the virtual reality, so we are not only introducing them to a new way of appreciating art, we also introducing them the rapid growing of technology platform. So, it's really great way for us to educate the community in the world at large, which is in fact our mission. So, we've made some changes along the way, in terms of how we present the experience based on the visitors' feedbacks and our own observations. But in general, both from online comments and from surveys that we do on site, we know that it's a very highly rated experience from our visitors' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

In terms of the evaluations on the production, the organization considers it as a remarkable outcome that achieves the goals, which represents a novel advance on the existing collections of the museum.

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'We know it's a huge success, because we don't extend the hours longer, so everyone has the chance to do it. It's not for everyone, but there's a good percentage that do want to see what this might look like, so we've been very pleased with the response to it. Most people walk away in 'Wow', which they could see other elements of the mind-set of the artist. And all of different things, which seems to open up how they look at art and how they could extend it even more so, which is right in the field of what Dali did' (Pam, the visitor experience director).

However, the organization has realized the fact that the visitors are not satisfied with the time constraints during their visit at the video tour. The organization solve this problem by developing the software and phone applications that allow the visitors to download on their personal devices to explore in- depth.

'We have already had it online, so unfortunately I guess the visitors didn't get told the information or given that handouts there... but we have a handout that lets people on site know that you can download the experience with your own virtual reality device, or even in a 2D fashion with your phone or in your computer, and the 2D video has about five and half minutes, so it's about twice as long as you've seen on site, and if you have your own virtual reality device, such as HTC VIVE, you can download it and it's unlimited, there's no time limit, you can go inside and do it for thirty minutes if you want' (Kathy, the chief operating officer).

In terms of the plans for the next stage, the organization aims at expanding hours of the exhibition and hope that encourages more visitors to explore Dali's art in a virtual world. Besides that, the organization seeks to apply diverse emerging technologies to their collections, which builds the visitors' connections with Dali and his art.

'We maybe adding more virtual reality, but we are also looking at augmented reality and other types of technology to see. We are not just locked into one, we think that just like Dali, we want to explore a lot of different options, and see what have there, and currently in our strategic plan to look at more technologies, and how it could match for our artist, and what might be a better way for visitors to connect, or more additional way for the visitors to connect to the art' (Pam, the visitor experience director).

This section reveals the findings of Dali's surreal world in VR from the organization perspective. The innovative form of art that has been represented in the virtual world sets up a close resemblance to the original concept of hyperreality in postmodern theories, whereby the symbol plays as the essential role that creates a simulated image of the reality---the *'more real than real'* simulation. Visitors are separated from the physical reality outside during their experience in the virtual world within which

visitors are transported into an illusionary world that can turn them into active explorers rather than passive observers. The emerging technology applications aim to advance on the existing collections at the museum and build connections with the visitors that enhances their feelings of immersion. From the organization’s own research findings, the visitors are interested and motivated by the digital experience and technology, and they are giving high rates and positive feedback on their experience at the ‘*Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality*’. The organization perceives the virtual production as a success at the present stage, and they are focusing on expanding and exploring alternative possibilities of their existing collections by applying diverse emerging technologies in the future. The visitors’ perceptions on the simulated production will be further explored in the next section.

4.3 Travels in Hyperreality: The Visitor Perspective

This section aims at exploring the visitors’ perceptions of their experience in the ‘*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*’, which the section has been divided as before, during and after. The first sector gives a brief overview of the interviewees’ information and their behaviours before their visit. The second section analyses the visitors’ reactions and experience during their visit at the virtual tour. The last section concludes the visitors’ overall evaluations after they have visited at the ‘*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*’.

4.3.1 Visitor Profile

Table 13 Visitor Profile

Interviewees	Gender	Age Group	Educational Level	Career	Type	Nationality
Alicia	Female	31-40	Postgraduate	Art Therapist	Tourist	European
Carson	Male	18-25	College	Student	Tourist	American
Emma	Female	31-40	Postgraduate	Editor	Tourist	European
Julia	Female	51-60	Undergraduate	Investor	Tourist	American
Kevin	Male	41-50	College	N/A	Tourist	Chinese
Maria	Female	31-40	Postgraduate	Cultural Resource Management	Local	American
Mark	Male	31-40	College	Engineer	Tourist	American
Matthew	Male	51-60	Undergraduate	Attorney	Tourist	American
Mia	Female	18-25	College	Student	Tourist	American
Nora	Female	31-40	Postgraduate	Advertising	Tourist	American
Ryan	Male	25-30	Postgraduate	Student	Tourist	Chinese
Sophie	Female	18-25	College	Accounting	Tourist	European

According to *Table 13*, there are twelve informants have been interviewed onsite, which includes seven females and five males. Half of the interviewees are in the middle-aged groups from the age 31 to 50. Besides that, there are four younger aged visitors from 18 to 30, and two elderly visitors from the age

of 51 to 60. Most of the interviewees have higher educational backgrounds with stable occupations, such as editor, investor and cultural resource management. In terms of the interviewees' nationalities and types, there are seven American informants, yet only one of them is a local resident. Additionally, there are three interviewees come from Europe, and two interviewees from mainland China. Most of the interviewees are travelling to the site with their friends or relatives. However, there is one individual interviewee, Mark, who has revisited to the attraction for the virtual exhibition. The visitors' intentions and motivations before their visit will be further indicated in the next sector.

4.3.2 Before Visit

This sector presents an insight of the visitors' behaviours and intentions before they visit the attraction, which has been divided into four sections that include the visitors' motivations, knowledge about the exhibition before they visit, previous similar experience, and travel information checking platforms.

Motivations

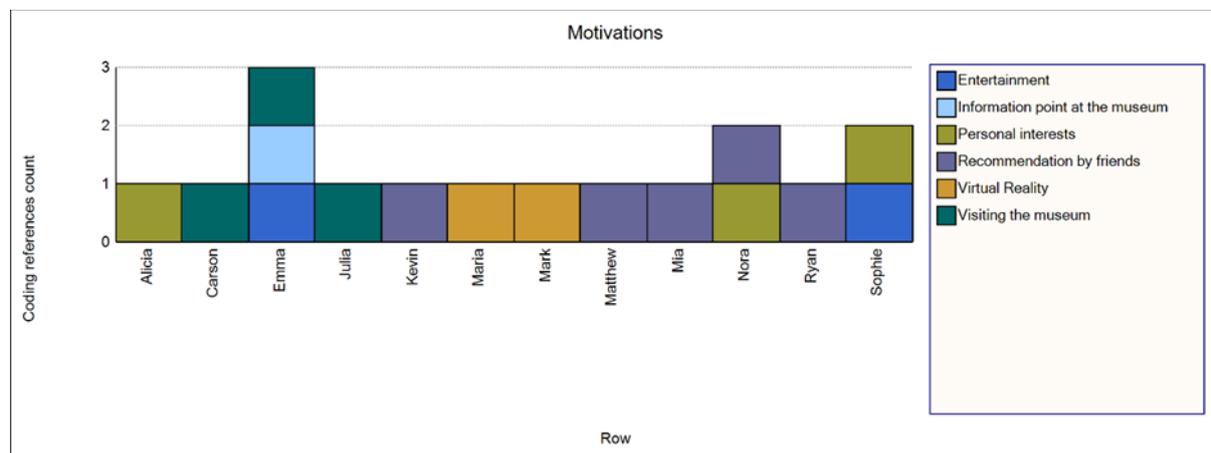


Figure 6 Motivations

The factors that motivate the visitors to the site are driven by recommendation by friends, personal interests, leisure and entertainment. As shown in *Figure 6*, most of the interviewees visit the attraction because of recommendations by their friends or relatives. Similar to the groups of interviewees who seek leisure entertainment and 'things to do' in Tampa, they have limited knowledge about the attraction before visit.

'I've never heard of the museum before, I didn't know it's in Tampa. I came here to visit a friend, and he recommended me the museum' (Matthew, male, aged between 51 to 60, American tourist, travelling with friends).

Some of the interviewees pay a visit to the museum because of the famousness of Dali and his artworks, and they have not realized that there is a 'hyperreal' production existing at the attraction until they arrive at the site.

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'Because we came to St. Petersburg, and we said what is here to do, and we found there's a Dali museum. We know there's one in Spain, and we said let's have a look. The lady downstairs told us there was a virtual reality exhibition while we were buying the tickets, and we decided to go and have a look at it' (Emma, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, editor, tourist from Europe, travelling with her friend).

In terms of the visitors who are enthusiastic about Dali and the attraction, the factors that motivate them to the site are driven by their attachments with Dali and their interests about the digital experience. The personal attachment refers to the visitor's enthusiastic connections with the artist Salvador Dali, which have become the core driving force for the interviewee Alicia to visit the site rather than the digital production.

'I have fascination for Salvador Dali since I was a young girl. This is something that we want to do for a very long time together. But I haven't heard about the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality before I came' (Alicia, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, art therapist, tourist from Europe, travelling with her friend).

In contrast to the interviewee Alicia, the interviewee Mark revisits the site because of the virtual reality experience, as he describes it as his favourite exhibition at the Dali Museum:

'I have heard about it before, and I have done it before! So, this is not my first time, but I've gone through it several times, and it's one of my favourite parts of the exhibit' (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller).

This section indicates that most of the interviewees come to the attraction because there are seeking for leisure entertainment and the legacy that has been left by Salvador Dali. Only one interviewee revisits the site because of the emerging technology applications based on his previous digital experience at the museum. This is different to the findings from the organization's perception on the visitors' motivations (seen in the organizational section), which shows that emerging technology is not the core driving force for the interviewees to visit the attraction as most of them have not realized the existence of the virtual tour until they have arrived. It leads to questions of the visitors' existing knowledge about the attraction before they have visited the site that will be further explored in the next sector.

Knowledge about the attraction before visit

In response to the question of the interviewees' existing knowledge about the attraction before their visit, most of them perceive the Dali museum as a landmark at Tampa. Some of the interviewees are

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enthusiastic about Salvador Dali and his artworks, yet they have insufficient knowledge about the virtual tour before they have visited the attraction.

'I haven't heard of the virtual reality, but I heard of the museum. I came to town before, maybe three or four times, I heard about this museum, but I have never been here. So, this is the first time I want to come and see it. I haven't checked any information before I came, but I did go to the website to see where it is' (Carson, male, aged between 18 to 25, undergraduate student, American tourist, travelling with his friends).

'We came just for the museum, cause he's both our favourite artist, and we are here for the week, didn't know they have virtual reality over there. I've been to the Dali museum when it was the old facility, so it is all new' (Julia, female, undergraduate degree, investor, American tourist, travelling with her husband).

One individual interviewee acquires comprehensive knowledge about the virtual reality exhibition from his previous experience at the attraction and his self-study about Dali's artwork via the internet.

'I've gone through it several times, and I gone online, which you can do it without 3D. But I checked and looked at on the Internet as well, so that's kind of interesting, and the painting itself. I read a lot about the painting itself too, and which is of course on the exhibit here too' (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller).

This section further indicates the factors that motivate the interviewees to come to the attraction for their first time are driven by Dali and his famous artworks, but the emerging technology application is not the main purpose for them to visit. In terms of the interviewee who is keen on the virtual tour, it is caused by his memory and previous digital experience at the Dali museum, which gives him more extensive knowledge about the exhibition than the visitors who first visit the attraction. To get an insight into the visitors' attitudes and perceptions of the digital experience, the visitors' previous similar experience will be demonstrated in the next sector.

Previous similar experience

According to the interviewees, the previous similar experience is associated with the immersive experience at theme parks, historical attractions and VR gaming. The digital experience at theme parks provides the visitors with an entertaining platform that allows them to be thrilled and to have the '*feeling of absence*' experience.

'My last one was the one in the Animal Kingdom, you played as an avatar, where they see you kind of like a stationary bike, and they have a full virtual headset, it

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feels like you are in the jungle as an avatar, and you are flying onto the creatures, and you are experiencing the water, and being attacked by other animals, the sky, you really feel like you are flying, that's a longer experience, I think it's up to five to ten minutes. That's just wow!' (Alicia, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, art therapist, tourist from Europe, travelling with her friend).

Increasing numbers of cultural attractions have applied emerging technologies as a new form of representation to attract their audience. From the interviewees' responses, most of them have similar digital experiences at varieties of historical attractions, such as augmented experience, living museums and virtual reality experience, yet none of them has previous experience that relates to the theme of 'stepping into the painting' as the Dali Museum does. The interviewee Maria comments on the convenience of the emerging technologies bring that makes the visitors easy to access without any spatial restriction.

'The last one I did was at the Jordan museum, which is an archaeological exhibit, so you could put yourself in a desert that remote in many tours, and also the castle, there are many tours you can't go physically, but this gives you the chance to visit' (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

Apart from the visitors who have their previous digital experience at cultural attractions, two of the interviewees (Ryan and Carson, males, younger-aged group visitors, students) gain their digital experience through gaming, which makes they are more familiar with operating the virtual device onsite in comparison with other visitors.

'I think it's easy to use, because I've tried VR before through gaming, so I'm familiar how it works. But for the visitors who have never tried the VR before, it will take longer time for them to get used to the device. While I was waiting in the queue, I noticed that one visitor focused on one dot for a long time and didn't even have the time to turn around to explore, he didn't know he can turn around in 360 degrees' (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist).

This section argues most of the interviewees are familiar with the concepts of the emerging technology applications at cultural attractions based on their previous digital experience. They are interested in the new form of representation because of the feelings of immersion it brings and the potential factor of convenience. The findings are partially in line with the existing knowledge about their audience from the organization perspective in section 4.2, which reveals visitors are keen on the immersive experience that the digital technology provides. However, based on the previous sectors, emerging technology is not the core driving force that motivates visitors to the site.

Travel information checking platforms

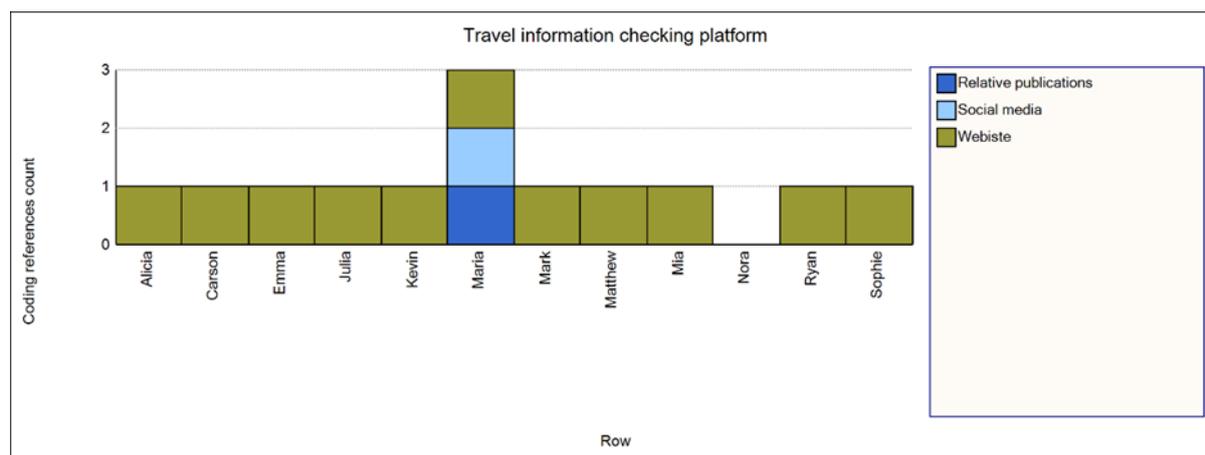


Figure 7 Travel information checking platforms

According to Figure 7, most of the interviewees gain their knowledge about the destination via the internet. Besides, Google and the attraction’s official website are the most common platforms for the interviewees to check on the general information about the attraction before they visit. In addition, visitors are using the TripAdvisor to check on the detailed information and other visitors’ reviews about the attraction. One interviewee, Maria, who is enthusiastic about art and culture, prefers to get in-depth knowledge about the artist she is interested in from relative publications and blog articles.

‘I use the website, but sometimes I check the information via travel advisor. And I like to do research on blogs or publications that are relative to me’ (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

In association with the previous section, most of the interviewees use the internet to get the general information about the attraction that gives them insufficient knowledge about the virtual exhibition at the attraction, which leads to their low expectations in relation to the digital experience that they are going to explore. Next section will focus on the visitors’ experience and perceptions of the production ‘Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality’ during their visit onsite.

4.3.3 During Visit

This section aims at providing a comprehensive understanding of the visitors’ experience and perceptions of the digital production during their visit onsite, which has been organised as follows: the visitors’ activities and the most evocative experience at the virtual exhibition, sensations, authenticity and immersive experience.

Activities and the most evocative experience

The visitors’ experience at the virtual world is constructed by three components that contain interpretation, representation and interaction, which together stimulate visitors’ feelings of immersion

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as an outcome. In particular, the interpretation and narrative refer to the presented symbolic virtual attractions and the scenarios inside of the surreal world. The representation is associated with the visual appearance and the simulated soundscape that co-create the atmosphere that motivates the visitors to interact with. In terms of the interactions of the virtual exhibition, most of the informants are drawn into the activities inside of virtual attractions that includes walking alongside with elephants in the desert, climbing the top of the tower, meeting Alice Cooper and listening to the lobster phone ring inside of the tower.

The embedded symbolic meanings of the virtual tour enhance visitors' understandings of Dali and his artworks. Additionally, it can evoke visitors' attachments and creativities that inspires them to discover the meanings about themselves in relation with the world, which is associated with the fewer individual visitors who are enthusiastic about Dali and his artworks.

'I like the Milky Way and the stars. I think the mimic is one of the most powerful ways of contextualizing your stories within not just the reality or world, but the whole universe. So, to me, whenever I see it depict in real life, it's like tremendous, symbol substance' (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

I think it helps to read a little bit about the painting, and get a little bit background of the painting, and I think it helps some of the symbolism, it's in there fits well. For example, Alice Cooper, the figure that's sitting in one of the towers, but I don't think he was in the original painting, but apparently, he became friends with Dali at some point, and Dali apparently admires his music, so that adds further kind of twist or dimension to it. (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller, frequent visitor at the attraction).

The representation contains the well-produced appearance and the simulated sound effects that are related to the themes of the painting. The representation sets up the atmosphere and evokes visitors' sensations of sightseeing and soundscape which motivates them to further interact with their surrounding environments that intensifies and strengthens their immersive experience.

'The details are really good, like the lobster phone and the rings, and the interviews in the background. the elephants were on the stilts, and they were walking next to you. The background music was really good...It's cool to get being inside of the painting, seeing it from different angles, and being like merged in it instead of staring at it with like five people in front of you' (Mia, female, aged between 18 to 25, college student, American tourist, travelling with families).

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The activities and the interactions refer to visitor's movements inside of the virtual environment as an avatar, which includes their movements from point to point through VR headsets. The interactions intensify the visitors' feelings of authenticity that provide them with the experience of being part of the scene. At this stage, the visitors have become the co-creators of the painting rather than passive observers.

'It has different features that you can go in, it's not just like you see what around you, and you can actually go into the structures and explore the different areas. I mean, the whole atmosphere, the music combine with the features that you are able to go through the painting itself, like you can feel yourself inside of the painting, It's not like looking from outside of the painting as a viewer' (Matthew, male, aged between 51 to 60, undergraduate degree, attorney, American tourist, travelling with friends).

This section has explained the symbolic meanings, the representation and the interactions with the virtual environment that have influences on the visitors' immersive experience. Similar to the findings of case studies at the other three attractions that have been presented in the subsequent chapters, the result has further strengthened the multi-sensory stimulation effects on the visitors' feelings of authenticity. The visual appearance and the sound stimulation have set up the atmosphere that triggers visitors' sensibilities, and their tactile interactions with the surrounding environments further stimulate the visitors' feelings of *'being there'* as an outcome. The roles of visitors' sensations during their experience at the virtual tour will be explored in the next sector.

Sensations

Based on the previous section, visitors' sensations onsite are associated with sightseeing, soundscape and interactive activities with the attractions inside of the virtual exhibition. Different from the representation of the other three attractions in case studies, this virtual exhibition provides visitors with a platform that has separated them from the physical reality out there---a total simulation, which allows them to fully immerse themselves in the simulated reality without intrusions.

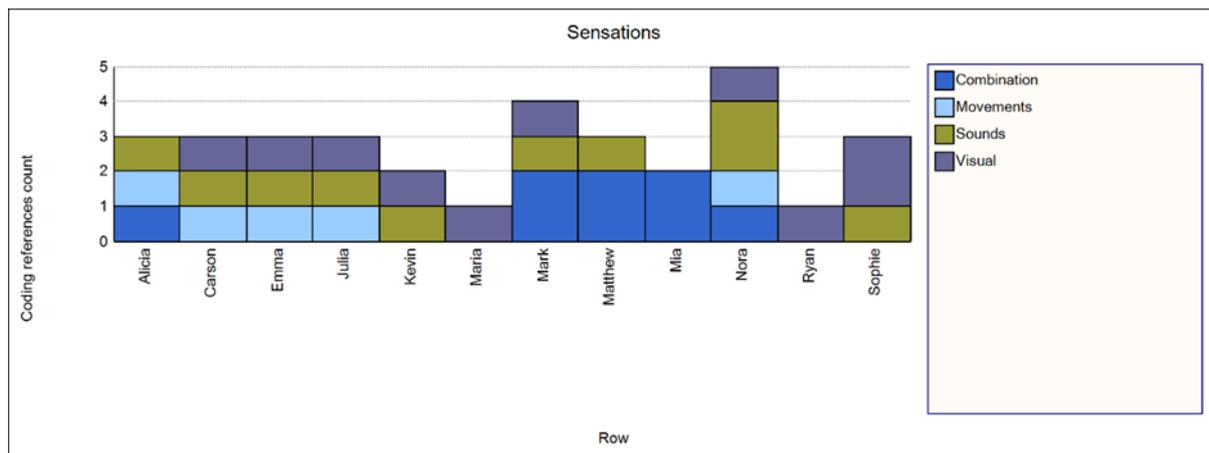


Figure 8 Sensations

According to *Figure 8*, visitors give their responses to sightseeing and soundscape the most, because it enhances on the atmosphere and further strengthens the visitors' multi-senses through their interactions with the virtual environment onsite, which work together to provide visitors with the feelings of 'as if they were there'. The findings of the sensation are in corresponds with the findings of visitors' most impressive experience in the previous section. The sightseeing and the soundscapes refer to the representation of the virtual production that set up the atmosphere as the first step for the visitors to explore. While the 'tactile' interactions with the surrounding virtual environment refer to the activities that the virtual tour provides. The combinations of the multi-sensory stimulation construct in visitors the 'feelings of absence' and the most impressive experience during their experience onsite.

The virtual appearance triggers visitors to sense the atmosphere of their surrounding environment as the first step. In the Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality, the virtual attractions have been presented more realistically than the abstract original painting, which includes the three-dimensional, well-produced details, the textures and the lighting effects of the simulated architectures that arouse visitors the most authentic experience of 'being there'.

'Because you can explore in the virtual world and have a close look at the details of the painting, like the material of the towers, and the shape of the crow in the sky, and I give credits to the producer's modelling techniques... This provides better immersive experience than the original painting, which I think it's unique! Because it allows us to see the features in a three-dimensional environment, which upgrades the original painting in a deeper level' (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, enthusiastic for VR gaming).

However, the finding reveals that the simulation is not able to fully separate visitors from the physical reality without intrusions, because of the technical issues of the virtual headsets. The light leaks and the

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focus problems of the device break the visitors' feelings of absence that decreases their immersive experience of being part of the painting.

'The only thing that I'm not satisfied with is the device is a little bit light leaks...when I look around in 360 degrees, I always can see my feet through the headset...and if I look forward with the device, I can see that there is a cabinet in the front of me' (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, enthusiastic for VR gaming).

The simulated sound effects that relate to the embedded symbolic meanings emphasize on the atmosphere of the virtual environment, which further intensifies visitors' feelings of authenticity. As the interviewee, Kevin puts it: *'I really like the background and the music of it, which makes me feel more real than real!'* (Kevin, male, aged between 41 to 50, Chinese tourist, travelling with his daughters). Also, the combinations of the sightseeing with the soundscapes highlight the theme of Dali's surreal world, which strengthens the visitors' connections with the artworks that enhances their understandings of the original painting in depth.

'When you go there, there's an Alice Cooper song in there for a while, but I think that's only through part of it. When you get up to the very top, you hear the wind and the glass expands, I think it's very important to the painting to have sound add to your all feelings, you hear the wind, and kind of the vastness of the area that you are in' (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller, frequent visitor at the attraction).

Nevertheless, the same issue with the visual sensors, the technical problems of the virtual device suspend the visitors' more real than real moment and diminish their authentic feelings that brings them back to the physical reality.

'There was no sound, I had to take it off, and made it work to start over' (Nora, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, advertising, American tourist).

In terms of the interactions with the virtual environment, it refers to activities onsite with the simulated architectures and the simulated creatures, which turns visitors to become the co-producers of the scene that enhances their authentic feeling of being inside of the painting. The combinations of the representation and the interactions arouse visitors' multi-sensibilities that transfers the dreams of Dali into their own stories and memories.

'There were two parts where you go past the people, which was like being in the crowd. That was interesting! The elephants impressed me the most, I watched that for a while, I knew I was supposed to go to the bubble, but I just kept watching. It's

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like being in there, and it was cool! (Julia, female, undergraduate degree, investor, American tourist, travelling with friends).

However, visitors are seeking for more interactions with the virtual environment that can stimulate their tactile sensors to make the immersive feeling lasts. Instead of moving from point to point, visitors are expecting to explore freely inside of the virtual production.

For example, in the dreams of Dali, when you walk by the tower, you can hear the phone bells ringing. If you can pick up the phone instead of just hear the phone ringing, I think that will be more immersive! (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, enthusiastic for VR gaming).

This sector stresses the importance of the soundscape and the interactions that can further reinforce the sightseeing, which evokes visitors' authentic feeling of '*as if they were there*'. However, it raises the questions of can virtual reality fully deliver the immersive experience that separates visitors from the physical reality as it promises to the audience? The visitors' sensations have been interrupted by the technical issues that decrease their feelings of absence and effects on their authentic experience during they are experiencing in the virtual tour. The finding proves that the visitors' subjective authenticity is associated with their multi-sensory stimulation onsite. Thus, the visitors' perceptions of the authenticity of the virtual reproduction versus the original painting will be further demonstrated in the next section.

Authenticity

From the collected data, most of the interviewees understand the virtual reproduction is represented as a symbol that sketches Dali's surreal world based on his original painting. Instead of questioning about the inauthenticity of the simulated reproduction, the visitors are embracing themselves into the innovative form of the representation.

'It's like saying do you want to have a chocolate bar or read a book about how chocolate is procedurally made. Both are interesting and satisfying, in very different ways, and they help you understand each other, you know what I mean' (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

Also, the visitors perceive the virtual exhibition as a further improvement of the original painting. The interactions with the embedded symbolic attractions enhance on their feeling about the moment from the aura and enrich their perceptions of the genuine artworks from a different perspective.

'Yeah, the phone has symbolism, and then to start with the boy standing there holding hands with his father, again, not in the original painting, but it's adding more. the original painting is the outgrowth for the video itself, but I would have to

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say, just from the certain amount of time that I have spent, I spend more time in the video probably than looking at the painting' (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller, frequent visitor at the attraction).

Additionally, the virtual reproduction arouses visitors' subjective authentic feelings that turns them into the active co-producer of the scene based on their backgrounds and understandings. Similar to the findings at the other attractions, the form of '*stepping into the painting*' arouses visitors' creativities that simulates their most immersive and authentic experience onsite.

'The going inside of the painting. That's cool! When you look at the painting on the wall, there are distances. But in this, it's like you are inside of a world from the perspective of the first person. Things like when you went inside of the tower and you looked down, you looked all around, and you walked through the stairs inside of the tower, you saw the telephone when it was ringing...It's so real!' (Nora, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, advertising, American tourist).

In response to the question of authenticity, only one interviewee prefers objective authenticity of the original painting to the virtual recreation. Because the details and the techniques on the original paintings from the artists bring out the personal values for the interviewee, which she describes the virtual tour as a fictional movie:

'I prefer the traditional art galleries. Because I like to see the brush strokes and techniques, and the small define, I guess. This VR exhibition is like a movie or something...I don't like the way the technology gets into the art...If there are more time to look through the details inside of the virtual exhibition, I think that will be better' (Sophie, female, aged between 18 to 25, college degree, accounting, tourist from Europe).

When asking about the authentic experience the emerging technology brings, one interviewee, Ryan argues that the augmented reality provides more feelings of immersion than the virtual reality. The interactions with the physical environments trigger the visitor's multi-sensibilities that enhances his authentic experience of '*being part of the scene*'. Whereas visitors can only move from point to point inside of the Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality, which could not deliver visitors a fully immersive experience in comparison with the augmented reality.

'I've tried augmented reality in living museums before, and it's totally different type of experience. I prefer the augmented reality much better than the virtual reality, mainly because in the live museum, you can explore freely without the time limits, you can touch or interact with the objects in the living museum. I've heard that there

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are certain VR devices allow you to interact and touch the stuff through the handle. For example, in the dreams of Dali, when you walk by the tower, you can hear the phone bells ringing. If you can pick up the phone instead of just hear the phone ringing, I think that will be more immersive!' (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, enthusiastic for VR gaming).

This section argues that most of the visitors are interested in the concept of 'stepping into the painting' as a symbolic representation without questioning the authenticity of the simulated reproduction. They perceive the virtual tour as a further improvement to their experience and understanding of Dali instead of replacing the objective original painting. The interactions with the surrounding virtual environment enhance their subjective authenticity of being inside the painting. However, respondent Ryan suggests that the feeling of authenticity is constructed by the multi-sensibilities through the active interactions with the physical reality. Apparently, the virtual reality development could not stimulate visitors' sensibilities from all dimensions at the present stage, which raises the questions of: Are visitors seeking for the authentic experience of being part of the scene as the active co-creator or just a purely digital experience that is developed by the latest technology?

Immersive experience

Based on the previous findings above, visitors get the immersive experience at the 'Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality' from the simulated reproductions and the interactions. The embedded symbolic representation with the sound effects leads visitors to their first step of the feelings of immersion, while the interactions with their surrounding environments further intensify the moment of being part of the scene. As the interviewee Carson puts it:

'When you step into the piece of art, it really brought it into life. It's a new way to see the older kind of things. I got the feeling of travelling inside of the painting...It really breaks down the wall that there when you look at the painting, literally the wall' (Carson, male, aged between 18 to 25, college student, American tourist).

However, the finding reveals that the visitor's feelings of immersion have not lasted during their visit onsite because of the technical issues and time restriction. Also, the main technical issues refer to the light leaks and the blurriness of the virtual device. Additionally, from the interviewees' responses, the headsets have kept falling off during their virtual tour onsite, and some of the interviewees give negative feedback on the poor qualities of their headphones that make their experience at the virtual world without any sound.

'Mine was a little blurry, and they couldn't fix it. I don't know it's just my screen, it seems a little bit blurring... I wish it would be more in higher definition. If they can be able to adjust the blurriness or concentration or something, the experience will

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be much better' (Matthew, male, aged between 51 to 60, undergraduate degree, attorney, American tourist, travelling with his friends).

In terms of the time restriction, visitors are not satisfied with their three minutes virtual experience at the attraction, which is a challenge for the visitors who are not familiar with the VR application to go through nine symbolic attractions in three minutes with the device. Some of the visitors share their experience of staying at one location for a long time, and they are not able to explore the rest of the landscapes of the virtual tour.

'When the phone was ringing, I was struggling to follow the sound and to find out the phone...when I finally found it, and it was over...Because you are spending time outside, and finally you get the time, you get up, and you are like 'Wow, this is really cool!' it's like okay you are done, next' (Nora, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, advertising, American tourist, travelling with friends).

Similar to Nora, the interviewee Mark who has revisited the attraction for multiple time is only able to get through half of the symbolic virtual attraction during his first visit onsite.

I think it's fine now because I've done it for a few times, but I do remember that the first time I did it, I want to say I didn't get through.....I think there are more than ten points that you can focus on, I maybe have gone through about half of the painting the first time. I didn't pace myself really well, and I wasn't sure exactly how to navigate my way through the painting, because my three minutes were up, and I didn't even go through the half of it. (Mark, male, aged between 31 to 40, college degree, engineer, American tourist, individual traveller, frequent visitor at the attraction).

The findings in this section acknowledge that visitors get the feeling of being part of the scene of the virtual tour, yet some of the visitors have not achieved the phase of using their imaginations and turning it into their own stories because of the problems of the technical issues and the time restriction. The finding is in line with the evaluations of the existing knowledge about their audience from the organization perspective in section 2, which visitors get inspired by a new form of representation that allows them to appreciate art from different perspectives. However, some of the visitors are not able to fully immerse themselves into the virtual environment, because they are focusing on adjusting themselves to the virtual device rather than the contents of the exhibition that fails to turn them into the co-creator of the scene by using their creativities and subjective imaginations.

4.3.4 After Visit

This section seeks to address visitors' perceptions and evaluations on the virtual production after they have experienced onsite, which has been divided as the overall experience and the recommendations

for the exhibition. The first section provides a brief overview of the visitors' experience at the 'Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality', and the recommendation section outlines the factors that the visitors are not satisfied with and their suggestions for the further improvements.

Overall experience

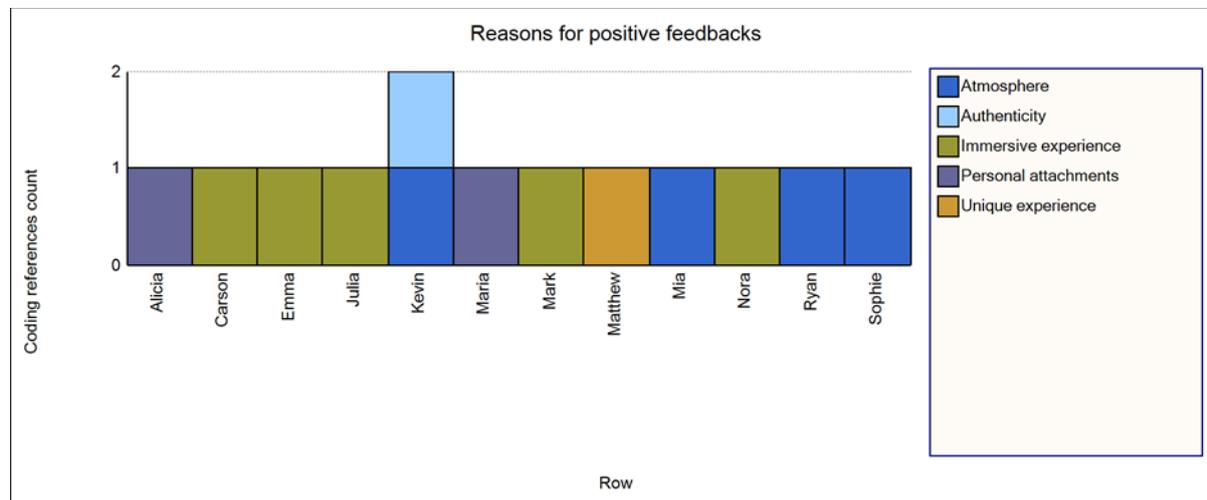


Figure 9 Reasons for giving positive feedback

Based on the collected data, the majority of the interviewees provide positive responses as their first impressions on the 'Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality', because the unique and immersive experience with the new form of representation allows them to step into the painting and to appreciate art from a different perspective.

In terms of the visitors who are enthusiastic about Dali and his artworks, the interpretations and the symbols of the virtual exhibition influence on their attachments to the artist, which arouses their memories and imaginations that bring out their feelings of immersion.

'While before we even went to virtual reality through the landscape of Salvador Dali, looks like the desert in Jordan that we got to experience for so many times. The experience overall is kind of like going back to that moment, but in a different way, the experience is very different. Because I really enjoy Dali and listening to the voice, then noticing Alice Cooper in the background, which is like where am I' (Alicia, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, art therapist, tourist from Europe, travelling with her friends).

Apart from the symbolic meanings of the interpretation, the well-produced representation has set up the atmosphere that stimulates visitors' multi-sensory stimulation, which provides them with the first step of the feelings of immersion. The interaction with the virtual environment further enhances the visitors' feeling of 'being there' that allows them to become part of the scene, which makes the most immersive experience emerge at the moment.

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'I really like the background voices that actually speaking of his memories, like his father wants him to go to the school and then it goes into inside the actual monument, and then there's like the stairs that you are trying to decide should I go down the stairs, or should I go over there...It looks like a cliff, and then I just jump out, and there's the vast desert, and at the same time, I like to hear the Alice Cooper music, and the memory of his father, and that wonderful relationship they had' (Alicia, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, art therapist, tourist from Europe, travelling with her friends).

Additionally, most of the visitors have low expectations on the virtual exhibition because they are not aware of it before they visit the attraction. In association with the visitors' motivations sector, the factors of appreciating the legacy that left by Dali and seeking for entertainment to fill the time are the core driving forces that motivate the visitors to the site. Because of the unexpected encounters, the virtual tour plays as an additional surprise that enhances the visitors' overall experience. As the interviewee Carson puts it:

'I don't know this is existing here, so I think it's a plus to the museum, I think it's very good' (Carson, male, aged between 18 to 25, college student, American tourist).

In comparison with the visitors' previous similar experience, the interviewees get impressed by the concept of becoming part of the painting, yet they are expecting more interactions with the virtual environment without time restriction.

'The last one I did was at the Jordan museum, which is an archaeological exhibit, so you could put yourself in a desert that remote in many tours, and also the castle...the one thing was better about the one I did in Jordan was that they didn't have time restriction, and also, there is a whole room that you can walk around, but here you can't walk around or move your body...' (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

Besides the factors of interactions with the virtual environment, the technical issues and the time restriction effect on the visitors' feelings of immersion as it has been demonstrated in the previous sections, and more detailed information about the visitors' 'negative feedback and their recommendations will be further explored in the next section.

Recommendations

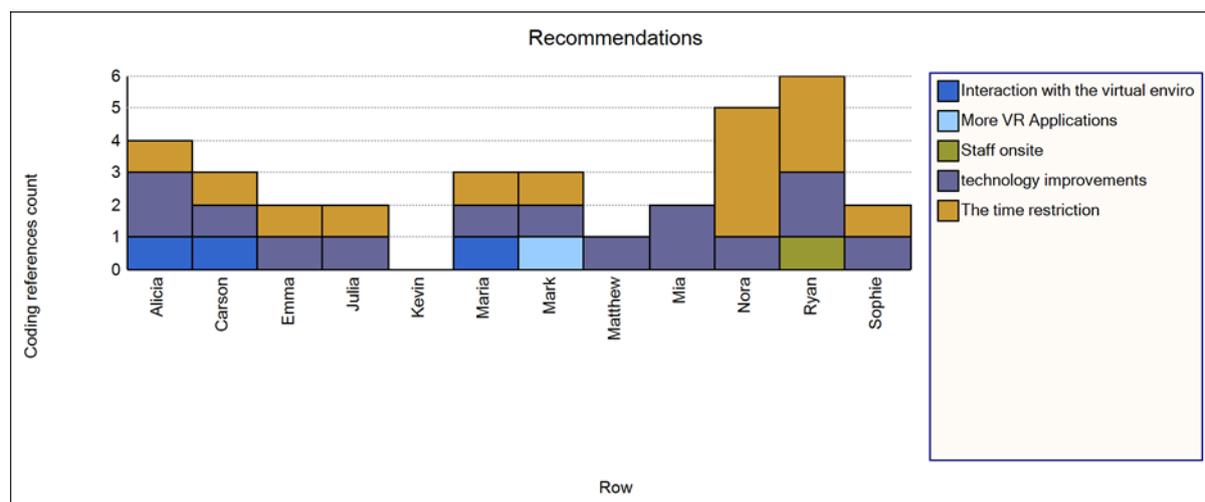


Figure 10 Recommendations

According to *Figure 10*, the finding proves the time restriction and the technical issues of the VR device have negative impacts on the visitors’ overall experience. Most of the visitors suggest extending the duration of the virtual tour time, which allows them to go through the nine symbolic attractions inside of the virtual world to get a comprehensive understanding of Dali and his artworks. Additionally, the insufficient amount of VR devices could not provide the opportunity for the large numbers of visitors who intend to revisit the virtual tour.

‘If you want to look at the details in some specific points, the time will not be enough for you to finish the whole tour...I think the amounts of the devices are not enough for the visitors, I mean, there are only three devices, and there are probably 20 visitors are waiting in the queue. I guess one visitor probably only has three minutes to experience in that, the time is a little bit short for me...’ (Ryan, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, enthusiastic for VR gaming).

Most of the visitors give negative feedback on the technical issues that the VR device bring, which include the light leaks and the blurriness problems that are required to be further improved. One of the interviewees suggests replacing the device to wireless because of the inconvenience of the device while she is experiencing the virtual tour onsite:

‘I think it could be wireless, because while I was spinning in my chair, and I was spinning into the wire...’ (Maria, female, aged between 31 to 40, postgraduate degree, cultural resource management, local resident, travelling with her friend).

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Some of the visitors expect to add more interactive activities with the virtual environments that can further strengthen their immersive experience, such as picking up the lobster phone, or exploring freely inside of the virtual world instead of moving from point to point.

'I suggest using the free motion around the virtual reality space instead of going to set locations from dot to dot, like you can control it, if I want to walk forward I can walk forward, if I want to fly up in certain levels, and I can go all the way up to the tower. That would be a lot more immersive for me' (Carson, male, aged between 18 to 25, college student, American tourist).

The finding at this section stresses appreciating Dali's famous artworks and seeking for entertainment are the core driving forces that have attracted the visitors to the attraction. Because most of the informants have insufficient knowledge about the virtual tour, it gives them low expectations on the virtual exhibition they are going to encounter at the museum. In addition, most of the visitors have previous similar digital experience at different types of cultural attractions, which makes they are familiar with the immersive experience the emerging technology provides. In comparison with the findings from the museum perspective, the digital experience has become a trend at tourism attractions in recent years, which grows the visitors' interests to explore in it. However, it is not the core driving force for most of the visitors coming to the site.

During the visitors experience onsite, they are interested in the concept of 'stepping into the painting' that gains their insights and experience of appreciating art from a different perspective, which achieves the museum's purpose of inspiring visitors to experience in art from multiple aspects. The findings reveal that most of the visitors get the feeling of immersion in the virtual tour, which gives credits to the well-produced representation and interactions with the simulated environments. The multi-sensory stimulation is aroused by the sightseeing and the soundscape that has set up the first step of the feeling of immersion. The interactions play as a bridge that allows the visitors to merge with the scene, which can stimulate their most immersive experience. However, the virtual tour fails to keep the visitors' feelings of immersion last because of the technical issues and the time restriction. The light leaks and the blurriness have ceased visitors' sense of being inside of the painting, and the time limitation has decreased the visitors' creativities and imaginations, which is unable for the visitors to co-create the scene with the virtual environment based on their understandings and backgrounds at the subjective level. Furthermore, some of the visitors are seeking for more interactions with the virtual environment that allows them to explore freely inside the surreal world instead of moving from point-to-point.

In terms of the solutions from the museum perspective, they are suggesting that the visitors can download the VR tour on their personal device and they are planning to develop more digital experiences such as augmented reality for their audience, which makes the question go back to: Are

visitors seeking for the immersive experience of being part of the scene as the active co-creator or just the pure digital experience that is developed by the latest technology?

4.4 Travels in Hyperreality: The Observation Findings

This section aims at validating the findings from the previous sections from a different perspective, which has been divided into two parts from the researcher's observation onsite. The first section contains the researcher's subjective experience as a pure visitor, and the findings are presented from the researcher's personal observation diary and drawings. The visual materials deliver the researchers' subjective feelings as being an insider that the textual materials cannot fully express, which entails the researcher's subjective reflections on the surrounding environment, which refers to a co-created sphere that is constructed by the researcher and the virtual production. The second section includes the researcher's objective records onsite as a pure observer. The subjective phase enhances the researcher's understandings and feelings about the attraction as an insider, which sets up the primary foundation for the following process of the observation and interview during the fieldwork onsite. While the objective observation phase decreases the researcher's personal bias, which validates the findings from previous sections as triangulations.

4.4.1 Subjective Perspective

I have gained my knowledge about the virtual tour from the videos on the museum's official website before I have conducted my fieldwork. This stage has aroused my imaginations and expectations before I visit the site. The fantasy of travelling inside of the painting has been pre-produced through my imagination.



Figure 11 Imagination about the virtual tour

According to *Figure 11*, I have imagined myself being emerged with the scene at the virtual tour, which provides me with the opportunity to explore freely inside of the simulation, such as climbing to the top of the tower to sense the light and the shadow of the landscape, walking alongside with the elephants in the desert, and stepping inside of the tower to encounter with Alice Cooper.

During my virtual tour at the re-created surreal world of Dali, I get impressed by the experience of stepping into the painting that the virtual reality brings. Especially at the beginning, along with the father and the son, I get the feelings of as if I were transferred from reality to a surreal world that I am going to explore.



Figure 12 The transition process

2nd Sep 2018, Weather: Sunny

'My first impression of the virtual tour: At first, the feeling was just like 'Wow', it feels like I was literally stepped into the screen, flying on top of the desert' (my first impression from the observation diary).

As *Figure 12* shown, the transition process has separated Dalí's surreal world from the physical environment out there, which stimulates my optical sensor the most. While I am seeking for exploring inside of the virtual world in-depth, I have found out my headset is broken that does not provide any sound. Additionally, I have been staying in front of the tower because I have no clue about how to use the headset to move around. The experience and feelings are presented in *Figure 13* below:



Figure 13 'The headset is broken'

'The device is a little bit difficult to use, plus, I couldn't hear anything through my headset. I don't know how to use the headset to focus on the dot to move from location to location. I thought it's wireless that can sense my movements from my body...I thought I could move freely inside of the virtual world like the virtual experience I had before through gaming'.

Because of the technical issues of the headset, I have to change the device and to re-visit the virtual environment. I get touched by the atmosphere and the music inside of Dali's dream. Based on my observation diary, the walking elephant is my favourite scenario, where I can see the details of the desert with the wind, the moonlight leaves the shadow of the elephants while they are passing by with their fragile legs, and the sounds of the elephants impressed me the most that stimulate my feeling of immersion. However, I have not gone through every symbolic attraction in my second visit at the virtual tour, because I am not aware of the time limitation.

'It's like a workshop to teach you how to use the virtual device. I didn't go through each attraction because I was staying with the elephants for so long (The elephants were so real, and I like the sounds of them). I had to ask the staff to give me the third chance to go through everything inside of the virtual tour!'

I have managed myself to go through everything inside of the dreams of Dali during my third visit onsite. I have to pace myself and to avoid to stay at one location for a long time, which leaves me no opportunity to go through the details inside of the virtual world closely. During my third time visit, I find out my VR device has the issues of blurriness that decreases my immersive experience. *Figure 14* expresses my feelings with the blurring headset:

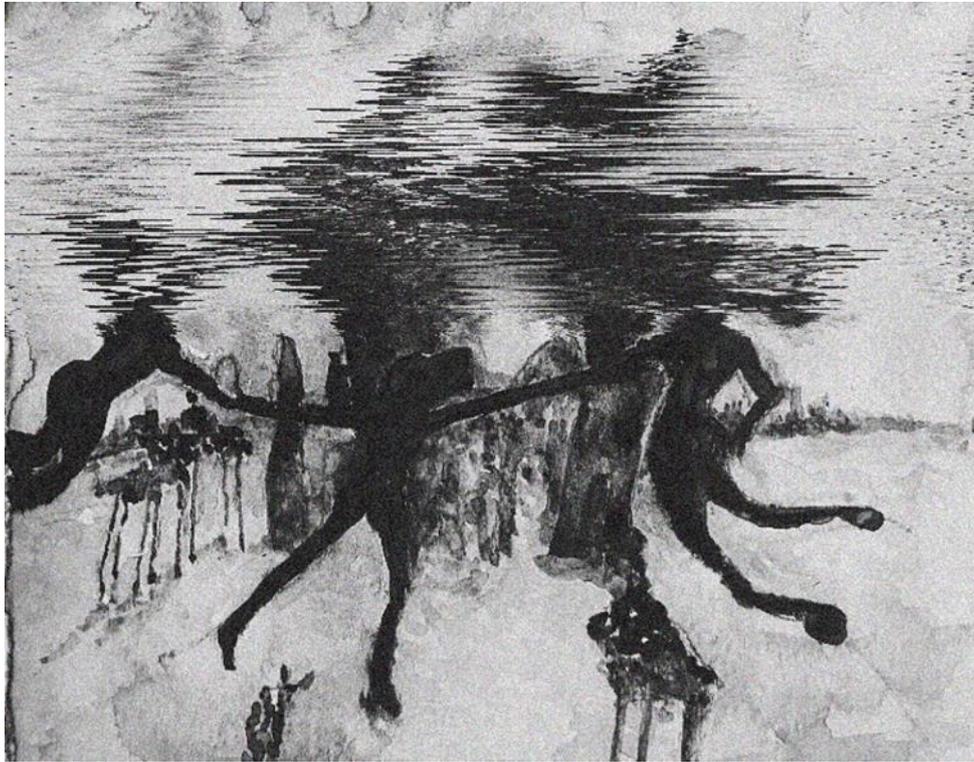


Figure 14' I can't see it clearly'

'I have to go really fast this time in order to see everything, I wish I could stay longer inside of the tower with the lobster phone...My headset is a little bit out of focus!'

The finding of my subjective experience onsite expresses the most memorable experience of the virtual tour, which is my imagination before I have visited the attraction and the elephant scenario during my visit onsite. The visual appearance and the sound effects bring out the atmosphere of the painting that evokes my feelings of immersion. Different from the findings at the visitor's experience section, I have high expectations on the virtual production before I visit, which leads to the neutral to negative feedback after I have visited the virtual tour. The finding of this section is associated with the findings of the visitor section. The representation and interaction arouse visitors' the most immersive experience, yet the feeling of immersion does not last for a long time because of the technical issues of the VR device and the time restriction. Furthermore, the visitors are expecting to explore freely inside of the virtual environment rather than moving from point to point.

4.4.2 Objective Perspective

Table 14 Observation findings

Symbolic Attractions	Representation	Visitors behaviours
The father and son	Appearance: simulated characters, the overview of the landscape in three-dimensional space Sounds: Dali's father Movement: visitors are leading by the simulated characters into the scene	The queue: visitors are waiting in lines and checking the information board before the virtual exhibition start The first virtual exhibition: one visitor is struggling to use the device, staying at the father and son scene for a long time (female, mid-aged).
The right tower	Appearance: The 3D tower, the bricks on the tower, the sand and the trees Sounds: The wind Movement: visitors can go inside of the left tower	Informal conversation with the visitors: <i>'That's so realistic!' 'Did you see the top of the tower?' 'No, can I go back?'</i> Second turn at 12.30pm
The lobster phone	Appearance: The white lobster phone in 3D modelling, darkness inside of the tower Sounds: the sounds of the ring	
The girl skipping rope	Appearance: outside of the left tower, near the elephant groups Sounds: mystery music	The staff onsite explain how to use the device for the visitors Informal conversations onsite, the visitor says: <i>'That's really cool, being inside of the painting! But the time is really short!'</i>
The elephants	Appearance: walking elephants, the desert, the details of the sand, the shadow and the light Sounds: mystery sound and sounds of the elephants	Most of the visitors start by starring at one point without movement
The left tower	Appearance: the 3D modelling tower, the details of the trees around, grey colour on the bricks Sounds: Alice Cooper's song inside of the tower	Third turn in the afternoon One visitor is asking: <i>'There supposes to be sound? The sound device doesn't work!'</i>
Alice Cooper	Appearance: inside of the left tower, holographic Alice Cooper in neon colours, the spiral shape of the stairs to the top of the tower Sounds: Alice Cooper's song	The visitors in queue are watching the other visitors who are experiencing in the virtual tour without looking at the information board Groups of visitors: <i>This is so cool! The sound is so realistic!' 'and the details of the sand!'</i> Visitor behaviour: taking pictures of her friend onsite

<p>The top of the tower</p>	<p>Appearance: The overview landscape from the top, the simulated universe with the stars, the black flying birds, the desert far from distance, the trees, the elephants</p> <p>Sounds: the elephants, the wind, the mysterious sounds, the sounds of the trees</p>	
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From the observation as a pure researcher onsite, the virtual exhibition is set in a small room that contains three screens with headset devices and three seats. The information board that contains the explanations of the nine symbolic meanings is provided at the entrance, which allows the visitors to get a general background about the virtual tour. The original painting ‘*Archaeological Reminiscence Millet’s Angelus*’ by Dali is presented at the exit of the virtual exhibition for the visitors to compare with. In terms of the representation inside of the virtual painting, it refers to the simulated architectures, creatures and characters in a three-dimensional environment, additionally, the reproductions are moving with the sound effects as the animations, such as the moving elephants, and the girl skipping rope. The simulated sounds are related to the themes of the scenarios inside of the virtual painting. Visitors are interacting with the virtual environments by using their headset to focus on the locations from dot to dot. From the observation onsite, most of the visitors are focusing on one dot without moving at the beginning, and the exhibition is ended by the time they are figuring out how to interact with the virtual environment. Some visitors are complaining about the technical issues of their VR device, such as the broken headset that unable to hear the sounds. When asking about visitors’ the most impressive experience during informal conversations onsite, most of them give positive feedback on the well-produced appearance and the realistic sound effects of the virtual exhibition, but some of the visitors are not satisfied with the time limitation of the virtual tour.

In comparison with the previous findings in the visitor section, visitors get impressed by the atmosphere and the representation of the scene that provides them with the most immersive experience. Similar to the findings from the visitor’s perspective, the sightseeing and the soundscape co-create the atmosphere for the visitors that allows them to step into the painting. In terms of the interactions with the virtual environments, some of the visitors get confused about the VR device that makes them stay at one particular scene for most of the time, which is associated with the findings of the researcher’s subjective observation and the findings from the visitors’ perspective. The technical issues of the VR device onsite further prove that the visitors get interrupted that influences their overall experience during their virtual tour.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' experience at the '*Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality*', which contains different perspectives from the organization, the visitor and the researcher. The finding reveals that visitors are interested in the concept of stepping into the painting that achieves the aims and purposes of the organization to develop the project. However, the core driving force for most of the visitors coming to the site is not caused by the emerging technology applications but by the factors of appreciating Dali's artworks and seeking for entertainment in Tampa, which leaves them low expectation on the virtual exhibition before they have experienced in it.

During the visitors are experiencing the virtual tour onsite, it provides visitors with the feeling of immersion because of the well-produced representation and atmosphere that allows the visitors to step into the painting as the first step of immersion. The interactions with the virtual environment further make improvements in stimulating visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that leads to their experience of '*being part of the scene*' as the second step. However, visitors are unable to explore freely inside of the virtual environment, and they are seeking for more interactions with the simulated objects inside of the surrounding environment, which makes the question of '*can virtual reality fully deliver the multi-sensory stimulation to its user?*' arise. Furthermore, most of the interviewees are giving negative feedback on the technical issues and the time restriction of the virtual tour, which decrease visitors' '*feelings of immersion*' to become part of the scene.

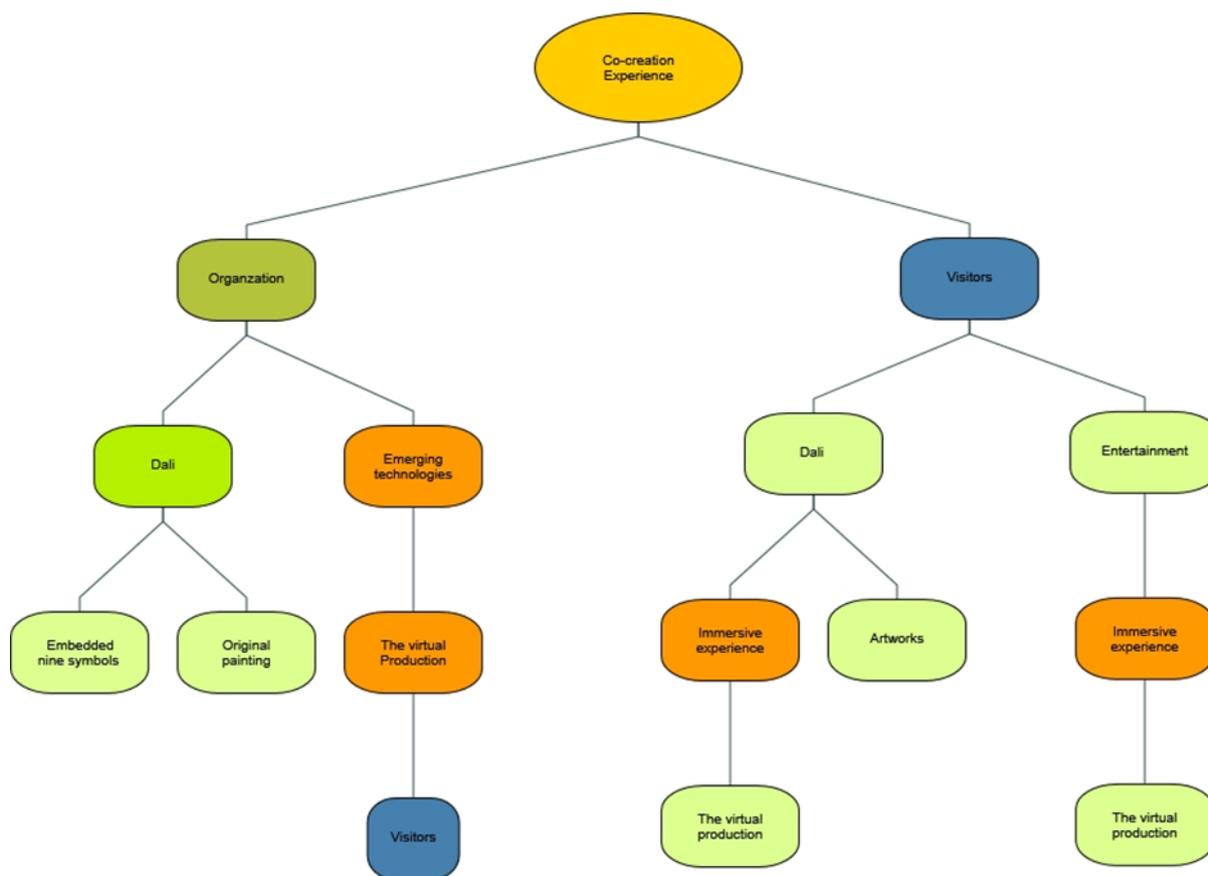


Figure 15 The co-creation experience

As it is shown in *Figure 15*, the organization focuses on developing the newest technologies to attract their audience without getting a comprehensive understanding of the audience, whereas the visitors have partially received the messages that the organization has delivered. The finding of the visitor experience stresses that the technical issues of the VR device have temporally limited visitors' sense of being inside of the painting, and the time limitation has decreased the effectiveness of visitors' creativities and imaginations to become the co-creators of the scene based on their understandings and backgrounds in the subjective level. Based on the findings, two questions have come to light: Do visitors give positive feedback on their virtual experience is because of their low expectations or because of the quality of the virtual production? Can the emerging technology applications bring visitors the most immersive experience or is there any other possibility to deliver the feeling of immersion to the visitors? Finding the answers is crucial because it effects the central focus of the tourism attractions in the future, which needs to be further investigated in future studies.

Chapter 5 The Imagination: Tang Paradise Theme Park

5.1 Introduction

The Tang Paradise Theme Park is located in the city of Xi'an in China, which is a replica of the royal lotus garden created for the emperor during the Tang Dynasty (618 to 907 BC). According to the official website of the attraction, it is the biggest theme park that represents the Tang culture in the north part of China (Tangparadise.cn, 2019). The whole park is built on a 49 acres artificial lake to reflect the atmosphere of the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty.

The original garden was built in Qin Dynasty (221 BC). It was called the 'Lotus Pond' at Sui Dynasty (581 to 618 BC), because plenty of water lilies were planted in the QuJiang Lake. It was one of the most famous tourist attractions for the citizens at the city of Changan in Sui Dynasty. In the late of Sui Dynasty, the emperor expanded it and made it as the private garden that only was served for the royal families. The Royal Lotus Garden was well developed and became one of the most significant landmarks of Changan in Tang Dynasty. The Ziyun Building and the Rosy Clouds Gloriette were built at that time for the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang to visit. In every summer, the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang visited and stayed at the garden for hunting, riding, admiring the beauty of the peony, hosting the litchi banquet, enjoying the dance and instrument performances, and relaxing in the hot spring inside the garden. Besides that, the QuJiang Festival was held every year to celebrate the glories of Datang, during the festival, the Royal Lotus Garden was opened to the public, and the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang and his beloved consort Yang Yuhuan would climb on the top of the Ziyun Building to spread the joy with his people. It was the period of great prosperity in Tang Dynasty during the reign of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang, which even made it become the Kaiyuan Flourishing Age in the ancient Chinese history. Unfortunately, most of the palaces include the original lotus garden was ruined and demolished by wars at the end of the Tang Empire, which did not provide any opportunity for the futurity to respect and admire the legacy of the golden age of Tang Dynasty (Tangparadise.cn, 2019).

To bring the history and culture of Tang Dynasty to life, the Tang Paradise Theme Park has been built near the original royal lotus garden. A large Chinese traditional architectural complex was mimicked in the design by the architect Jinqiu Zhang based on the historical records. These include the Yuyuan Gate at the entrance, the Lotus Bridge, the Luyu Tea House, the Rosy Clouds Pavilion, the Apricot Garden and the Lady's Hall. The most representative architecture in the park is the Ziyun Building that is located in the centre of the park. The building is constructed in four floors, 39 meters height. The edge of the roof was painted in gold lines as the world's great imperial power in Tang Dynasty (Tangparadise.cn, 2019).



Figure 16 The Ziyun Building in winter (Source: Tangparadise.cn, 2019 obtained the copyright with the organization's permission)

In terms of the interpretations and activities on site, there are live performances from morning to night in different locations at the park, such as the Tangyue dance at the Ziyun Building, the Waterfall movie in front of the Ziyun Building at night, the poetry contest at the Apricot Garden, and the Tang theme food market at the Hu Market, all these themed activities perform as a symbol of the greatness of the city of Changan and the royal lotus garden back in the time of the Tang Dynasty. What is worth mentioning here is that the Chinese traditional Dongcang drum music show that is held on the third floor inside of the Ziyun Building, which belongs to the intangible cultural heritage in China that has been left from the ancestors in Tang Dynasty (618 to 907 BC). During the instrument show, all the live actors are performed in a Chinese traditional way just as how it was used to play for the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang. The site also invites composers to create eight Chinese traditional styled songs to highlight the different themes inside of the park, and the songs are played as the background music in different attractions inside of the park (Tangparadise.cn, 2019).

Besides the traditional live performances, the Tang Paradise Theme Park also has held music festivals in front of the Ziyun Building in the years of 2011 and 2013, bands or musicians who play folk music, independent music and rock music have been invited to the site. The theme of the modern music and the Chinese traditional style landscape has merged that attracts younger visitors to appreciate the great view of the park while they are enjoying the music that played on site.

Table 15 Attractions and activities inside of the park

Locations and activities inside of the park	Representation
The Ziyun Building	Appearance of the building: rebuilt architecture, painted in grey, red and gold Background music: theme song of the park Inside of the building: manikins on the first floor, theatre on the third floor, museum on the fifth floor
The centre of the lake	Visual: the Ziyun Building far from distance, willow trees around, water lilies on the water during the summer Background music: theme songs of the park Animals: Black swans
The royal deer garden	Deer inside of the yard that guard by the iron fence, trees around
The Lady's Hall	Appearance of the building: rebuilt architecture, painted in red and white Background music: themed music different from the Ziyun Building Inside of the building: exhibition of the Chinese traditional Hanfu Activities: costume rental booth, live performances of the Ladies at Tang Dynasty
The rosy cloud pavilion	Appearance: long pavilion near the river, the lanterns are hanging on each side of the roof, and the pillars of the pavilion are painted in red Background music: themed music (the same one at the Lady's Hall)
The market of Hu	Appearance: shops are built in the traditional Chinese style, sculptures of the Hu Shops and contents: massage store, restaurants with the Xi'an famous snacks, beverage store (tea and coffee), toy shops, shadow puppetry shop Animals: two camels at the entrance of the market
The Tangyue dance	Location: inside of the Ziyun Building Layout: decorated in bright colours, golden ceiling with the western style chandelier, wooden seats, small section selling popcorn and snacks behind the seating area Visual effects: blue and green lightning Sounds effects: loud Scene: the love story of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang and his lover Yang Yuhuan Smells: popcorn Costumes of the live actors: bright yellow, neon pink and red Live actors' performances: lack of passion
The Dongcang drum music show	Music: traditional Chinese instrument play by the live performers Lighting effects: red and blue Costumes of the live actors: bright colour

Table 15 above and partially from the observation findings onsite presents a brief overview of the activities the visitors can experience at the Tang theme park. The organization aims at bringing visitors to a dreamy sphere in the ancient city Changan by applying the embedded Tang cultural symbols into the physical environments without deploying technological applications, which creates an image of the

Da Tang for the visitors to explore. The chapter focuses on developing a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' hyperreal experience at such a reconstructed physical environment, which has been divided from the perspective of the organization, the visitors and the researcher's observation onsite. The findings from the organization perspective sketch the process of developing the production that includes aims and purposes, the procedures, existing knowledge about the audience and the production evaluations. The visitor section focuses on gaining an insight into the visitors' hyperreal experience at the recreated physical environments as before, during and after. The observation section aims at validating the previous findings as triangulations that cover the researcher's subjective and objective aspects. The final section provides a brief summary of the significant findings and the co-creation experience of the research.

5.2 Travels in Hyperreality: The Organization Perspective

This section indicates the hyperreal production '*The Tang Paradise Theme Park*' from the organization perspective, which begins by the aims and purposes on producing the project, following by the process of designing the project. Finally, the evaluations on the visitors and the reconstructed park will be presented as the conclusion in this section.

The interviewee Yuzhong Liu, the architect, is responsible for the projects of the Lady's Hall, designing the interior of the Ziyun Building, the Apricot Garden and the Luyu Tea House in the year of 2007.

5.2.1 Aims and Purposes

According to Yuzhong Liu, the purpose of recreating the Tang theme park is to present an image of the glorious age of the Da Tang as a landmark that can attract more to visitors come to Xi'an. The organization seeks for embedding the Tang cultural symbols together to recreate the ancient city Changan as an impression, which aims at providing a place that represents the golden age of the Tang Dynasty that allows visitors to explore and immerse themselves in.

'I think one important thing is to highlight the theme of the park, and to give visitors a general image of what the city Changan used to like back at Tang Dynasty. The organization wanted to develop the theme park as a place that represents the golden age of Tang Dynasty, which allows the visitors to experience in the golden age of Changan. But instead of recreating the history of Tang Dynasty, we wanted to represent it in a symbolic way. We were not trying to replace the original royal lotus garden and recreate the history. Our purpose was to let the visitors get a sense of the golden age in Changan at Tang Dynasty. The concept of 'travelling back to the city Changan at Tang Dynasty' is abstract and impressionism, which is not about the representation or a form of art but about the meaning and the stories that you want to deliver to your audience'.

5.2.2 The Process

In terms of the representation at the attraction, the organization not only seeks for capturing a solemn atmosphere of the royal palace at Tang Dynasty but also the realistic and accurate appearance that is based on historical records. During the designing process, the organization has invited a historical consultant at the Shaanxi Historical Museum to ensure the authenticity of the representation. Also, the organization has conducted fieldwork at the Forbidden City for a month to observe and sense the traditional Chinese architecture complex to capture the dignity atmosphere of the royal palace in ancient China.

'I invited one of my friends at the Shaanxi History Museum to be the consultant, because we wanted to make it as real as possible based on the records in history. You probably have already known that most of the architectures from Tang Dynasty have been ruined and don't exist anymore. At that time, we were seeking for that emperor, royal and aristocratic kind of feelings, but we couldn't find any in Xi'an. Our team conducted our fieldwork at the Forbidden City for a month, to get a sense that solemn atmosphere'.

In terms of the symbolic representation of the site, the architect Yuzhong Liu applies the traditional Chinese philosophy 'Yin and Yang' to highlight the different atmosphere and themes inside of the park by using colours and the textures. For example, the Ziyun Building represents the power of the emperors with the colours in black and red, while the Lady's Hall is painted in pink and powder blue that aims at delivering the delight feelings of the Ladies at Tang Dynasty to the visitors.

'I wanted to combine the concept of Chinese philosophy 'Yin and Yang' with the architectures and the themes of the park. That's why you'll find the Lady's Hall has a more feminine look with the peach blossom outside of the building, whereas the Ziyun Building was designed in a more masculine style to feature the majesty and the power of the emperor. We decided to use colours to distinguish the concept of 'Yi and Yang', so you'll find loads of colours like red, pink, powder blue or pinkish purple in the Lady's Hall area, and a lot of dark red, black and gold colour inside of the Ziyun Building'.

When talking about the concept of authenticity during the interview, the architect Yuzhong Liu perceives the concept as a symbol of Tang that has been constructed by both objectivity and subjectivity, because the feelings of the real rely on the objective authenticity that is combined with the historical accuracy. Thus, the organization has embedded different symbols and themes that represent the Tang Empire to feature the glorious age of the ancient Changan at Tang Dynasty to their visitors.

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'If you look at the map of the ancient Changan, you'll find the Apricot Garden was not in the original Lotus Garden, and it was used to be the place for the imperial examination back at Tang Dynasty. Same with the Market of Hu, it used to be the market for trading with the Hu at Tang Dynasty that didn't locate in the royal lotus garden. But we decided to add them inside of the Tang Paradise Theme park, to let the visitors to get insights of the history and culture of Tang Dynasty comprehensively'.

From the objective perspective, authenticity refers to the realistic and accurate recreated architectures that are closely based on historical records. While from the subjective aspect, he understands it comes from the visitors' intersubjectivities based on their cultural backgrounds and understanding, which refers to the concept that *'there are a thousand ways to interpret one story'*.

'I went through tons of books and records that were related to the Tang culture or history to make it present in a realistic way. Sometimes I think the concept of authenticity is subjective, sometimes viewers may think something presented in a fake way even it's the real deal, because it doesn't suit their tastes or beyond their understandings'.

According to Yuzhong Liu, the emerging technology application represents a form of expression that is not the core driving force for them to develop the project. He suggests that the interpretations and the contents are more important than the representation of the technology. In his point of view, the organization should make more efforts on understanding the history in depth rather than focus on the manifestations of technologies.

'I still prefer the traditional technique of expression either in architecture or art, things like VR or AR are just a way of expression. You may find that there are too many organizations using the emerging technologies without purposes, which is more like a show of the technologies...I despise that, and I think designers or developers in historical sites should make more efforts on understanding the history in depth rather than developing something looks cool'.

5.2.3 Evaluations

In terms of the existing knowledge about their audience and the evaluations on the project, he gets the situation that the visitors are disappointed with their experience at the Tang Paradise Theme Park in recent years. Changes to the team who operate the attraction, indeed their complete replacement, has led to changes away from their initial aims and purposes for developing the projects at the attraction.

'After we finished this project, the park was operated by different team and people, people who didn't care about the history and their visitors, which made so

everything has been changed. That's probably why you found the visitors get upset at the attraction, but we can't do anything about it right now'.

The findings at this section acknowledge that the organization reproduces the park as a symbol of representing the golden age of the city Changan at Tang Dynasty, which they are expecting their visitors to feel the atmosphere and to step into the history. In terms of the interpretations and the narratives of the attraction, the organization has embedded varieties of emblematic symbols to recreate an image of the Tang Dynasty. The organization suggests the emerging technology should serve for the narratives and interpretations at the attraction that brings visitors the most immersive experience. In addition, the organization perceives the feelings of authenticity is associated with the objective authenticity that refers to historical accuracy. However, the finding entails that the organization has relied on the symbolic representations rather than a coherent narrative of the Tang Dynasty, which is unable to support the visitors' immersive and authentic experience as *'being there'*. Furthermore, from the architect Yuzhong Liu's responses, he is aware of the situation that visitors are not satisfied with their experience at the attraction because of the staff attitudes and performances onsite. The visitors' reactions and perceptions of the reproduced theme park will be further indicated in the next section.

5.3 Travels in Hyperreality: The Visitor Perspective

This section seeks to address the visitors' hyperreal experience at the physical reconstructed theme park, which has been organised as follows: before, during and after. The first section provides a brief overview of the interviewee's information and their behaviours before their visit. The second section aims at gaining an insight into the visitors' experience at the attraction during their visit. The last section draws on the conclusion of the visitors' overall experience and their evaluations on the Tang theme park after they have visited the site.

5.3.1 Visitor Profile

Table 16 Visitor Profile

Interviewees	Age Group	Career	Costume	Educational Level	Gender	Nationalities	Visitor Type
Hao Wu	25-30	N/A	Modern	Undergraduate	Male	Chinese	Tourist
Hong Fan	25-30	N/A	Costume	Undergraduate	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Huifang Wang	18-25	Student	Costume	College	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Jing	25-30	Government-owned corporation	Modern	Postgraduate	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Kun Zhang	18-25	Student	Costume	College	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Qi Zhao	25-30	Worker	Modern	Undergraduate	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Qikai Dong	18-25	Programmer	Modern	Undergraduate	Male	Chinese	Tourist
Qing Liu	25-30	IT	Modern	Undergraduate	Female	Chinese	Tourist

Tian Xia	25-30	N/A	Modern	Undergraduate	Female	Chinese	Tourist
Xi Yang	25-30	Hotel Manager	Modern	Undergraduate	Female	Chinese	Local
Xucheng Wang	18-25	Student	Modern	Postgraduate	Male	Chinese	Tourist

The total number of visitors who take part in the interviews is eleven. As it is shown in *Table 5*, there are eight females and three males, and most of the interviewees are young adults in the age groups between 18-25 and 25-30. In terms of their education levels, most of them remain in higher educational levels such as the undergraduate degree and the postgraduate degree, and there are seven interviewees in undergraduate backgrounds with stable occupations such as the government-owned corporation, programmer, and hotel manager. All the visitors are from other regions of mainland China except for one local resident. Nine of the interviewees are travelling to the attraction with their friends or families, only one male interviewee visits to the attraction individually. To feel the atmosphere of the ancient Changan and to fit for the themes, three female interviewees are wearing the traditional Chinese Hanfu on site.

5.3.2 Before Visit

This section aims at gaining an insight into the visitors' behaviours and perceptions of the attraction before their visit, which is organised as the visitors' motivations, existing knowledge about the attraction, previous similar experience, and travel information checking platforms.

Motivations

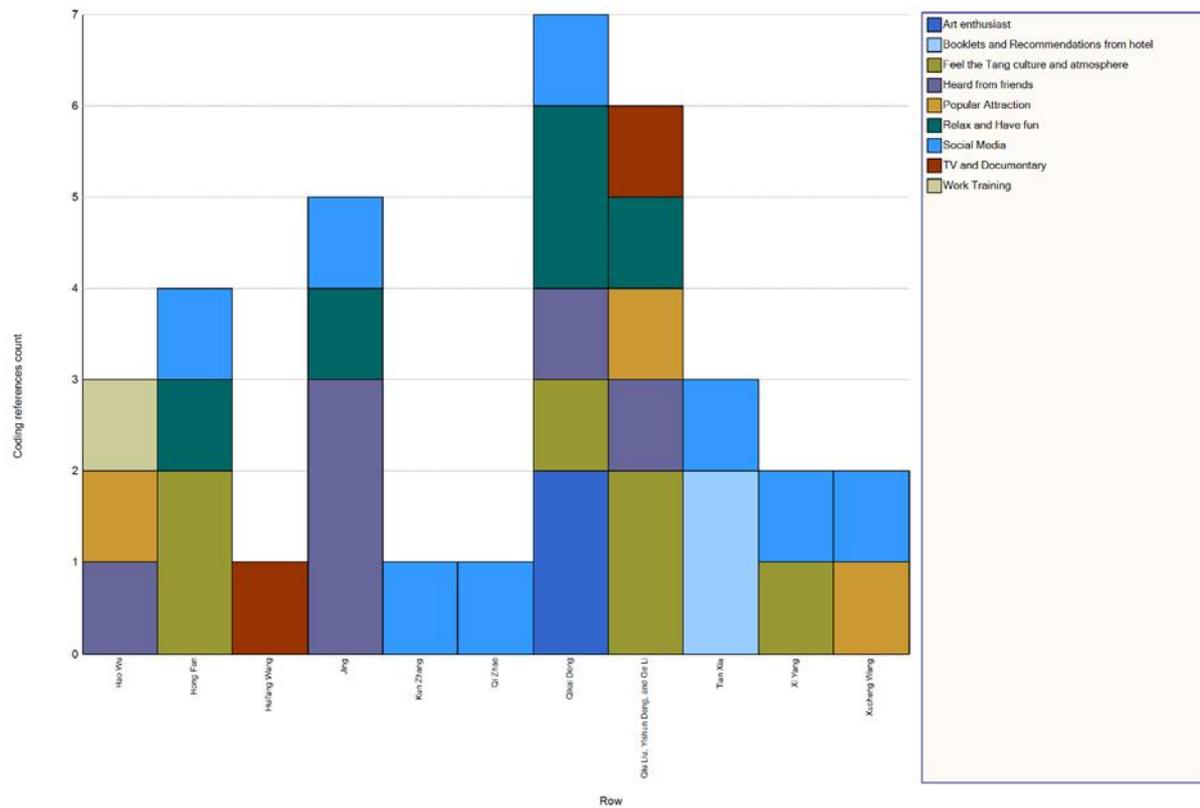


Figure 17 Motivations

From the collected data, the visitors’ motivations are driven by primary recommendations from social media and their friends, following by personal interests, and website recommendations. The online pictures of the attraction either from the attraction’s official website or social media impress the visitors and make them want to experience the historical atmosphere of the Tang Dynasty. The visual sensors are simulated by the aesthetic of online pictures, which arouses in visitors’ imaginations about the appearance at the attraction that they are going to visit.

‘My friend told me this attraction, and she knew it from her Wechat Moment, where she saw her friend posting videos and pictures of the Tang paradise Theme Park. She showed the pictures to me, which made me want to pay a visit here. So, we came together, relax and feel the atmosphere of the ancient Changan in here.’ (Jing, female, aged 29, postgraduate-owned corporation, travelling with her friend from the other region of the mainland China).

In terms of personal interests, it refers to gain knowledge about the historical interpretations and the lifestyles of the attraction. Meanwhile, visitors are expecting to feel the atmosphere of the glories age of the Tang Dynasty. There are two interviewees visit to the site because of the influences of the TV show and the historical documentary. The documentary of the Tang Paradise Theme Park has huge impacts on the interviewee Huifang Wang, she learns the knowledge about the royal lotus garden at

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Tang Dynasty from the documentary 'National Treasure' that allows her to get an insight into the Tang culture. She expects to merge with the themes and the atmosphere onsite, which makes her wear the traditional Chinese style to feel the atmosphere of ancient Changan.

'I've learnt this place from the cultural documentary 'National Treasure'. I thought the costume would fit for the theme of the golden age of Changan back at Tang Dynasty, which made me decide to bring it here and maybe my mom can help me to take some nice pictures here' (Huifang Wang, female, aged 18, college student, travelling with her mom from the other regions of the mainland China).

Qing Liu gains her knowledge about the tragic love story of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang and his consort Yang Yuhuan from the TV show 'Tang Paradise', which attempts her to explore more about the lifestyle and stories of the emperors and royal families at Tang Dynasty.

'You know there is a TV show which is called 'Tang Paradise', and it's all about the story of the emperor and his lover Yuhuan Yang back in Tang Dynasty. The story itself was based on the historical written records. I wanted to experience the Tang Dynasty atmosphere here, just like what they had put on the TV show' (Qing Liu, female, age group: 25-30, undergraduate degree, IT, travelling from other regions of mainland China).

The local interviewee Xi Yang gains her knowledge about the attraction because of the previous music festivals she has attended and the images of the park from social media. She argues that as a local resident at Xi'an, she should learn more about the legacy and history of her hometown where she has rooted in.

'I saw it on the social media and commercial ads. There used to have a music festival that held inside of the Tang Paradise Theme Park. Sometimes I drive pass by the spot, and I get the feeling of that I should pay a visit as a local resident. Luckily enough, I have got the ticket from my friend for free this month. That's why I come here. Besides, I want to learn more about Tang Dynasty culture and legacy. I know this is an artificial historic attraction from the commercial advertisements on social media. In the centre of the park, there has a giant artificial lake' (Xi Yang, female, age between 25-30, undergraduate degree, who likes to travel, hotel manager, local resident, travelling alone).

The finding reveals that to learn and feel the atmosphere of the Tang Dynasty is the core driving force that motivates most of the informants to visit the attraction. The aesthetic online images from social media and website arouse their imaginations and increase their expectations before they have visited the attraction. However, from the collected data, most of the informants acquire basic information about

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the history of Tang Dynasty that leads to the questions of the visitors' existing knowledge about the attraction before they have visited, which will be further indicated in the next section.

Knowledge about the attraction before visit

Most of the interviewees acquire the basic information about the attraction in Xi'an from their friends or social media. They know it is a replica of the Royal Lotus Garden at Tang Dynasty, and the city Xi'an used to be the ancient capital of thirteen dynasties. However, they get high expectations on the Tang Paradise Theme Park from its advertisements and pictures on the official website and social media. Also, visitors' travel intentions are also affected by their imaginations from the pictures that they have seen online, memories and similar experience that they used to have. Visitors are expecting to see the image of the ancient Changan and experience in the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty:

'In my imagination, the layouts inside of the building were supposed to look like an ancient palace in the Tang Dynasty that I can experience, and the subject of how the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang used to live in here intrigues me the most!' (Qing Liu, female, age group: 25-30, undergraduate degree, IT).

Apart from other visitors, only one interviewee is keen on the history and culture of Tang Dynasty, she checks the information about the attraction from different platforms after has watched the cultural documentary 'National Treasure', which provides her with a comprehensive understanding of the history and backgrounds of the attraction. She perceives the attractions as an addition to get an insight into the history, which provides visitors with the opportunity of stepping into history as '*being there*'.

'From the Baidu Baike and the documentary that I've just mentioned. I also checked loads of information about Jinqiu Zhang, the person who designed for the Tang Paradise Theme Park. I think it's good for the people who are into history and culture, because they can feel and touch the texture on the Ziyun Building physically and seeing what the history has left for use. For those who seek for entertainment, I wouldn't bother to ask them to come! They may say: 'It's just a park, or I got nothing to do in here!'...' (Huifang Wang, female, aged 18, college student, wearing her own traditional Chinese Hanfu on site, travelling with her mom from other regions of the mainland China).

The finding of this section has further indicated that the aesthetic pictures from the official website and social media that evokes most visitors' visual sensor and arouses their imaginations of the attraction, which makes the factors of '*feeling the atmosphere*' and '*being there*' become the core driving force for them to visit the site. Besides, the finding reveals that visitors have high expectations on the attraction because of their previous similar experience that will be further explored in the next section.

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Previous similar experience

The visitors' expectations on the attraction are also caused by their similar experience and valuable memories that they are used to have. The previous similar experience the visitors are used to have is in associated with the similar types of physical reconstructed historical attractions. The attraction they have mentioned the most is the Song Cheng Theme Park, which is a replica based on the painting '*Along the river during the Qingming Festival*' by Zhang Zeduan. The Song Cheng Theme Park recreates the scene of the citizens and the landscape of Kaifeng during the Northern Song Dynasty, where the staff on site are wearing costumes and pretending to be the mongers and sellers on the street at Song Dynasty.

'I had the most immersive and exquisite experience at the Song City Theme Park in Hang Zhou. It gave you the feelings as if you were the citizen who lived there in the Song Dynasty. All the staff, either the sellers or the tour guides were wearing costumes like the ancient people used to wear! It felt like you were interacting and talking with the citizens from the Song Dynasty on the street!' (Hong Fan, female, age group: 25-30, undergraduate degree, renting the traditional Chinese costume from the rental booth).

From the collected data, three interviewees who visit the Tang Paradise Theme Park with costumes are all females, in younger age group, and they all have similar experiences at the replica of the Song Cheng Theme Park.

*'The park at Luo Yang, which is the replica of the painting '*Along the river during the Qingming Festival*'. Even though I went there three years ago, I could still recall everything there vividly, which left an indelible impression on me'* (Huifang Wang, female, aged 18, college student, enthusiastic about history and culture, wearing her own Chinese traditional Hanfu to the attraction with her mom).

*'I've been to the theme park based on the painting '*Along the river during the Qingming Festival*' at Kaifeng, the staff and all the settings present a comprehensive view of how people used to live back at the Song Dynasty. All the staff were wearing the traditional Chinese costume and acting like the shop mongers and citizens who used to live in there, just like the original painting'* (Kun Zhang, female, aged 18, college student, who loves retro styles and traditional Chinese architecture, wearing the traditional Chinese Hanfu onsite).

The findings suggest that visitors can acquire immersive experience at such physical reconstructed replicas. Also, three female interviewees give positive feedback on their previous experience at the Song Cheng Theme Park because of the representation and the interactions with the live actors onsite.

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Additionally, the previous similar experience of becoming part of the scene raises their high expectations on the Tang theme park that they are going to visit.

Travel information checking platforms

The visitors are using websites and social media to check the destination and travel information. The website is mainly used for checking basic destination information and booking tickets, which include Baidu Baike, Ctrip.com, and Tongcheng.com. The visitors use the Ctrip.com the most because of the convenience of the multi-functions the website has provided.

'Normally, on Ctrip.com, you can also book hotel and buy flight tickets there, what cool about the website is their personalized service, they can arrange the trip for your based on your personal budgets and interests, you can even rent cars for travelling on their website as well, which is really convenient! If I want to check on the particular information about attractions I want to visit, I'll just use Baidu.' (Tian Xia, female, aged 28, undergraduate degree, travelling alone from the other region of the mainland China).

Most of the informants use social media to check reviews about the attraction based on other visitors' comments and feedback. The main platform the visitors are using is Weibo and WeChat Moment. The interviewee Jing (female, aged 29, postgraduate degree, government-owned corporation) is interested in checking travel information from travel bloggers because it can provide comprehensive information about hot spots or interesting hidden places of the attractions. Similar to the findings of the live performance in Xi'an, increasing Chinese visitors have relied on social media, especially they use WeChat to obtain the travel information.

5.3.3 During Visit

This section focuses on exploring visitors experience and perceptions of the reconstructed '*Tang paradise Theme Park*' during their visit onsite. It has been divided into four sectors to gain an insight into the visitors' immersive experience at the physical replicas of the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty, which contains the subjects of visitors' activities and the most impressive experience onsite, sensations, authenticity and immersive experience.

Activities and the most evocative experience

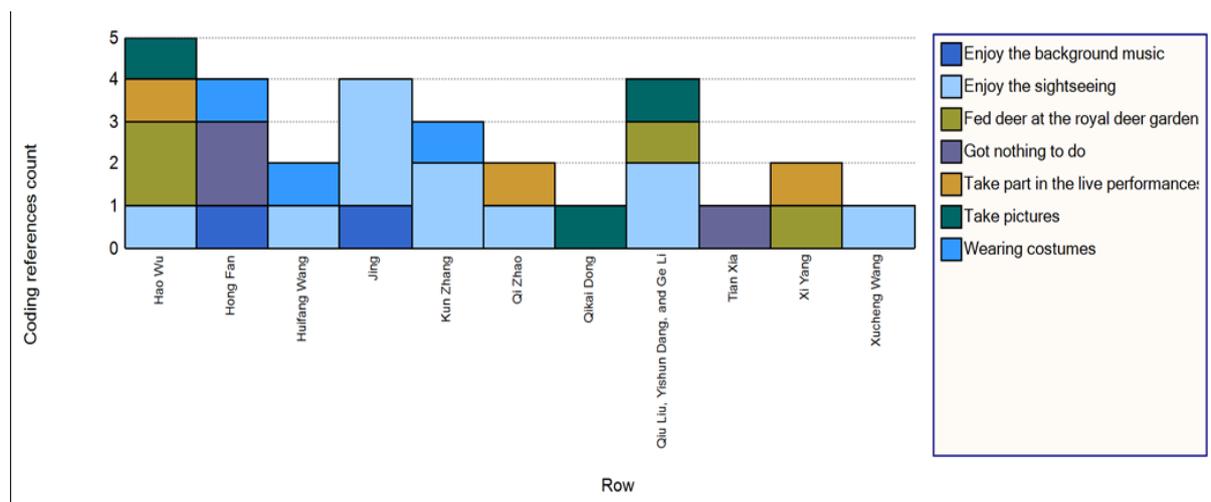


Figure 18 Activities onsite

According to *Figure 18*, seven interviewees are impressed by the sightseeing at the attraction, and it has been also linked with the activities of enjoying the background music and taking pictures of the site. Three of the visitors have fed the deer at the royal deer garden, and two of the visitors have taken part in the live performances on site. Based on the collected data, the Ziyun Building and the central lake district are the most mentioned spots inside of the park because of the scenery and the symbolic representation, which represents the image of the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty. Following by the royal deer garden inside of the park, visitors are more impressed by the deer than the live performances of the park. Besides the activities that have been provided onsite, two of the visitors are making their efforts on merging with the scene by wearing their own traditional Chinese Hanfu to the site, they pretend to be the ladies who come from the Tang Dynasty to immerse themselves into the atmosphere. Visitors get attracted by the landscape at the attraction, especially during the summertime. The Ziyun Building and the district near the centre of the lake are the most popular locations for the tourists to visit. They spend their time sitting near the lake to immerse themselves into the atmosphere while they are listening to the background music, which brings history to life vividly.

‘The lake in the centre of the part was as beautiful as a painting, with the lotus and the shadows on the lake, which reminded me the water lilies that had been painted by Monet. My favourite music was the one they played in the centre of the lake area, where you could see the Ziyun building from a far distance, you could see all the willow trees around you, and the music made me imagine the ladies and musicians from Tang Dynasty were playing traditional Chinese music across the lake’ (Jing, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Government-owned corporation).

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Apparently, the Ziyun Building is the most representative and symbolic that reflects the Kaiyuan Flourishing Age of Tang Dynasty, which also stimulates the visitors' imagination of themselves being part of the scene or lifestyle of the emperor at Tang Dynasty.

'When I first entered the park. Until I saw the Ziyun Building, I was attracted by the layout of the architecture complex...There is no word to describe the Ziyun Building, I really want to live inside of it as the ladies of Tang Dynasty! I was wondering is this the same as the original building that the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang used to live, if came to here, what kind of clothes would he wear, and what would he do inside of the Ziyun Building if he came here during the summer time? What did he think of the building when he first saw it? I'm curious about the way they used to live in here. But I guess it would not be as hot as right now during the summer time in Tang Dynasty...' (Huifang Wang, female, aged 18, college student, enthusiast of culture and history, wearing her own traditional Chinese Hanfu, travelling with her mom from other region of the mainland China).

In terms of the interactive activities on site, two visitors take part in the activities of onsite performances and feed the deer at the royal deer garden. They give more positive responses to the interactions with the animals onsite than the live performances.

'I must complain about is the live performers inside of the park, who are not professional and are lack of passion. I know the live performance supposes to let the audience interact with the actors and immerse themselves with the scenes on site, but the guard and the warning line gives me the inauthentic feelings. My favourite spot inside of the park is definite the deer garden, and the deer was just adorable. I have never seen such view at other heritage attractions in Xi'an, which is unique! I fed them the leaves from the trees for a very long time, which gave me peaceful feeling while I was with those lovely deer' (Xi Yang, female, aged between 25-30, local resident, hotel manager, who loves to travel, travelling alone).

The findings of this section argue the sightseeing plays the priority role that leads visitors to their imagine themselves living in the Tang Dynasty as the first step of feelings of immersion, along with the soundscape that intensifies their experience of being part of the scene. However, the staff's unprofessional attitudes and performances onsite break visitors' authentic feelings of *'being there'*. The finding entails that sensation has a huge impact on the visitors' feelings of immersion that will be further indicated in the next section.

Sensations

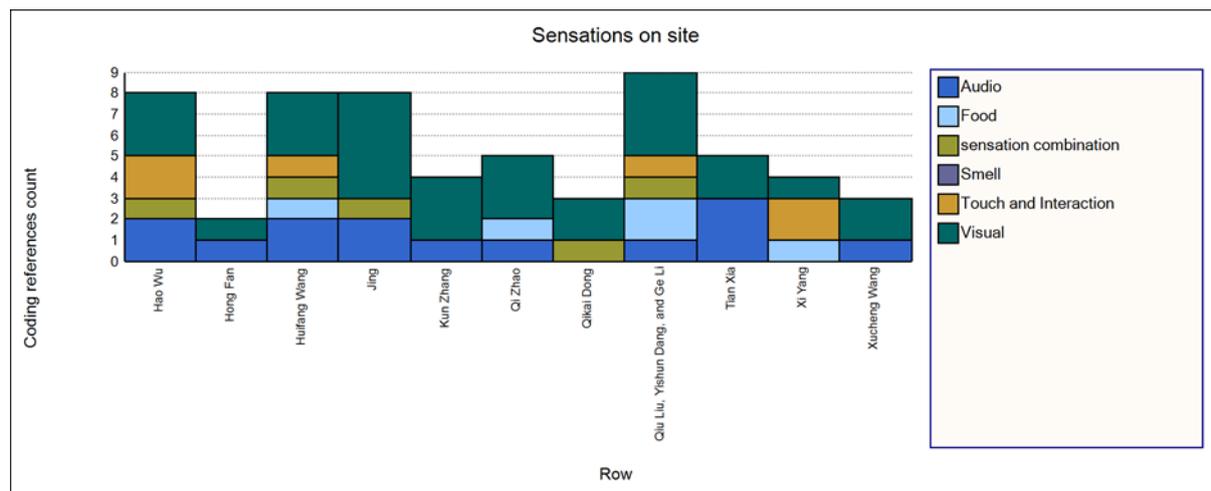


Figure 19 Sensations

Sensations are associated with the visitors immersive and authentic experience through their interactions and activities on site, according to *Figure 19*, the sight remains the largest proportion of the visitors' sensation on site, following by hearing and touch, which co-creates the feelings of 'being there' for the visitors. Four interviewees are talking about the food that has been sold at the Market of Hu, but none of the interviewees is mentioning the smell at the attraction.

Sightseeing is the first step to let visitors reach into the past because sight is the most intuitive way to sense the atmosphere and environment of the attraction. Most visitors are impressed by the landscape of the site, especially during the summertime. As the previous section shows, the Ziyun Building and the district near the centre of the lake are the most entrancing sites to provide with the feelings of 'being there' at Tang Dynasty to the visitors.

'The view of the Ziyun Building and the landscape here made me speechless, mainly because you can sense it in a more intuitive way' (Kun Zhang, female, aged between 18-25, wearing her own traditional Chinese Hanfu inside of the park).

In addition, the reconstructed architecture and the atmosphere onsite stimulate visitors' imaginations that evokes them to create their own scene and story of Tang Dynasty in mind.

'I still think the visual impact of the landscape impressed me the most in here...When I saw the Ziyun Building, I imagined some ladies from Tang Dynasty were passing by with lanterns in their hands, and there were musicians of Tang Dynasty playing instruments far from distance' (Huifang Wang, female, aged between 18-25, college students, wearing traditional Chinese Hanfu, interested in culture and history).

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The background music that has been played at the attraction further arouses visitors' feeling of immersion in combination with the sightseeing onsite. Different tune has been played as the background music at the attraction to highlight the theme, for instance, the music in front of the Ziyun Building is composed in a masculine and upbeat style to stress the power of the emperors of Tang, while the music around the Lady's Hall is composed softly in a feminine style to feature the characteristics of the Ladies at Tang Dynasty.

'It gave me the feeling of Tang Dynasty in some level, and I had noticed that they changed the music to highlight different themes in each section of the park. My favourite was the one they played in the centre of the lake area, where you could see the Ziyun building from a far distance, you could see all the willow trees around you, and the music made me imagine the ladies and musicians from Tang Dynasty were playing traditional Chinese music across the lake. The music outside of the Apricot Garden reminded me a scenario of a movie about Tang Dynasty that I had seen' (Jing, female, aged between 25-30, postgraduate degree, government-owned corporation, travelling with her friends from other regions of the mainland China).

In terms of the touch and related activities on site, most visitors get impressed by the interactions with the animals inside of the park, especially the deer at the royal deer garden, but none of the visitors is satisfied with the staff and the live actors through the interactive activities on site.

'The deer was just adorable. I have never seen such view at other heritage attractions in Xi'an, which is unique! I fed them the leaves from the trees for a very long time, which gave me peaceful feeling while I was with those lovely deer...I think they should provide more activities to let us interact with the live performers or staff' (Xi Yang, female, aged between 25-30, local resident, interested in travelling).

Huifang Wang, who has huge interests in the history and culture of Tang Dynasty, has been thrilled by the appearance of the Ziyun Building when she first sees it that turns her imagination into the reality where she can touch the texture of the building and immerse herself into the scene:

'There is no word to describe the Ziyun Building...I really want to live inside of the building. I think it's good for the people who are into history and culture, because they can feel and touch the texture on the Ziyun Building physically and seeing what the history has left for us' (Huifang Wang, female, aged between 18-25, college student, wearing her own costume inside of the park).

The sensation of taste relates to the visitors' experience at the Market of Hu, yet visitors give negative responses to the food because it is not relevant to the theme of the Tang Dynasty. As the interviewee

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Huifang Wang puts it: *'once you try it, all the magic disappears, which brings you back to the ordinary modern world'*.

From the collected data at the attraction, the sightseeing and soundscape dominate the priority position from the visitor experience, following by the hearing and interactions onsite. However, the attraction is unable to deliver the feelings of immersion through the multi sensations because of the unprofessional staff and activities onsite, which provides visitors with the inauthentic experience and feelings about the attraction.

Authenticity

The informants understand the concept of authenticity from three perspectives: the objective authenticity, the symbolic representative authenticity and intersubjective authenticity. In terms of the objective authenticity, it relates to the original heritage attractions or the original objects that are displayed at the traditional museums, which can bring visitors the authentic feeling of the *'genuine'*.

'The treasures and relics they have displayed inside of the museum, which appeared to be really delicate and elegant! I'm interested in appreciating the real deal at the museum, because I don't think people can make the replicas as delicate as the original ones used to like in nowadays... Visiting at the Tang Paradise Theme Park is not like visiting the Bell Tower of Xi'an, where you can get that decorous and dignified feeling about history.' (Xucheng Wang, male, aged between 18-25, undergraduate degree, has previous experience at the Shaanxi History Museum, the Bell Tower and the Terra Cotta Warriors at Xi'an).

Some visitors perceive the concept of authenticity as a symbolic representation, which refers to the combination of reality and the illusion. The local interviewee Xi Yang who is not satisfied with the authenticity of the Tang Paradise Theme Park, during the interview, she comes up with the most immersive and authentic feelings that she has experienced at the Europe Park and the roller coaster at Switzerland.

'It is the experience that I had in the Europe Park while I was in Germany few years ago. It is a theme park based on a simulated environment (replica and AR). No one cares if it is real or not because it turns the false into real, and the feeling was real in there. There is another place in Switzerland, which is not a heritage type of thing. It's a roller coaster in iced tunnel which is quite representative, because I can feel the Swiss culture and atmosphere from it. I mean, you don't have to doubt about the authenticity of it, because it is real!' (Xi Yang, female, aged 25-30, undergraduate degree, hotel manager, who loves to travel, local residence).

In comparison with the visitors who rely on objective authenticity, one male interviewee seeks for the feeling of authenticity through his imagination, which makes the represented reality have no connection with the physical reality anymore.

'I guess the whole atmosphere was quite right, the artificial replicas don't bother me at all! I used my imagination to fix the flaws and things I'm not satisfied with in the park. I just want to enjoy the good time and have fun here. If you want to see the real deal, why don't go to the museum' (Qikai Dong, male, aged between 18-25, programmer, interested in VR Gaming and photography).

The findings indicate that most of the interviewees are unable to get the immersive experience because of the inauthenticity of the site. The relationship between the immersive experience and authentic experience is interrelated, the previous section has stressed that authenticity plays an important role in visitors' immersive experience. Also, visitors perceive the concepts of authenticity from the aspects of objective authenticity, symbolic representative authenticity and subjective authenticity. The following section explains the factors that fails to deliver visitors the authentic experience at the attraction.

According to *Figure 20*, the inauthentic experience at the site is mainly caused by the factors of representation, the live interactive activities, the modern intrusions, interpretations, the staff attitudes and the live actors' performances on site. The inauthentic representation includes the appearance of the rebuilt architectures and the costumes of the live actors. Also, lacking historical accuracy and making in cheap materials and bright colours cause the inauthentic appearance that leads to the visitors' inauthentic feeling. The interviewee Xucheng Wang is not satisfied with the vibrant colour that has been painted on the reconstructed architecture. The sketchy replicas inside of park appear too commercial for him that reminds him of other reconstructed heritage attractions in his hometown.

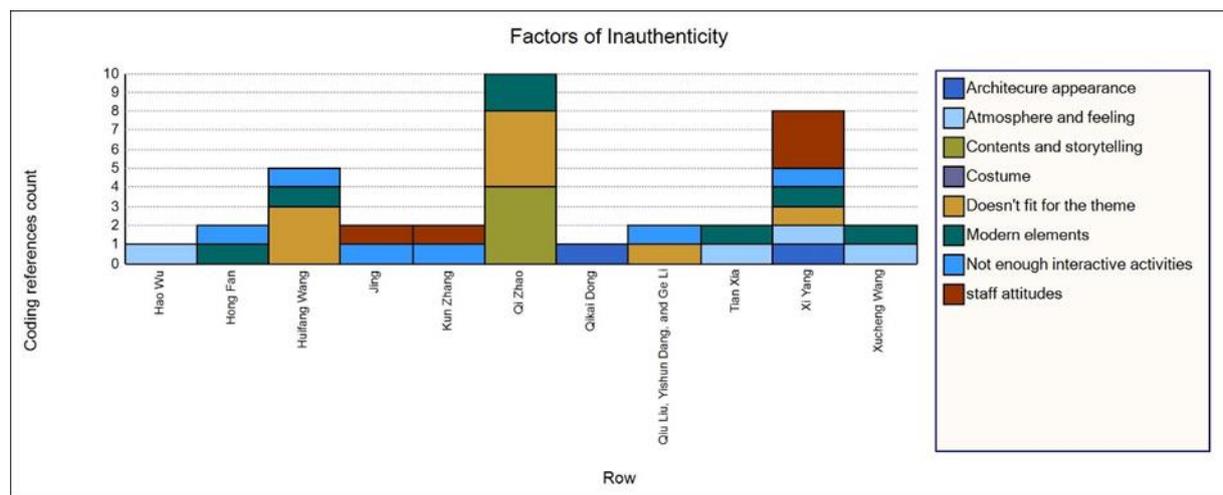


Figure 20 Factors of inauthenticity

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'Some of the attractions are not as good as their pictures online, the pictures seemed to bring the glorious of Changan alive...but when you got here, you found all the architectures were artificial and rebuilt in a sketchy way, which made me think everything here was so fake...Apparently it didn't provide me that feeling of ancient Changan at Tang Dynasty. This replica of the royal lotus garden reminded me of one touristic attraction from my hometown, which's about the hometown of Xiang Yu, and to be fair, it looked exactly like the one in here. The same cheesy and sketchy feeling with the vibrant colours painted on the buildings...From my understanding, these rebuilt historical attractions appear the same to me, and I thought this one might be different, but clearly I was wrong!' (Xucheng Wang, male, aged between 18-25, has previous experience at the Shaanxi History Museum).

Similar to the appearance of the architecture, visitors are questioning about the authenticity of the live actors' costumes because of the materials and colours, which fails to represent the elegant and delicate Hanfu at Tang Dynasty.

'Don't even get me started on this, the costume they wear were just hilarious! From what I've seen in the museum and history documentaries, the Hanfu at Tang era should be elegant, delicate and well-made in silk and satin. But in here, the costume is made in really poor quality with neon pink and green, which is ridiculous' (Jing, female, aged 25-30, postgraduate degree, government-owned corporation).

Visitors get an inauthentic experience at the site because of the live actors' performances and the lack of interactions on site. Besides, visitors are not satisfied with the unprofessional skills and the poor attitudes of the staff and the live actors onsite. Additionally, visitors are expecting the staff onsite wearing the traditional Chinese Hanfu to fit for the theme of the park. Furthermore, the staff's attitudes onsite interrupt the visitors' feelings of immersion and authenticity during the performance.

'I thought all the staff inside of the park were wearing Tang Dynasty Hanfu, but apparently they didn't even bother to do that. You kept seeing the cleaners sweeping the dirt on the ground during your visit, and the tour guides were arrogant and aloof. In terms of those live actors, they were lacking skills and passionate' (Jing, female, aged between 25-30, postgraduate degree, government-owned corporation, who has arguments with the staff at the entrance before she enters the park).

Besides the inauthentic representation and the live performance, the irrelevant contents inside of the theme decrease visitors' feeling of immersion as well. The contents and interpretations onsite are required to be historically accurate, the Market of Hu and the interpretations inside of the Ziyun Building has misrepresented the history and culture of the Tang Dynasty that disappoint the visitors.

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While the visitor Qi Zhao has been interviewed at the Market of Hu, she is talking about her inauthentic feeling of the site in general:

'Because they are all fabricated replicas... like the Market of Hu we are at right now, for me, it makes no difference with the free market on the street, I don't think there should have any type of market in a royal garden back in Tang Dynasty, I mean, this theme just doesn't fit for the royal lotus garden. Besides that, I don't see any Hu with their traditional clothes! The food they sell at the Market of Hu, you can find them everywhere in Xi'an, even at the supermarket that has no relevance to the theme of Tang culture at all' (Qi Zhao, female, aged between 25-30, undergraduate degree, who has just visited the Shaanxi History Museum with her families at Xi'an, travelling from other regions of the mainland China).

The modern intrusions have negative impacts on the visitors' authentic experience from two aspects: the inappropriate design of the architecture and the surrounding modern buildings outside of the park. The inappropriate design is related to the lack of historical accuracy that is irrelevant to the theme of the park. Some of the architectures inside of the park are reconstructed in combination of the modern architecture style and the Chinese traditional style, which makes visitors are questioning about the authenticity of them. The surrounding buildings outside of the park also have a disruptive influence on visitors' authentic and immersive experience.

'I was impressed by the Ziyun building when I first saw it, and the background music was a plus to the whole atmosphere. At that moment, the glories age of Tang Dynasty came alive to me. I appreciated the smoggy steam in the centre of the lake, which brought everything together. There were certain times, I thought the ancestors were about to show up from the bottom of the lake. That moment was so beautiful and unforgettable until I found all those modern tall buildings outside of the park when I looked up. Those surrounding buildings brought me back to the ordinary modern life, what a shame' (Hao Wu, male aged between 25-30, travelling alone from other region of the mainland China).

Immersive experience

This section explores the immersive experience from the visitors' perspective, which will explain to what extent makes the visitors think themselves *'being there'* at the Tang Dynasty, and what are the factors that fail to achieve the feeling of immersion for the visitors. To get a comprehensive understanding of the concept of becoming part of the scene at the attraction, the following section covers the visitors' immersive experience onsite and the immersive experience visitors used to have.

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The finding demonstrates three factors a huge influence on visitors' feeling of immersion, which refers to the concept of authenticity, representation and interactive activities onsite that construct the visitors' experience of becoming part of the scene as a result. Also, authenticity is associated with interpretations, atmosphere, interactive activities and staff performances on site. Additionally, four of the visitors get the feeling of immersion through their imagination, which is evoked by the atmosphere and interactive activities. onsite.

The atmosphere brings visitors the feeling of immersion that is constructed by the visual effects and the sounds effects of the attraction, which arouses visitors' imagination of the stories and the scenes in history. The atmosphere onsite creates the feeling of 'being part of the scene' as the first step of the immersive experience, particularly the Ziyun Building and the district near the centre of the lake are the most mentioned locations while visitors are talking about their immersive experience on site.

'The Ziyun Building was spectacular, definitely mimicked the image of what it used to be back in the glories time of Tang Dynasty! It gave me the feeling of Tang Dynasty in some level, and I had noticed that they changed the music to highlight different theme in each section of the park. My favourite was the one they played in the centre of the lake area, where you could see the Ziyun building from a far distance, you could see all the willow trees around you, and the music made me imagine the ladies and musicians from Tang Dynasty were playing traditional Chinese music across the lake' (Jing, female, aged between 25-30, postgraduate degree, travelling with her friends).

In the process of the immersion, the atmosphere has been created by the visual effects and the sounds effects lead visitors to step into the past as the first step. However, to keep the immersion lingering, it requires visitors' involvement with the physical environments and activities onsite.

'We were impressed by the gorgeous architectures and sculptures once we entered the park. Feelings like we were living at Tang Dynasty! But that feeling didn't last for a very long time, we got disappointed afterwards, mainly because they didn't provide much activities or contents for us to involve with' (Yishun Dang, female, age between 25-30, big fan of the Tv show 'Tang Paradise').

The immersion also relates to how the attraction represents the history and culture of Tang Dynasty to visitors, apparently, the visitors at the Tang Paradise Theme Park are not satisfied with the interpretations and contents of the attraction. Firstly, as it has been mentioned previously, the staff inside of the park are not wearing costumes that give visitors an inauthentic feeling of travelling to the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty. Besides that, another factor that effects on visitors immersive experience is the irrelevant and unrelated themes of the Tang culture.

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'I think it's just a park with great views...I don't find myself being in there at Tang Dynasty, things like the Market of Hu we are at right now, for me, it makes no difference with the free market on the street, I don't think there should have any type of market in a royal garden back in Tang Dynasty, I mean, the market of Hu theme just doesn't fit for the royal lotus garden. I didn't expect to buy a cup of coffee or a box of popcorns at the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty' (Qi Zhao, female, aged 26, undergraduate degree, who have previous experience at the attraction Song City Theme Park).

Being part of the scene is co-created by both the visitors, the performances and the settings of the site. The overall experience section shows that visitors are not satisfied because there is a lack of interactive activities on site. The finding stresses the importance of the individual's subjectivity because some of the visitors make efforts on being part of the scene by wearing their own traditional Chinese Hanfu to create their own memorable stories.

'I thought the costume would fit for the theme of the golden age of Changan back at Tang Dynasty, which made me decide to bring it here...the landscape, the scene, everything in here merge into a story, which you can memorise it in your mind...it's all about feelings and experience in here' (Huifang Wang, female, aged 18, wear her own traditional Chinese Hanfu, history and culture lover, travelling to the site in summer).

The finding at this section shows visitors are not satisfied with their immersive experience at the attraction because of inauthentic representation, the lack of interactions, and unprofessional staff attitudes and performances onsite. However, the finding also stresses the importance of individuals subjectivity and creativity, which can create their own narratives to become part of the scene through their imaginations and efforts (wearing costumes). In association with the previous sections in this chapter, the imagination is stimulated by the visual appearance, which brings visitors into the first step of the feeling of immersion alongside with the soundscape, which can further advance the visitors' immersive experience. It requires interactions with the physical environments and the live actors to let the visitors actually *'being there'*. Apparently, the attraction fails to deliver the immersive experience to the visitors because of the inadequate interactions at the attraction.

5.3.4 After Visit

This section aims at providing a comprehensive review of the visitors' experience at the theme park after they have visited the attraction, which is associated with the subjects of their perceptions of the traditional museums versus the reconstructed theme park, their overall experience, recommendations and future travel intentions.

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Perceptions of the traditional museums versus the Tang theme park

The finding argues that the majority of the visitors enjoy both types of attractions, because they provide different experiences for the visitors. The traditional museum and historical attraction provide the opportunities to the visitors to learn and gain an insight into the history and culture. While the recreated attraction presents the image of history in a more intuitional way to the visitors.

'I like them both equally, I mean you can get different experience from them. If I go to the Forbidden Palace museum, I wouldn't dress like this, I will grab my notebook and wear my thick glasses to observe very closely to learn about the treasures or the old ancient paintings that I'm interested in. Here, you could still get to know the history from their booklets or the signs in the attractions, but I wouldn't take notes and wear my thick glasses, instead, I would put on my Hanfu and take some nice pictures of the site...I think you can memorise it in your mind...it's all about feelings and experience here'(Huifang Wang, female aged 18-25, keen on Chinese history and culture).

The reason for visitors enjoys their visit at the reconstructed historical attraction is because of atmospherics and the environment, interactive activities, and the feelings of being part of the scene and entertainment.

'Attractions like the Tang Paradise Theme Park is more about entertainment and experience, like Disneyland, which lets us to experience inside of the history instead of learning about the history through the displayed objects behind the glass' (Xia Tian, female, aged between 25-30).

Some of the visitors prefer their experience at the traditional type of museums because of the authenticity of the original objects that have been displayed, gaining knowledge and the professionalism of the tour guides.

'My friend and I went to the Shaanxi History Museum yesterday, which was such an extraordinary experience! The treasures and relics they have displayed inside of the museum appeared to be delicate and elegant! I'm interested in seeing the real objects from the history, and I don't think people can make the replicas as delicate as the original ones used to like in nowadays' (Xucheng Wang, male aged between 18-25, postgraduate student).

Overall experience

From the collected data, most visitors give neutral to negative feedback concerning the attraction. They tend to respond their overall experience as 'so-so' or 'it's okay' at first, but when they have been asked to explain their feelings and experience further in more details, they tend to give negative responses.

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Only three of the interviewees give total positive feedback on their overall experience, yet the local resident, Xi Yang leaves the most negative feedback. To get a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' overall experience, the following section focuses on explaining the visitor's positive feedback and negative feedback on the attraction in specific.

The reasons for the visitors to give positive feedback are caused by the view of the landscape at the attraction. Based on the positive responses of the visitors, the reason for 'impressed by the landscape' is linked with two factors that include the visual effects and the historical atmosphere environment. The visual effect is mainly aroused by the scenery inside of the park, and visitors leave more positive comments on the great view of the park during their summer visit, for example, sitting near the centre of the lake at summer to enjoy the view of Ziyun Building is one of the most common activities for the visitors on site.

'This place makes me speechless! I am impressed by the environment and atmosphere in here, and the aura helps me to relax and calm down. The lake in the centre of the part was as beautiful as a painting, with the lotus and the shadows on the lake, which reminded me the water lilies that had been painted by Monet' (Jing, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, travelling with her friends to the attraction).

Another factor attracts to the visitors is historical atmosphere and environment, which relates to the replicas of the traditional Chinese architecture complex that had been recreated inside of the park. The appearance of the Chinese traditional architecture stimulates visitors' subjective imaginations of the scenes at the Tang Dynasty. The interviewee Qikai Dong is the one who gives the most positive feedback during the interview, which he brings up the concept of imagination for multiple times:

'At the first glance, the Ziyun Building was so stunning and outstanding...The most exquisite experience is come from the combination between the reality and the imagination...I imagined I were the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang who actually live in here while I was passing by the bridge on the lake' (Qikai Dong, male, age between 18-25, undergraduate degree, programmer, travelling with his friends).

The finding also stresses the visitors who wear their own traditional Chinese Tang style Hanfu to the site provide more positive feedback on their overall experience at the attraction than the other visitors. There are three interviewees wearing costumes while they are visiting the site, and all of them are females. Two of them are wearing their own costumes to the attraction in summer, one is renting the Tang styled costume from the booth inside of the park in winter, and she gives fewer positive responses mainly because of the staffs' attitudes and their unprofessional skills.

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'It costed me 20 yuan, and I was disappointed by the fact that I was only allowed to wear it from here to there (Pointing from the rental booth to the Apricot Garden). Also, the staff didn't tell me clearly about the price and the moving space before I paid. I was not happy about it, which was such a bad experience! Another thing worth to rant about was how unprofessional and impatient he was! The pictures he took were in bad qualities, I mean, my boyfriend's photography skill is even better than him!' (Hong Fan, female, aged between 25-30, undergraduate degree, travelling from other regions of China with her boyfriend).

Apparently, the attitudes and the professional skills of the staff onsite play as an important factor that relates to the visitors' overall experience, which will be further indicated in the following section. According to *Figure 21* below, visitors who get disappointed and unsatisfied with the attraction are caused by eleven factors. Questioning about the authenticity of the rebuilt park occupies a large proportion that also relates to the subject of irrelevant themes of the Tang culture, following by the lack of interactive activities on site. Because there are insufficient contents and activities the visitors can involve with onsite, some of them accuse the ticket price of the attraction is too expensive, especially during the winter season. In addition, the pictures of the attraction on the attraction's official website and social media raise high expectations for some of the visitors, but they get disappointed once they have visited the attraction. The staff attitudes is another important factor that has impacts on the visitors' overall experience. The local visitor Xi Yang gives the most negative feedback on the attraction is because of the authenticity and too commercial of the site.

'They are so fake, and the sculptures they designed which doesn't give me the feeling that I am visiting the Tang Dynasty Lotus Garden... I got very similar feelings and experience at different heritage attractions in Xi'an, how weird is that! I guess that's because these places are too commercial and lack of contents for visitors to experience. Why bother to pay for 100 yuan to see something that you can find them everywhere in Xi'an for free!' (Xi Yang, female, age between 25-30, undergraduate degree, hotel manager, local resident).

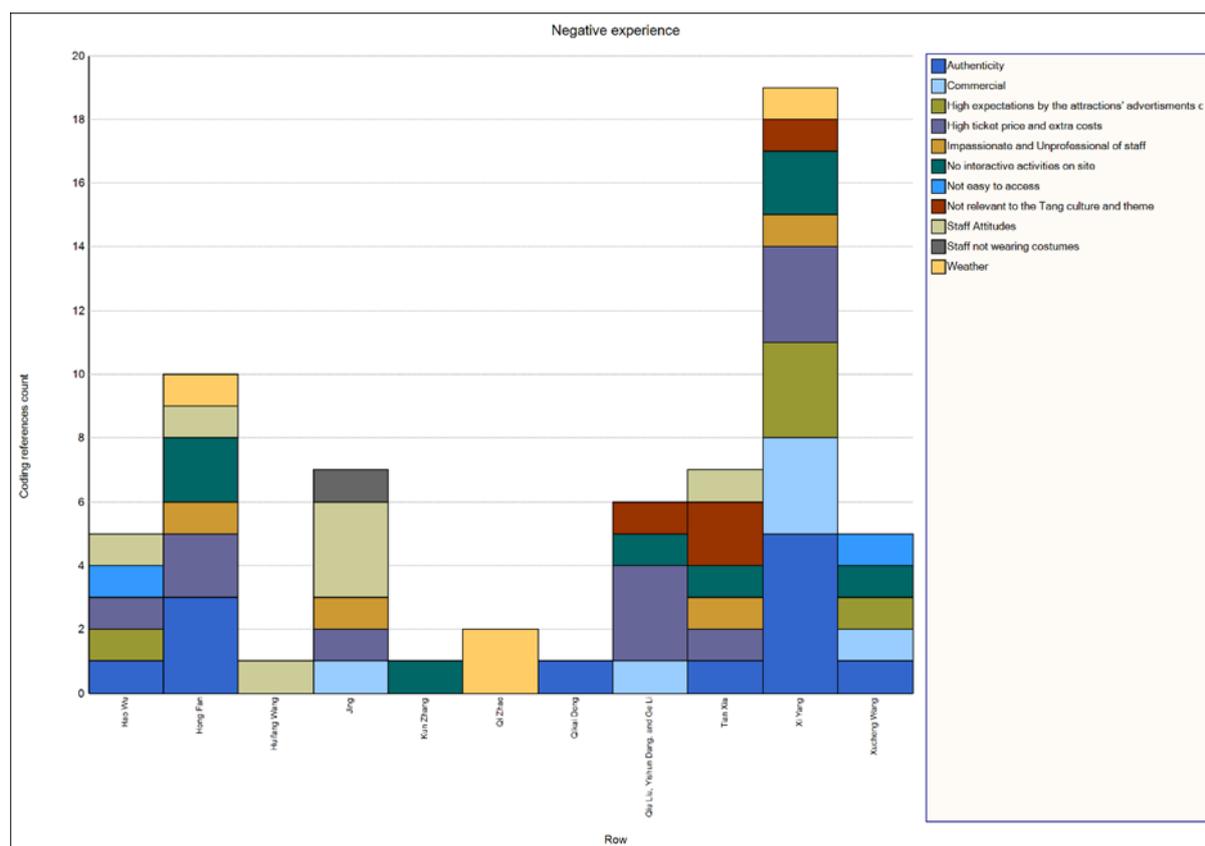


Figure 21 Negative feedbacks

In terms of the authenticity as it has been stressed in the previous section 5.3.3, the inauthenticity the visitors complain about is caused by two aspects, the objective authenticity and the feeling of authenticity. The inauthentic appearance is unable to convince visitors to believe they are at the Tang royal lotus garden, which includes the historical accuracy of the replicas, the appearance, the texture and the materials that have been made on the artificial architectures.

‘To be honest, nothing has impressed me so far...some of the attractions are not as good as their pictures online, the pictures seemed to bring the glorious of Changan alive...but when you got here, you found all the architectures were artificial and rebuilt in a sketchy way, which made me think everything here was so fake...’
 (Xucheng Wang, male, age between 18-25, postgraduate student, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

In addition, visitors are not satisfied with the contents and activities the organization has produced on site. Visitors seek for the lifestyle and the stories of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang back in the Tang Dynasty, apparently, the attraction does not meet the visitors’ expectations. In terms of the live activities that have been held inside of the park, the immature skills and unpassionate attitudes of the live actors could not provide any opportunity to let the visitors immerse themselves into the scene.

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'The appearance of the Ziyun Building was stunning, but once you walked inside of the building, everything became boring and disappointing, instead of live actors with costumes that I had in my imagination, they decided to put the unrelated frightening was manikins in the first floor!' (Qing Liu, female, undergraduate degree, IT service, travelling with her friends).

'I know the live performance supposes to let the audience interact with the actors and immerse themselves with the scenes on site, but the guard and the warning line gives me the inauthentic feelings' (Xi Yang, female, undergraduate degree, hotel manager, travelling alone, local resident).

The interviewee Jing, female, travelling from other regions of the mainland China is impressed by the landscape and great view of the attraction during her summer visit, but she still leaves her negative comments because of the staff attitudes on site.

'The main issue I had was the attitudes of the staff here! They were very rude, and unconcerned about their visitors. Seems like they couldn't care less about our feelings and experience here! We had booked the tickets of the park online in advance, but we were not informed that we can only get our booked tickets at the entrance of the East Gate of the park. We arrived at the West Gate, and the staff refused to answer our questions and asked us to leave! We were furious at that point until we got help from a nice local citizen who was passing by... the most disappoint thing here is the people and staff's attitudes, you kept seeing the cleaners sweeping the dirt on the ground during your visit, and the tour guides were arrogant and aloof.' (Jing, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, travelling with her friends to the attraction).

Some of the visitors get high expectations because of the aesthetically pleasing online pictures of the attraction before they have visited the attraction. However, the representation and interpretation have not met their expectations that leave them with disappointment. The interviewee Xi Yang has expected the experience at the Tang Paradise Theme park should be unique and exclusive, but after she visits the actual site, she gets the feeling as:

'I think this place is over-hyped and I feel disappointed after I have visited this attraction... the pictures and advertisements on their official website and social media are just gimmicky. The actual site has nothing in common with what they've put on their advertisements! It's just a park, like other gardens or parks in Xi'an. I got very similar feelings and experience at different heritage attractions in Xi'an, how weird is that! I guess that's because these places are too commercial and lack

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of contents for visitors to experience...Why bother to pay for extra 100 yuan to see something that you can find them everywhere in Xi'an for free!' (Xi Yang, female, aged between 25 to 30, undergraduate degree, local resident).

Based on the factors that have been explained above, visitors get upset about the ticket price because they still need to pay extra fees for sightseeing bus or tour guides once they have entered the attraction. The visitors' negative experiences have influences on their future intentions. According to *Figure 22*, seven of the interviewees give negative responses that they will not revisit the Tang Paradise Theme Park in the future, and they will not recommend the attraction to their relatives or friends. Mainly because they get upset by the interpretations, authenticity, live activities and the staff attitudes onsite. In terms of the visitors get positive feedback on the attraction, two of them (Huifang Wang and Kun Zhang) are the visitors who wear their own traditional Chinese Hanfu to the site (females, aged between 18-25, college students, both loves history and culture), and there is one male (Qikai Dong, aged between 18-25, bachelor degree, programmer, loves art and culture, big fan of VR games) plan to revisit the site during the summertime. The reason behind their positive feedback on the attractions is the power of imagination, which allows them to immerse themselves into the site and create their own stories as the co-creators of the site.

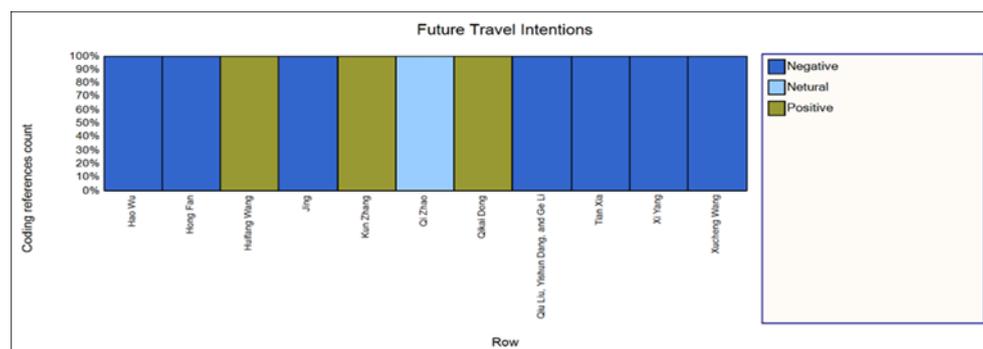


Figure 22 Future travel intentions

Recommendations

Based on the findings in the previous sections, visitors are expecting more interactive activities and interpretations at the attraction. Besides, visitors suggest on making improvements on the staffs' attitudes and performances. In addition, they are expecting more authentic interpretations and representations onsite. Furthermore, one visitor recommends applying more emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality based on his previous experience in the virtual world.

'There's one video game called Uncharted 4, which is amazing! The great view and the landscape of the historical inside of the game appear to be so real! It's like you were transferred into the virtual world, and you become Drake, not a player but Drake! I hope they could have this type of thing in here, sounds unique and

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interesting' (Qikai Dong, male, aged between 18-25, programmer, keen on art and VR games).

But the interviewee Hao Wu, who has interests in VR gaming as well, he prefers the physical world that he can interact to the virtual world.

'But I still prefer things in the reality, because they truly exist that you can touch and feel. In the virtual world, even with the joystick and the controller, you still can't feel the texture of the objects' (Hao Wu, male, aged between 25-30).

The finding in this section stresses the importance of individual visitors' subjectivities and creativities that allows them to create their own hyperreal experience through their imaginations. The finding also suggests the role of the visual sensor stimuli, which has set up the atmosphere that allows visitors to explore as the first step of the immersion, whereas the soundscape in combination with the visual effects can further advance on the visitors' immersive experience. However, the organization has failed to deliver a fully immersive experience as *'being part of the scene'* because of the inauthenticity and inadequate interactions onsite, which are unable to stimulate visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that reduces their immersive experience. In comparison with the findings from the organization perspective, the core driving force that motivates visitors to the attraction refers to *'feel the glorious of the DaTang in the ancient city Changan'*, which is associated with the organization's aims and purposes of producing the theme park as a symbol of the golden age of Tang Dynasty. In terms of the themes and contents inside of the attraction, visitors are aware of the symbols that highlight the different themes of the attraction during their visit on site. From the organization perspective, the architect is using the symbolic representation and colours to feature the themes at different locations inside of the park. While for the visitors, they have recognised the differences between locations by the hearing the different themed background music. Some of the visitors are questioning the authenticity of the recreated heritage attraction because of the representation and activities inside of the park. The inauthentic buildings and layouts inside of the park lead to their feeling of inauthenticity, and the lack of interactive activities decreases their feeling of becoming part of the scene. From the project developer perspective, they are combining both objective authenticity and subjective authenticity to let the visitors reach to the past. However, from the interviewees' responses, the architecture is lack of historical accuracy and details. The live actors and the staff's performances onsite have not impressed the visitors but disappointed them. From the visitor perspective, the representation that combines the traditional Chinese architecture with the symbolic elements of the Tang Dynasty such as the Market of Hu does not provide them authentic feeling, because it does not fit for the royal lotus garden theme. The architect has mentioned the previous operational team has been replaced by the groups of people who care less about the history of Tang Dynasty and their visitors, which fits for the main reasons that lead to the visitors'

disappointment about the attraction that includes the lack of interactive activities, the live actors' skills and performances.

5.4 Travels in Hyperreality: The Observation Findings

This section aims at validating the previous findings from the researcher's perspective as triangulations, which is constructed by the aspects of subjectivity and objectivity. The first section seeks to address the researcher's subjective experience onsite as a pure visitor that the findings are presented from the researcher's personal diary and her drawings. The visual materials are applied as intuitive support for the researcher's subjective reflections on her encounters at the attraction that include the landscape and the activities as an insider, which has further explained the hyperreal experience at the Tang theme park. The subjective process has set up the foundation for the following process of the observation and the interviews during the fieldwork onsite. The objective observation as a pure researcher focuses on decreasing the researcher's personal bias in order to present the findings more objectively.

5.4.1 Subjective Perspective

Before I visit the attraction, I have gained my knowledge about the attraction from the attraction's official account in the social media Weibo, which I am fascinated about the aesthetic appearance at the attraction, especially the Ziyun Building that stimulates my imagination about the attraction in the Tang Dynasty.



Figure 23 The Ziyun Building

As *Figure 23* has been presented above, I have combined my imagination with the aesthetic images online to express my feeling about the attraction before I have visited the attraction. In winter, I am drawn into the representation of the Ziyun Building, the appearance arouses my imagination of the royal palace at the Tang Dynasty, whereas the background music provides me with an image of the Ziyun Building at the Tang Dynasty through my imagination.

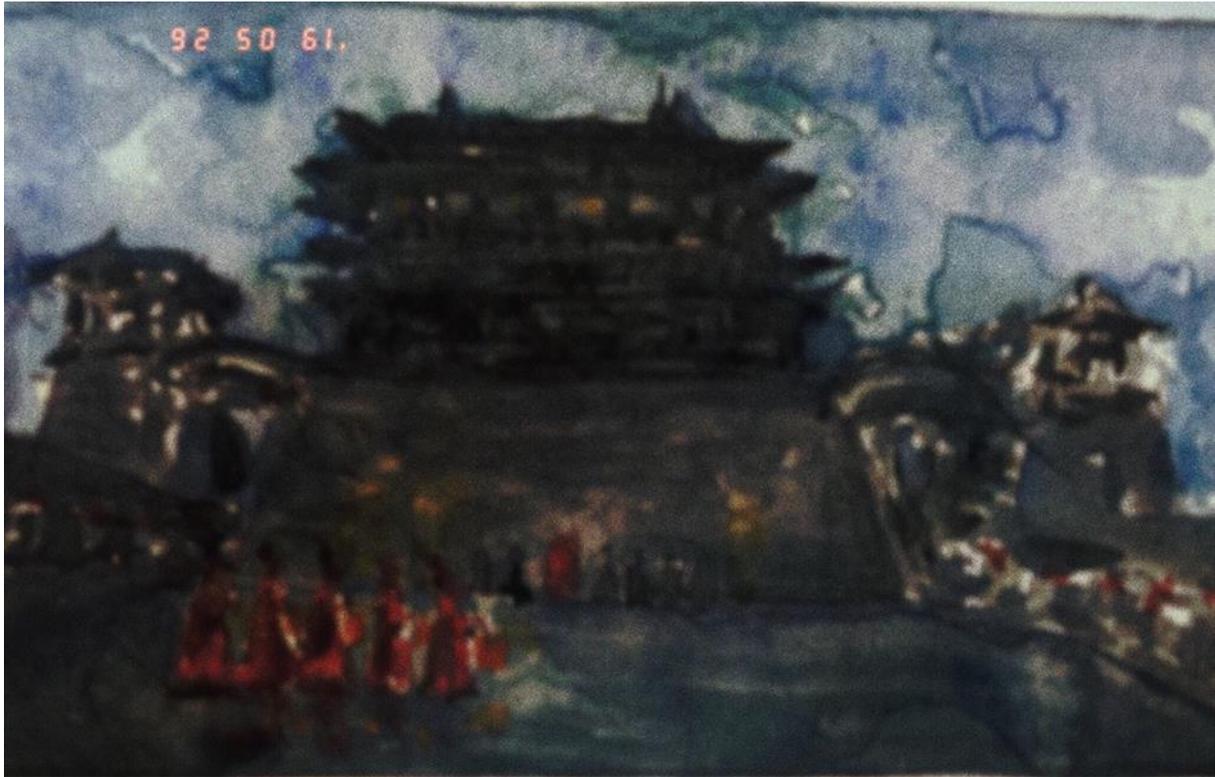


Figure 24 The imagination of the Ziyun Building at Tang Dynasty

28/11/2017, Tuesday, Weather: Cloudy (Low Season)

'I went directly to the Ziyun Building, at the first glance, I was attracted by the magnificent appearance of the reconstructed architecture, which made me start to imagine what it used to like at Tang Dynasty. Somehow, the memories and feelings about the Forbidden City had occurred to me. When the traditional Chinese instruments started to play as the background music, I imagined there were ancient people at the palace at Tang Dynasty were passing by with their lanterns in hands.'

(my impression on the Ziyun Building from my observation diary).

The imagination has ceased when I have entered the Ziyun Building because of the unrelated themes and interpretations, which provides me with the inauthentic feeling about the attraction. The inauthentic interpretation and themes refer to the manikins and the western decors inside of the building that brings me back to reality.

'The manikins take the whole entrance hall without any meaning! You get frightened when they are staring at you. Except the manikins, there are nothing to see in the entire building! Why they put the ridiculous western style chandelier on the ceiling! The golden and red decors remind me of the western style shopping mall that I went to when I was a kid'.

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In terms of the live performance and activities onsite, I am fascinated by the traditional Chinese drum music show that has been held at the Ziyun Building. The rhythm of the music has brought me back to the ancient Changan at the Tang Dynasty, yet the costumes and the layout onsite decreases my feeling of immersion that makes me start to imagine the scenes based on my existing knowledge about the Tang Dynasty subjectively.



Figure 25 The imagination of the musical instrument show at Tang Dynasty

'The music reminds me of the traditional Chinese music 'Chun ying chuan' that has been played at Tang Dynasty. I can imagine the performers from Tang Dynasty are sitting inside of the Ziyun Building to play the instrument in front of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang. But without these cheesy neon coloured costumes and the western-styled chandelier! They should wear the traditional Chinese Hanfu as it

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has been shown in the traditional Chinese paintings, with the mountains and trees as the backgrounds, and wooden floor I guess.'

The quote above entails the soundscape arouses my memories of symbols and images that represent the culture at Tang Dynasty. The representation and the appearance inside of the theatre decrease my authentic feelings, yet I have produced a scene of the musical instrument show at the Tang lotus garden through my imagination subjectively.

I am not satisfied with the live actors and staff onsite, but the interactions with the animals and other visitors at the attraction have improved on my overall experience. The interaction with the animals refers to the activities at the royal deer garden, which I have fed the deer with fallen leaves on the ground. My feeling of *'being there'* has emerged through my imagination during the interactive process onsite.



Figure 26 The royal deer garden

Figure 26 illustrates my imagination of the royal deer garden through the interactions with the deer onsite. However, as it has been mentioned in the previous section, the appearance and the poor facilities onsite arouse my inauthentic feeling about the royal deer garden, which I have used my subjective understanding to create an imaginative image of the scene at Tang Dynasty.

'When I ask the staff about the location of the deer garden, his attitude is just rude! When I finally get there, I find out that they have been kept in a small yard with iron fence around. They shouldn't keep the deer inside of the iron fence at the royal lotus garden! The yard is in such poor condition! There should have a garden or a

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palace that made for the deer, or at least to let them walk freely inside of the park that can allow us to get more interaction with!

In terms of the encounters with other visitors onsite, it has not made any improvement in the immersive experience but enhancing my overall experience. We have co-created story onsite that turns into our own personal memorable experience at the attraction as *Figure 27* has been presented below.



Figure 27 'Here comes the dog!'

'I see other visitors are picking up leaves on the ground to feed the deer through the iron fence, I join them together. One of a sudden, a dog jumps out from nowhere and starts barking at the deer, and his owner run to him from a far distance. The owner keeps chasing his dog, and the groups of deer stop eating the leaves and look at the scene of the dog and his owner with curiosity. Everyone laughs on site, which feels relaxing and entertaining. There is one visitor (individual traveller, male) who feeds the deer with leaves next to me before the dog shows up, and we are talking about the dramatic scene that just happened, 'I guess you could never see this in the emperor's royal garden' he says.'

The finding at this sector highlights the power of the individual visitors' subjectivities and creativities, which allows them to create their personal stories based on their experience of 'stepping into the history' through their imaginations. In comparison with the findings from the visitor's perspective, it reveals the appearance and the representation can evoke visitors' visual sensibilities that arouse their imaginations of the attraction as the first step of the immersion. Different from the previous findings in the visitor's section, the soundscape can trigger the researcher's memorability and imagination without the sightseeing. The finding also strengthens the interactions with the physical environments and other

visitors enhance the visitors' overall experience. In addition, both findings argue the organization has failed to provide visitors with the feeling of immersion because of the inauthentic appearance, the inadequate interpretation, and the unprofessional attitudes and performances of the staff onsite.

5.4.2 Objective Perspective

Based on the observation findings that have been presented in *Table 17*, the Ziyun Building and the central lake district are the most popular locations inside of the park because of the appearance of the building and the atmosphere that has been created around the lake. Visitors are taking pictures and taking a rest while they are appreciating the view of the Ziyun Building and the centre of the lake. In terms of the interactive activities on site, visitors interact more with the animals inside of the park than the live actors. Visitors are attracted by the deer at the royal deer garden, they spend their times by feeding the deer with fallen leaves through the iron fence. Different traditional Chinese styled music is played as the background music to highlight the themes of different locations. The music that has been played at the Lady's Hall is more tender than the music around the Ziyun Building. There are massage shops, beverage shops, toy shops, shadow puppetry shop and the Xi'an famous snacks restaurants at the Market of Hu, and the numbers of visitors are less than other locations inside of the park. The live performances inside of the Ziyun Building are the most popular ones inside of the attraction, which include the Tangyue Dance and the traditional instrument Dongcang drum music show. The theatre is decorated with bright colours, with the golden and western-styled chandelier hanging up on the ceiling. The colours of the lightning effects during the show are bright red, blue and green. There is one counter sells popcorns and snacks behind the seating areas, which makes the theatre filled with the smell of popcorn the whole time. Visitors are giving positive responses when the emperor appears on the stage, some of the visitors stand up from their seats and take pictures of Emperor Xuzong of Tang and his lover Yang Yuhuan. During the traditional drum music show, fewer visitors are taking pictures of the scene. Two males fall asleep while the live actors are playing the instrument, and some of the visitors have left during the show.

Table 17 Observation findings

<i>Locations and activities inside of the park</i>	Representation	Visitor behaviours
The Ziyun Building	<p>Appearance of the building: rebuilt architecture, painted in grey, red and gold</p> <p>Background music: theme song of the park</p> <p>Inside of the building: manikins on the first floor, theatre on the third floor, museum on the fifth floor</p>	<p>Taking pictures outside of the building, sitting on the stairs to enjoy the views of the park, looking at the manikins on the first floor, standing on the balcony of the building to enjoy the view, waiting for the live performance at the theatre</p>

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<p>The centre of the lake</p>	<p>Visual: the Ziyun Building far from distance, willow trees around, water lilies on the water during the summer Background music: theme songs of the park Animals: Black swans</p>	<p>Sitting near the lake, taking pictures, more visitors during the summertime, feeding the swans in the lake district</p>
<p>The royal deer garden</p>	<p>Deer inside of the yard that guard by the iron fence, trees around</p>	<p>Taking pictures of the deer, feeding the deer with the fallen leaves on the ground</p>
<p>The Lady's Hall</p>	<p>Appearance of the building: rebuilt architecture, painted in red and white Background music: themed music different from the Ziyun Building Inside of the building: exhibition of the Chinese traditional Hanfu Activities: costume rental booth, live performances of the Ladies at Tang Dynasty</p>	<p>Taking pictures, renting costume from the booth, looking at the exhibition inside of the building, watching the live performance and leaving during the show</p>
<p>The rosy cloud pavilion</p>	<p>Appearance: long pavilion near the river, the lanterns are hanging on each side of the roof, and the pillars of the pavilion are painted in red Background music: themed music (the same one at the Lady's Hall)</p>	<p>Sitting inside of the pavilion to enjoy the view of the lake, taking pictures, reading, playing cell phones</p>
<p>The market of Hu</p>	<p>Appearance: shops are built in the traditional Chinese style, sculptures of the Hu Shops and contents: massage store, restaurants with the Xi'an famous snacks, beverage store (tea and coffee), toy shops, shadow puppetry shop Animals: two camels at the entrance of the market</p>	<p>Walking around, few visitors are eating the Xi'an snacks inside of the restaurant No visitors ride the camels</p>
<p>The Tangyue dance</p>	<p>Location: inside of the Ziyun Building Layout: decorated in bright colours, golden ceiling with the western style chandelier, wooden seats, small section selling popcorn and snacks behind the seating area Visual effects: blue and green lightning Sounds effects: loud Scene: the love story of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang and his lover Yang Yuhuan Smells: popcorn Costumes of the live actors: bright yellow, neon pink and red Live actors' performances: lack of passion</p>	<p>Taking pictures, recording videos, getting excited when the emperor appears on the stage, some of the visitors stand up and take pictures of the scene. Sharing the recorded videos on the WeChat Moment</p>
<p>The Dongcang drum music show</p>	<p>Music: traditional Chinese instrument play by the live performers Lighting effects: red and blue Costumes of the live actors: bright colour</p>	<p>Two male, mid aged, fell asleep during the show, some of the elderly visitors are enjoying the drum music by following the drumbeats with feet tapping, No visitor takes pictures during the show</p>

		Some of the visitors leave in the middle of the show
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In comparison with previous findings in the visitor experience section, the representation of the Ziyun Building and the central lake district evoke visitors' visual sensation. Most of the visitors are sitting inside of the park, taking pictures and enjoying the view of the landscape, and there is fewer interactive activities for the visitors to involve with onsite. Some of the interviewees are questioning the authenticity of the Market of Hu, from the observation, it proves the contents and the themes are not relevant to the royal lotus garden at the Tang Dynasty. Visitors are seeking for the authentic and traditional culture of the Tang Dynasty, but in the traditional Chinese drum music show (the way it used to play at Tang Dynasty), visitors are showing their impatient to the contents of the show. The love story of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang calls visitors' attention to stand up and take pictures, which proves visitors are more interested in seeing the lifestyle and stories of the emperor at Tang Dynasty.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter shows the visitors experience of travelling at the Tang Paradise Theme Park, the data is collected from interviews and observation on site both in winter and summer. Eleven visitors have been interviewed. Most of the interviewees give negative feedback on the attraction because of the lack of interactive activities, impatience and unprofessional performance of the staff and live actors on site, and high expectations but low outcomes. In terms of the significant findings of the fieldwork at the Tang Paradise Theme Park, visual remains the largest proportion of the visitors' sensation on site, which evokes their first step of immersion through imagination. The feeling of immersion is constructed by both visitors' imagination and their involvements onsite. Authenticity also plays an important part in the visitors' immersive experience, which refers to the objective authenticity and the subjective authenticity. The feeling of real has relied on realistic representation and interactions onsite.

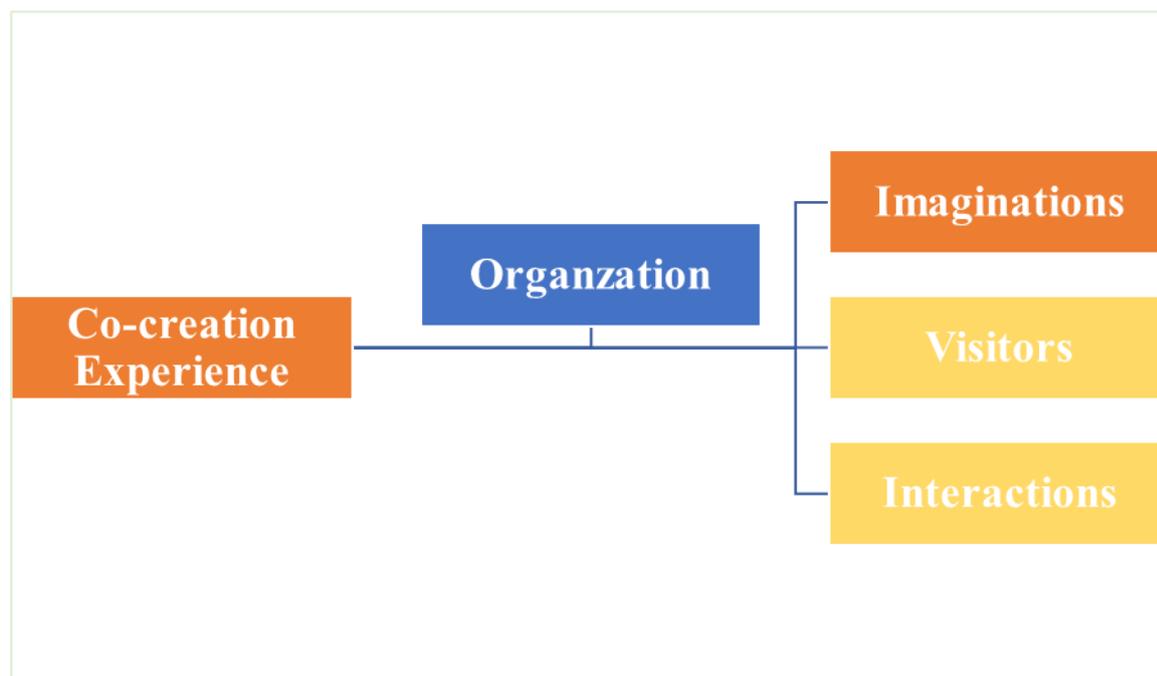


Figure 28 Co-creation experience

According to *Figure 28*, the organization has failed to co-create the hyperreal experience with the visitors, yet the visitors can create their own hyperreal narratives through their imaginations and creativities. The findings indicate the organization aims at providing visitor with a recreated royal lotus garden as a symbol of the glories age of the Tang Dynasty that allows their visitors to step into the history. However, it fails to deliver the message properly to their audience, which includes unrelated themes and interpretations at the attraction; inauthentic appearance and representation; inadequate interactions and live activities; unprofessional staff's attitudes and performances. The finding stresses the importance of the individual visitors' subjectivities and activities, which they can produce the feeling of immersion through their own imaginations. Imagination is stimulated by the visual sensation of the landscape, which refers to the first step of immersion. Through the imagination process, visitors create their stories about themselves being part of the scene by combining Their surrounding environments with the illusion. Being part of the scene is not only generated by the visitors' imagination but also their involvements with the attraction. The two young female visitors who make their efforts on understanding the knowledge about Tang culture and history before they have visited the site, and wearing their own traditional Chinese Hanfu to immerse themselves into the atmosphere during their visits, which turns the imagination of being part of the scene into reality. The findings in this chapter raise the questions of can physical environments deliver the most immersive experience to the visitors? And how to deliver the message properly to arouses the visitors' multi-sensations rather than the optical sensor stimuli to stimulate visitors the most immersive experience? The answer will be further explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 The Sensations: Brunel's SS Great Britain

6.1 Introduction and Background

Brunel's SS Great Britain is one of the famous landmarks in the city of Bristol, UK. The ship has been designed by the engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806 - 1859) and is originally launched in the year of 1834 that has used to be called the 'greatest experiment since the creation'. The ship has started her journey at Bristol for the emigrants who are travelling to Australia. The ship is used as a passenger ship for 30 years then it has been converted to carry cargo. The SS Great Britain has carried a variety of exports between England and the West Coast of America during the years 1882 to 1886. The ship gets destructive damaged because of the storms in the year of 1886, which makes the ship finishes her mission in the year of 1993. The ship is in poor condition that has been damaged and left to rust away until the architect Ewan Corlett has recognised the importance of the heritage legacy. The ship has been rescued and brought back to Bristol in the year of 1970 (ssgreatbritain. org, 2019).

To conserve the ship and generate more revenues, the organization has opened the ship to the public as a tourist attraction. In contrast with other traditional types of historical attraction, the SS Great Britain aims at bringing the history alive that allows visitors to experience it within the ship. The attraction has developed different sections such as the galley and the bakery room, the area beneath the water, the steerage saloon, the engine room, and the weather deck for visitors to experience and explore. The attraction has simulated the sight, sounds effects and smells that relate to the Victorian theme on board. In terms of the interactive activities at the attraction, the organization has also provided visitors with the 'set sail for the summer spectacular', the steampunk mistress and the time machine', series of discovery talks on board, 'Shakespeare Undone' and 'Christmas Murder Mystery Dinner' that can enhance their interactions and experience onsite.

Table 18 Activities and Representation on board

Locations and activities inside of the attraction	Representation
The weather deck	Appearance: The rebuilt architecture, painted in warm colours, artificial farm animals Sounds: simulated animal sounds The entrance to the inside of the ship Staff on board with costumes
Beneath the sea	Appearance: The original ship with water on the top Sounds: the sounds of the water
The galley	Appearance: replicas of the Victorian-styled furniture, life-sized manikin with costumes, lightning screen effects of the rats and the cats, artificial food and kitchenware, visual effects of the fire Sounds: simulated sound of the chef, the bubbling sound in the pot

The storage room	Appearance: replicas of the food and veggies Olfactory: mouldy smells
The bakery room	Appearance: reproduced bakery oven in Victorian style, artificial bread Olfactory: aroma of the bread
The steerage	Appearance: reproduced Victorian-styled furniture in poor conditions, painted in dark colours, manikins with costumes Sounds effects: women are gossiping with each other, a woman who is giving labour and the sounds of the baby crying Olfactory: simulated filthy smell
The toilet	Appearance: the locked door Sounds: simulated sounds of the man shouting at the visitors who are trying to open the door Olfactory: the smell of the toilet
The dining saloon	Appearance: replicas of the Victorian-styled furniture, manikin, artificial food and tableware, painted in bright and warm colours
Go aloft! Climb the rigging!	The crew explain how it works to the visitors before the visitors take part in the activity
Discovery talks on board	The history and stories about the ship, talked by the crew on board

Table 18 presents a brief overview of the interactive activities and experience that visitors can obtain at the attraction. In different from other attractions of the case studies, the SS Great Britain has developed multi-sensor stimuli to evoke visitors' immersive experience that allows them to step into history. According to Table 18 (partially from the observation finding onsite), the attraction has combined the visual appearance in the physical environments with simulated sounds and olfactory for visitors to interact with and explore freely inside of the ship.

This chapter focuses on exploring visitors' perceptions and experience at the recreation inside of the Brunel's SS Great Britain. The first section covers the production design from the organization perspective, to get a comprehensive understanding of the attraction, which includes aims and purposes, the developing process, the existing knowledge about their audience and the evaluations on the project. Following by the visitors' responses to the recreated productions on board, which has been divided into three sections that refer to before, during and after. The last section contains the researcher's observation results from two aspects as objectivity and subjectivity to validate the findings from different perspectives.

6.2 Travels in Hyperreality: The Organization Perspective

This section focuses on exploring the process and stories behind the Brunel's SS Great Britain from the organizational perspective, which covers the organization's perception on developing the project as a

recreated simulation inside of the ship. The section has been divided into three parts, which includes the aims and goals, the project developing process, and evaluations on the project.

The interviewee Luke Holmes is the senior interpretation officer at the SS Great Britain Trust, who is responsible for working as part of the team that develop the exhibitions on site.

6.2.1 Aims and Purposes

According to Luke Holmes, the primary goal for developing the project is to protect and restore the ship. In order to protect the ship from rusting and being destroyed, the team comes up with the '*stability of the project*' as an ongoing process to generate more revenues from the visitors who come to the attraction. The team considers their relationship with the visitors as a symbiotic relationship because the visitors can get an insight into the history of the ship but also generate more revenues to protect the ship from being destroyed.

'I guess the primary one that affects us here is to restore and protect the ship, the Great Britain, but also to expand global knowledge of the SS Great Britain, and the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, which is the engineer behind the project. So for many years after she returned to Bristol in 1970, the core focus was on conserving the ship, and making sure that she didn't rust away. So quite a radical plan was needed, in order to generate more revenues that we can protect the ship in a bad way... the revenue generated by visitors coming here and enjoying the ship is what keeps our lives, which is kind of a symbiotic relationship there. We want to improve kind of greater and wider knowledge, and knowledge sharing around sort of specific about the ship, but that includes the British Marine time history, and kind of Victorian era. So that's really important for us, and that's really why we've developed the ship the way that we have.'

The factor that motivates the organization to represent the attraction as a living museum is based on the organizational interpretation philosophy, which refers to the concept of letting visitors step into the history actively rather than observe onsite passively.

'That is really all about trying to reach into the past, and move beyond sort of conventional learning, knowledge transfer, and trying get people to experience what history can be like, and to live inside it. I guess it's just learning it in a different way, by having fun or enjoying yourself, and be surrounding by it rather than always kept away... and that's defined most of the projects that we do on board about creating a little about past rather than an aesthetic one.'

6.2.2 The Process

In terms of the interpretation developing process at the attraction, the recreations on board have reflected the history and stories that have been introduced at the museum. The organization encourages visitors to gain an insight into the history, but at the same time to experience in it and turn it into their own stories.

'Things like the manikins, we do quite a lot of research to our manikins to look like, but often our visitors don't know who the manikins are, or they don't relate them to the sources. So, things like just flagging them up in the museum I think, saying: 'Here's this passenger and character, they did these five things, and can you find them on board.' Then they'll understand when they are going. We also got the little boarding cards, which we developed quite recently, to try to get people understand that the ship was experienced by real people, they did have their own lives and their own stories, and they can relate those stories to their own lives, but also to the exhibitions on the ship, that's quite important and working really well.'

Developing technological applications is not the core driving forces for the organization, but a bridge can deliver their messages to visitors that enhance their understandings and experience at the attraction. The organization perceives emerging technologies as a tool that can blur the lines between history and reality.

'What we do is that we use technology to further the immersive experience, so we try to use the technology where we can't achieve the same effects anywhere else. So if we think something it's going to be amazing, which really make people feel immersed, we'll do it. I'll give you examples like in our galley, we have got a screen of little rats to run across, we've got the bubbling pots, things like that where you don't look at that immediately think of technology, because it's more like magic I guess, like performance magic. So that's where we see the opportunities and the technology as well, which we can use to further blur the line between modern and the past.'

The organization has applied different techniques to stimulate the visitors' multi-sensory stimulation. Different from the traditional type of museums, the attraction also produces the simulated sounds and smells to let the visitors reach into the past. The appearance affects visitors' first impression, but the soundscape and the olfactory play as important factors that further intensify the visitors' feeling of immersion.

'A lot of what we do on board, we try to offer as many different ways to accessing history, so if you are blind, then you can still hear the soundscapes or if you are

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deaf, you can obviously see everything going on around you. We are trying to get people to experience the ship as she was by using all the sensory experiences, like smell, sight, and sound... You could stand on the ship, and you could see all these different things around you, and constantly pop into sight. But smell is such a trigger for memory, and I think it's all about furthering that element of immersion'.

The simulated olfactory reflects the themes of the physical environments but also arouses the visitor's memorability and imagination. The team makes the efforts on keeping the simulated smell accurate to the themes on board, as Luke puts it:

'It's not trying to make everything seem too pretty, we're trying to be as realistic as possible. walking into a fish store and smelling fish, or walking into an engine room and smelling oil, which really helps to trigger the memories, we're trying to do that as much as possible. And we tend to choose smells that are sort of unmistakable, but also usually quite funny. So we got the poor steerage vomiting smell, which was really strong and horrible. But obviously kids love that, they are able to dare themselves to go in'.

In terms of the interactions with the physical environments, the organization aims at educating and entertaining visitors at the same time, which the team stresses the sense of humour while they are developing the project on board. Because the sense of humour can bring out the visitors' interests and enhance their understanding of the lifestyle about how the passengers used to live on board.

'Yeah, they are very curious, and humour is quite important for us, again, we don't want people to think we are just a stuffy museum, and humour is a part of life, and museums are about understanding human life, so you can't live in a life without humour, so we are trying to get that as much as possible'.

Besides the interactions with the physical environments, the team starts to employ the volunteers who dress up as the passengers at the Victorian Age. The organization is aware of the ethical issues of the British visitors in the process of interacting with real people instead of manikins, as Luke describes as *'a little bit too much'*. To enhance visitors' experience but with the considerations of the ethical issues, the team decides to let the live actors perform as the interpreters who represent as the characters from the past because of the factors of modern intrusions and authenticity.

'We have volunteering groups who dress up as different characters on the ship, they walk around and very knowledgeable... I think we want to move towards a model that has more people dressed up moving around and talking to people. But it has to be quite careful by doing that, particular in Britain, because people are very hostile to being approached, I don't like it personally, I find people in costumes is a little

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bit too much, but we are planning on doing that, and we use a form of interpretation, so rather than having our volunteers with costumes as interpreters, rather than having them being in first person, we have the third person, who'll say: 'I will represent as this person who's on the ship two hundred years ago... And the reason we do that, honestly, is that if you are in first person, and someone walks up to you and says: 'Excuse me, where's the toilets?' and you have to say: 'Toilets? What are toilets?' and 'What do you mean by this word?' It just doesn't work for visitors on site. So being in a third person, we allow people to have a real conversation, which we think works for the best'.

When talking about the perceptions of immersive and authentic experience during the interview, Luke considers it as a balance between objective authenticity and subjective authenticity. The ship and the objects that have been displayed at the museum are the genuine and original ones, whereas the recreations inside of the ship refer to the reflections on the real objects at the museum.

'A lot of our research we did show us that people are looking for the authenticity, so they want the real, they want everything to be as it was. The ship itself is the real object, but if you walk into the steerage and you pick up a dress, usually is not a two hundred years old dress. But when we dress areas at the ship, we do a lot of research, to ensure what we are putting on the ship is correct and right for the period... They can go into museums and they can see the original objects that they know are important that can't be touched and need to be protected, but then when they are going on to the ship, they can see those same objects that they can touch, but they know what they are, they know they are the real things that people had'.

In terms of the visitors' immersive experience, the objective authenticity onboard is served for providing visitors with the feeling of authenticity. The developing team stresses the importance of the historical accuracy and relating to the themes of the recreations on board, and the modern intrusions have effects on the reproduced objects on board that leads visitors' to the inauthentic feelings. The reproduced scenes on board represent a symbolic image of the ship at the Victorian Age that allows visitors to step into history.

'And immersion is about removing a lot of modern intrusions, so if everything smells like the lady's perfume that just walked past you, or the food down the hall someone's eating, which breaks you out a bit, you are not thinking historically. Having to go through the much detail on everything! But it really works when it comes together, I think it's as a picture, as all the different parts come together, you start to really build that atmosphere... We are trying to get people to experience the ship as she was by using all the sensory experiences, like smell, sight, especially

sound. And we are trying to use all those wholly immersive experiences to let people get the feeling of authentic'.

6.2.3 Evaluations

The organization has developed their own research team to evaluate the visitors' experience onsite, from their interviews and observation onsite, they find out the visitors give positive feedback on their experience at the Brunel's SS Great Britain. According to Luke Holmes, the visitors are responding well to the recreations inside of the ship. In specific, visitors are visiting the attraction with low expectations but leaving with high assessments on their experience onsite.

'We constantly receive amazing feedback, so we are number 1 in TripAdvisor of Bristol, we get 98% of four or five stars of this, so we know that visitors get a lot out of coming to the ship, and they aren't expecting how the ship as interesting as it is. What they have expected is that they just walk around it and kind of leave. And a lot of our visitor research evaluation has been done shows that people enter the site with relatively low expectations, but they leave with their expectations much exceeded, which is opposite to most visitor attractions'.

In terms of the evaluation on the project, the organization considers the project as a successful milestone that achieves the goals but also an ongoing process that always needs further improvement.

'I think we are very proud of what we do, and we found that it's been successful, and we are broadly happy with that, but we can always do more, and we are quite hard on ourselves, so especially on the ship itself, we never feel the work is done, it's never finished, even when you just finished a project, there will be another layer you can add on top'.

The organization makes efforts on adding more interactive activities with the live actors to replace the manikins onsite. Another challenge for the organization is about how to apply emerging technologies to let the virtual environments and the reality work together that can provide visitors with the most immersive and authentic experience at the attraction.

'So the living elements complement the aesthetic elements, the way always try to make the ship feels more living, so I think if we had the resources, we probably get rid of all the manikins, and every manikin has somebody permanent working there, one day probably...The challenge I think would be about how you get the virtual and the real to work together, and there's a lot of ideas about that, lots of discussions and workshops, so I think that will be the real challenge for the organization here'.

The organization is always seeking for solutions to transfer challenges into the opportunities. In terms of the future plans, the team focuses on technology applications and expanding the visitors. The emerging technology applications have become a trend within the tourist industry but require further development.

'Digital elements particularly are quite interesting in the minute, but people don't really know what is doing. There are lots of hostility towards digital and this idea of what about museum, or objects, and tangible things, screens and website... You get new technologies arrive, which gives you new opportunities, we've been looking at AR, VR, and casting shadows onto the wall with characters, acting in a scene when you open the door. So, every time when you see a new technology idea, you'll get inspired and you want to do it immediately'.

The organization also aims at expanding the target audience from diverse backgrounds and interests, which they have worked on producing devices that easy for visitors to access. Besides, the organization is working on developing multiple platforms for the visitors who have different interests.

'A lot of what we do on board, we try to offer as many different ways to accessing history, so if you are blind, then you can still hear the soundscapes or if you are deaf, you can obviously see everything going on around you. On a deeper level, if you are really interested in ships and shipping, then there is a lot more in the museum about how the ship has been built, constructed and designed. If you are really interested in people and how people used to live, we have a lot of social history for people to get in to. So, the accessibility is really high up on our list, because we also know we have particular demographic people that visit, and it doesn't reflect the demographic of Bristol, we want more and more people from diverse backgrounds to come and visit us, and tell us what they want to know about, and what they are interesting to them. I think if you start ignoring every group as your main audience, then you're going to be in trouble in a few years' time. we will be continuing to develop our work, we are launching a multi-media guide with different language for visitors, because in the minute everything is in English, so we're getting a guide that will be in Chinese, Mandarin, Spanish, French and German as a trail, you can take that into museum, it also works on the ship, and the New Museum as well'.

6.3 Travels in Hyperreality: The Visitor Perspective

This section contains the findings of the travelling experience in hyperreality from the visitors' perspective, which aims at providing a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' perceptions and

experience at the Brunel's SS Great Britain that relate to the previous section. The section is constructed by the visitors' behaviours from three stages of their visit to the site: before, during and after.

6.3.1 Visitor Profile

Table 19 Visitor profile

Interviewee	Gender	Age Group	Education	Career	Nationality	Type
James	Male	51-60	Postgraduate	Lab Manager	British	Tourist
Judy	Female	51-60	Undergraduate	Artist	British	Tourist
Kathy	Female	61-70	N/A	Physiotherapist	British	Tourist
Liam	Male	61-70	Undergraduate	Teacher	Australian	Tourist
Lu Zhang	Female	25-30	Postgraduate	Oversea Student	Chinese	Tourist
Richard	Male	25-30	Postgraduate	Oversea Student	Chinese	Tourist
Roy	Male	51-60	Teaching Cer5	Service Engineer	British	Local
Ruth	Female	61-70	N/A	Retired	British	Tourist

During the fieldwork, there are eight participants have been interviewed, which include four males and four females. Most of the interviewees are in the age groups from 51 to 70, and two of the interviewees are the younger aged tourists from 25 to 30. As it has been shown in *Table 19*, six of the interviewees are in high education backgrounds who work in diverse industries that include the job occupations of lab manager, artist, physiotherapist, teacher, oversea students and service engineer. In terms of the interviewees' nationalities and types, there are five British interviewees, and only one of them is a local resident. Two of the interviewees are oversea students who come from mainland China. One of the interviewees is from Australia. All the interviewees are visiting the attraction with their friends or relatives. Their intentions and behaviours before the visit will be covered in the next section.

6.3.2 Before Visit

This section focuses on exploring the visitors' intentions and behaviours before they visit the attraction, which includes the visitors' motivations and expectations, previous similar experience, and travel information checking platforms.

Motivations

According to *Figure 29*, the visitors' motivations are driven primarily by recommendations from friends and families, following by the factor of personal interests, and then recommendations by website and leaflets. In terms of the groups of interviewees who get recommended by their friends and websites, their intentions for visiting is because the attraction is one of the famous landmarks at Bristol. They are looking for entertainment to fill the time during their visits at Bristol, thus they get inadequate knowledge of the attraction.

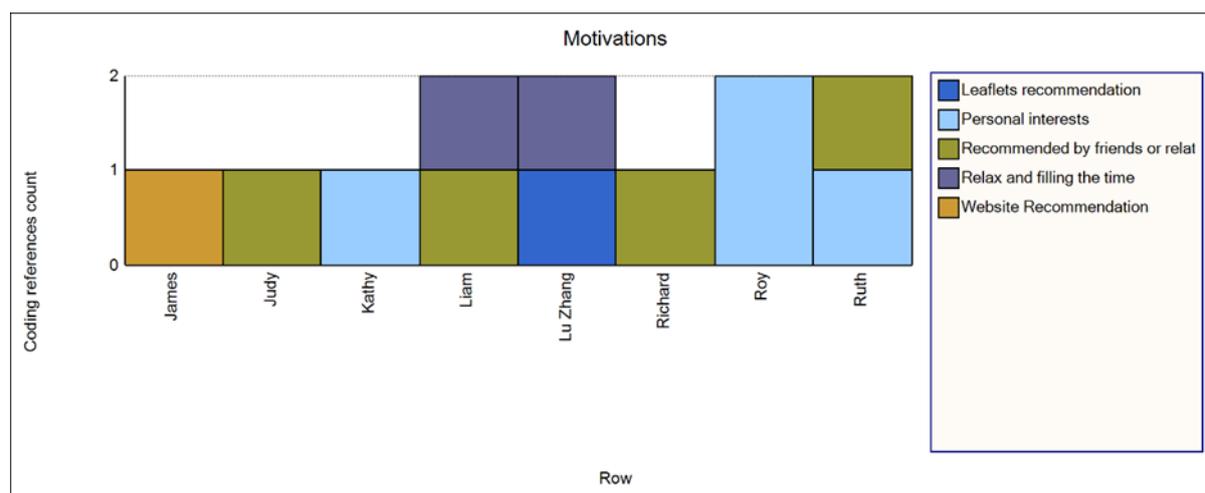


Figure 29 Motivations

'We are students who study in London, we like to visit historical attractions, and we have this huge interest in Bath and Stonehenge. The thing is, the hotels at Bath are too expensive, and we found the accommodations at Bristol are way much cheaper than Bath. That's why we are here, and we found this 'things to do at Bristol' booklet while we were in the hotel. The attraction was on their top ten lists, which made us decide to spend our time here in this afternoon' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist, travelling with her friends).

In terms of the visitors who have established personal interests about the attraction, they visit the attraction because of personal attachment and a sense of belonging to the attraction. The motivations for them to visit the site are caused by two factors that refer to their historical society groups and their memories of the ship. The interviewees are elderly in the age group 61 to 70, and they are all British visitors. They get familiar with the history and stories about the ship before they have visited the attraction.

'We've heard of it for a very long time, and my husband and I were in the Scilly Isles in 1970, when we saw it be brought back, and ever since then, my husband said: 'I want to go and visit it!', so it's taken until now, it's being a long time' (Ruth, female, aged between 61 to 70, retired, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

From the collected data, none of the interviewees is aware of the attraction is presented in the form as a living museum before their visit, which gives them low expectations on the site because of their previous experience at other historical attractions. From their understandings, they assume the attraction is similar to the traditional museums, as the interviewee James (male, age between 51 to 60) describes his feeling about the attraction before he visits: *'I was expecting it would be quite a... once we enter*

the ship, it's quite museum liking'. Similar to James, the interviewee Kathy who belongs to the historical society in the UK and has personal interests to the attraction and expects it is a platform where she can gain more knowledge about the history of the ship:

'I thought it was a ship with nothing inside, I wasn't expecting any of that. I thought it was the museum like when you go in first of all, they tell you what about it, and I didn't expect what it's like inside of the ship' (Kathy, female, aged between 61 to 70, physiotherapist, British tourist, travelling with the group members of the history society).

The finding reveals that most interviewees visit the site because it is one of the '*things to do*' in Bristol and that they are seeking for leisure entertainment, which means they have inadequate knowledge about the backgrounds and history of the attraction before their visit. The interviewees who visit the attraction with their personal interests are motivated by personal attachment and gaining more knowledge about the attraction in-depth, and they are familiar with the history and stories of the ship. However, none of the visitors perceives the attraction is presented as a living museum, which they presume the attraction is traditional types of historical attractions that leads to their low expectations on the attraction before they visit.

Previous similar experience

The previous experience refers to the similar contents and the similar experience the visitors acquire at different historical attractions. The interviewee Richard is mentioning about his experience at the Royal Navy at Cardiff, according to him, the attraction is presented as a traditional type of museum.

'Like the warship at Cardiff, which was an ordinary ship, where you entered the ship, looked around in the captain's room, and that's it' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate, Chinese tourist, travelling with his friends).

Visiting living museum has become a trend for the British tourists, most of the interviewees have similar experiences at varieties of the historical attractions in the UK, such as the Mary Rose Museum at Portsmouth, the Warwick Castle, and the Black Country Museum. The Black Country Museum has been brought up multiple times by different interviewees. The interviewee James gets impressed by his experience at the Black Country Museum is because of the interactions with the live actors and live performances.

'I've remembered the Black Country Museum. We go there fair regularly. That one was good, they've done differently with real people, acting as people from the past rather than manikins, so there are people exhibiting skills from the past, there are live performance, and they have people who sitting in the house and tell you what the house was about, in interpretive ways. (James, male, British tourist).

Travel information checking platforms

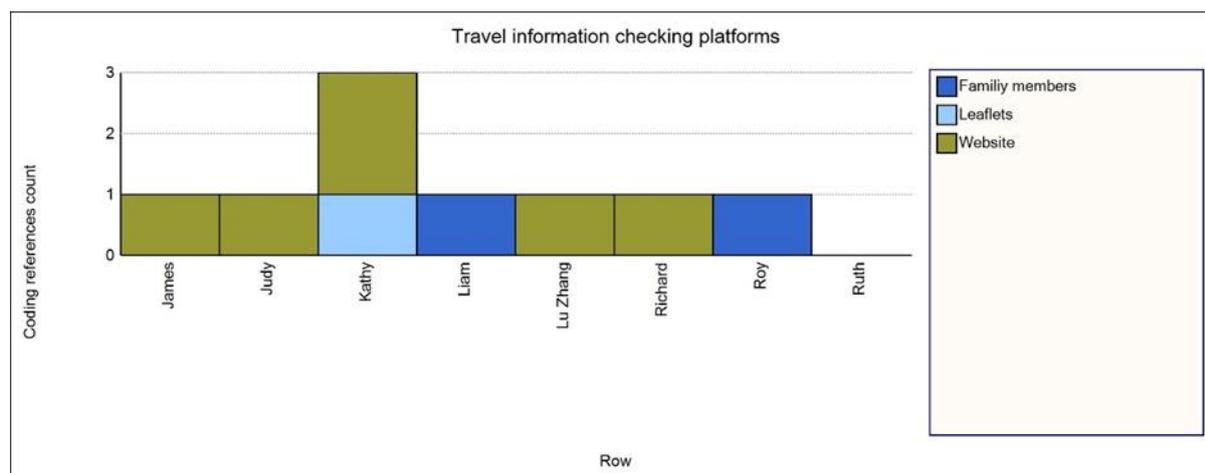


Figure 30 Travel information checking platforms

As it has been shown in *Figure 30*, most of the interviewees check travel information via the internet and website. Google and the attraction's official websites are the most common platforms for visitors before they travel. From the collected data, the visitors choose TripAdvisor to check the online reviews about destinations before they visit the attraction. There is one interviewee, who comes from China, using the travelling website Qyer.com to book tickets and check travel information because of the convenience and multi functions that the website has provided.

'Sometimes we use the qyer.com to check the destination information, and you can make your travel plan on the website, they have various options and recommendations on your travel budget, which is really convenient! If we want to check on reviews or comments of attractions, we'll use the TripAdvisor' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student who studies in London, Chinese tourist, travelling with her friends).

However, from the findings in the previous section, the interviewees presume the attraction is a traditional type of historical attraction rather than a living museum, which entails they have insufficient knowledge about the activities and the exhibitions of the attraction prior to arrival. The collected data shows that some of the visitors have checked 'things to do' in VisitBristol.com and Google to get general information about the attraction before they visit.

'I checked the 'things to do at Bristol' on VisitBristol.com to get a general idea about the attractions' (Judy, female, aged between 51-60, undergraduate degree, artist, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

6.3.3 During Visit

This section aims at providing a deep understanding of visitors' experience during their visit at the Brunel's SS Great Britain. It has been divided into four parts to explore the visitors' perceptions of travelling inside of the ship at the Victorian Age, which covers the subjects of the visitors' activities and most impressive experience onsite, sensations, authenticity, and immersive experience.

Activities and the most evocative experience onsite

The onsite activities refer to visitors' interactions with the physical environments while they are enjoying the great views on board. The visitors get impressed by the representation, the atmosphere and the interactions at the attraction. Their favourite spots include the area beneath the sea, the galley and the kitchen area, and the simulated toilet with the locked door.

Visitors get attracted by the representation and recreations on board because they are well-produced in details, realistic, and relating to the theme of the Victorian Age. The old-fashioned kitchen is decorated with the reproduced food and furniture in the physical environments, the manikin (the chef) with the sound effects and the lighting effects of the cat chasing rats create a scene that arouses visitors' imaginations.

'I think the kitchen area, they would have to provide all that food, with pots and pans, and have a huge fire in there, and cooking for all these people all day long, day in and day out, it's just amazing. Some of the food are showed in there very well!' (Ruth, female, aged between 61 to 70, retired, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

The atmosphere refers to the visitors to get the feeling of being part of the scene by the sightseeing and the soundscape at the attraction. Visitors are feeling the moment as if they were there, which are caused by the factors of the physical settings, the original ship with the watering effects and the surrounding sounds effects beneath the sea.

'The underneath of the ship, I was surprised by the scale of the ship. With the sounds of the ocean, they made you feel like you were diving in the water, the experience was so real' (Judy, female, aged between 51 to 60, undergraduate degree, artist, British tourist, travelling with families).

The interactions with the physical settings stimulate the visitors' tactile sensibility that also provides them with the opportunity to become part of the scene, such as opening the locked door, sitting on the Victorian styled sofa, lying on the bed at the third-class steerage. The toilet with the locked door has been a popular location at the attraction, which visitors get the feeling of immersion from the interactions and the sounds effects onsite.

'The toilets scene they've simulated was really funny, at first you couldn't open the door, and then the passenger was shouting at you to let you go away. It felt like someone came from hundreds of years ago was actually using that toilet, which was really interesting!' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate, Chinese tourist, travelling with his friends).

The finding at this section reveals that visitors give positive responses to their experience at the attraction are caused by the well-produced representation, the atmosphere, and the interactions with the physical settings onsite. Besides, the finding entails the sightseeing, the sounds effects and the tactile interactions enhance the visitors' sensibilities that have further improved their immersive experience at the attraction that will be explained in the next section.

Sensations

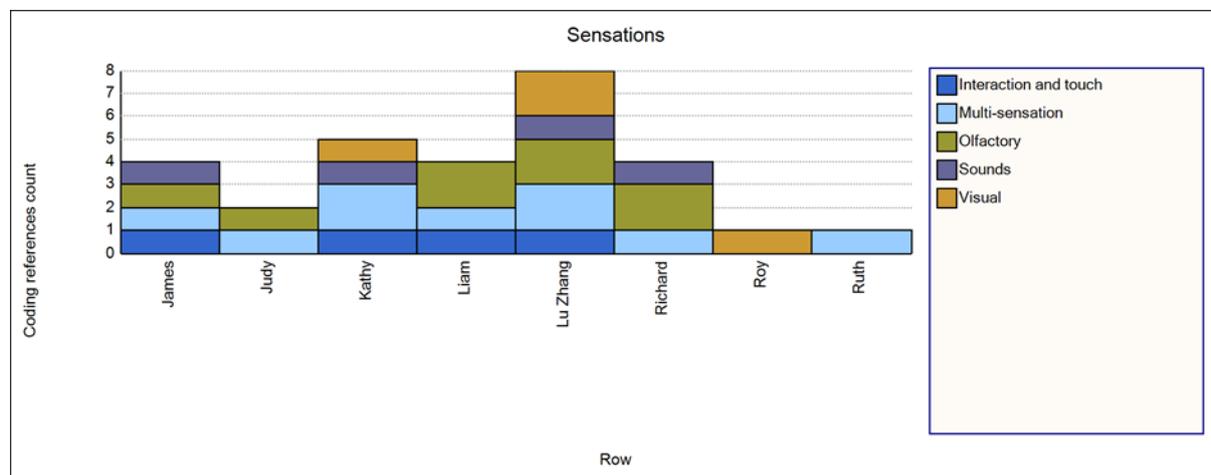


Figure 31 Sensations

According to *Figure 31*, the multi-sensor domains play as central roles during the visitors experience onsite, which refers to at least three sensations work together that provide visitors with the most immersive experience. The visual effects inspire the visitors to get familiar with their surrounding environments as the first step, whereas the combination of the simulated sound effects and the simulated smells guide the visitors into the illusionary world they are going to experience. The tactile interactions with the physical environments add the final link to the feeling of immersion that allows the visitors to step into the illusion and be part of the story. The finding also reveals visitors give the highest positive responses to the simulated olfactory onsite, following by the soundscape and the tactile interactions. Visitors get impressed by the decorations and well-produced appearance at the attraction, but the visual effect is the least mentioned sensation when visitors get fully immerse into the scene.

The olfactory arouses visitors' emotions and evokes their feelings of authenticity, which is associated with the factor of historical accuracy and relating to the themes inside of the ship, such as the aroma of

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the bakery room and the oil smell of the engine room. The simulated olfactory further enhances the visitors' understandings of the scenes and interpretations that have been created inside of the attraction.

'The scents they created in the ship was a plus to the whole experience. I quite like the bakery room, which made you feel warm and pleasant' (Judy, female, aged between 51 to 60, undergraduate degree, artist, British tourist).

'One thing surprised me was the scenes they put on the ship, which was a plus to the whole immersive experience. It was really stinky on the lower decks! The scents fitted perfectly for the scenarios inside of the ship, which definitely helped me to feel what the ship used to like' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist).

The sound effects guide visitors to get familiar with their surrounding environments which leads them to merge into the atmosphere at the attraction. The visitors' feeling of immersion is partially associated with the simulated sounds and the manikins (visual) onsite, which work together to present the stories that have happened on board at the Victorian Age.

'Some places were quite spooky because with around all these manikins, they looked very realistic in alive, and with they got the sound activated area, sounds like the baby crying and somebody 'Shush' you, I thought someone was in there while I was walking in there' (James, male, aged between 51 to 60, postgraduate degree, lab manager, British tourist).

The tactile interactions refer to the visitors' interactions with physical settings onsite, which enhances visitors' overall experience at the attraction. The interaction has converted visitors from the pure observers to the active performers that allow them to step into history and become the co-creators at the scene.

'I was also obsessed with the scenes that they have created on the ship, where you could actually lay on the bed, pull the rope deck, and sit in the room for upper class and pretend being rich, which was really interesting!'(Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, oversea student, Chinese tourist).

The visual effects of the representation have been least mentioned by the interviewees, yet it still plays a crucial role in the visitor experience onsite. The well-produced replicas and decorations onsite provide visitors with the general information about their surrounding environments, which functions as the first step that leads visitors to the feeling of immersion. Additionally, the replicas with historical accuracy and relating to the themes at the attraction improve the visitors' authentic experience during their visiting onsite.

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'The appearance and the layout of the ship were splendid! It was like being in an oil painting, and the colours they've used on the decorations definitely reflect the theme on the ship, I've noticed that they've been using the shaded grey colours in the poor people section, whilst in the banquet hall area the colours are brighter and richer...The scenes they recreated there looked so real, which reminded me the movie Titanic' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, oversea student, Chinese tourist).

The findings in the section stress the importance of the multi-sensation in the visitors' feeling of the immersion process. The sightseeing captures the atmosphere of the physical environments that arouses visitors' imaginations as the first step of being part of the scene. The simulated olfactory and the soundscape improve the visitors' immersive experience, which guides them to step into history. The tactile interactions turn visitors into the co-creators at the scene that provides them with the feeling of being there. At this stage, all the sensations have merged together to construct the most immersive experience for the visitors, but the visual sensory has been decreased from the central role during the process. The factors of historical accuracy and relating to the themes of the attraction (sounds, smell, sightseeing) have influences on the visitors' authentic experience that will be further explored in the next section.

Authenticity

From the collected data, the authenticity is constructed by original objective authenticity, constructive authenticity and subjective authenticity. The objective authenticity sets the foundation for the visitors' authentic experience, following by interactions with the physical environments that provide visitors with the *'more real than real'* moment, and then the subjective authenticity emerges as a result through the visitors' imaginations and memories.

The objective authenticity refers to the original objects and the realistic appearance of the replicas on board. The items that have been displayed and the ship itself are the original objects at the Victorian Age, whereas the scenes and decorations inside of the ship are replicas that have been reproduced based on the historical records and the original objects inside of the museum. The visitors perceive the recreations on board as the *'real'* objects because of the realistic appearance because of the historical accuracy and the details of the reproductions (texture, colours, materials).

'I like the bread, and the pans bubbling on the stove, I think that was all very realistic! I mean the ship is the original isn't it? The inside of the ship was changed and remade, but I presume how it was, does it? Because it's constructed so realistic...so when they found it, they knew where it was, didn't they?' (Ruth, female, aged between 61 to 70, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

It was realistic and accurate! There was a close resemblance between the replicas on the ship and the original pieces at the museum! We were impressed by how delicate the replicas appeared on the ship! (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese student who studies in London, travelling with her friends).

The authentic experience is associated with the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments on board, which provides visitors with a symbolic image of the history inside of the ship. The atmosphere is constructed by the appearance, the sounds effects and the olfactory simulation, and the interactions add the final link to enhance the visitors' authentic experience. During the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environment, the feeling of immersion has appeared. For instance, one of the interviewees has mentioned about her 'seasick' experience while she is visiting on board:

'I felt it when we were in the third class and the second class, where with all these books, and the kitchen area, I thought it was the tremendous feeling when you got from that, it also, I get seasick, and I know it wasn't moving, but I got the feeling it was moving...' (Ruth, female, aged between 61 to 70, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

At this stage, the subjective authentic feeling is aroused by the visitors' personal backgrounds and understandings, where they create their own stories through their imaginations and memories. 'Being part of the scene' triggers the visitors' creativities and imaginations subjectively that stimulates their most immersive and authentic experience onsite.

'I think we probably would be gone in the third class, I don't think we would be in the first class, would we? But even in the first class, their beds and the space are very small, and in fact, third class in some way seemed have a little bit more space, even the bed seems longer...Maybe the people at that time were much smaller' (Ruth, female, aged between 61 to 70, British tourist, travelling with her husband).

The room like you said with little tiny bed and tiny little cabins, when I was a little girl, we used to come cross to England in a boat, and we had cabins and things, even then the cabins were bigger. But it was still quite compact, and the thing they had to travel further in Australia! It must be amazing! And the little skylights in the steerage classes, they didn't have the light coming in and they had been covered over. And then in the very nice first class, they had the light coming in to let them enjoy. Probably kept them warm as well! (Kathy, female, aged between 61 to 70, British tourist, members of the history society in the UK).

The finding stresses the importance of constructive authenticity, but the objective authenticity is the first step that convinces the visitors to believe *'it is real'* during their experience onsite. The realistic appearance of the recreations is associated with the factors of historical accuracy that relates to the themes of the attraction. The detailed qualities of the reproductions (materials, colours and textures) enhance visitors' authentic experience during their interactions with the physical environments onsite. The visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments function as a bridge, which guides them to the *'more real than real'* moment. During this stage, the visitors' subjective imaginations and understandings play as key roles that allow them to create their personal stories, which enhances their feelings of *'being there'*. The combination of the physical environments and the visitors' subjectivities stimulate visitors the most immersive experience, and the visitors' feelings of immersion will be further explored in the next section.

Immersive experience

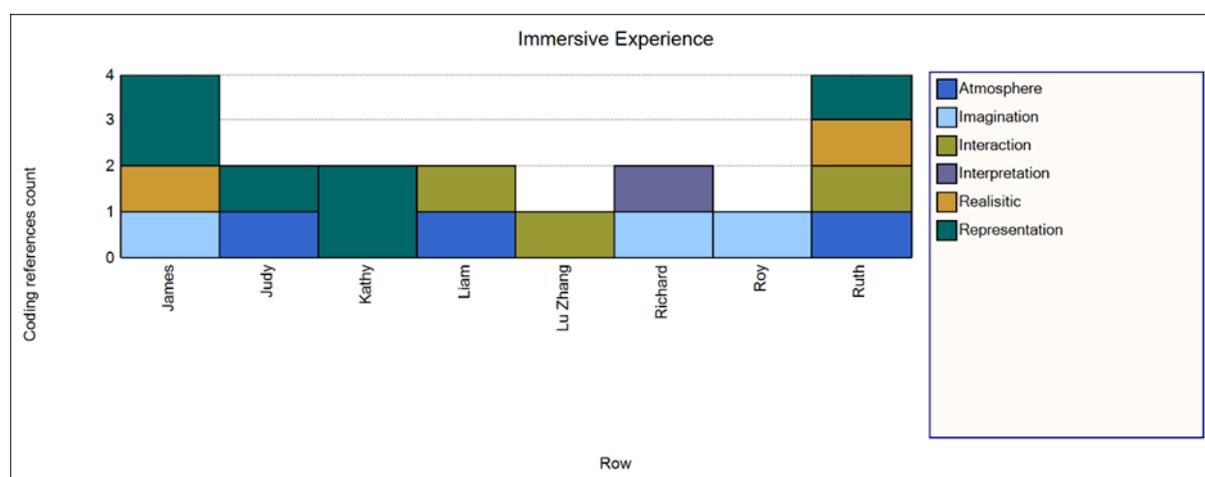


Figure 32 Immersive experience

Based on the previous findings, the immersive experience is caused by the objective reproductions, visitors' interactions, and their subjectivities. According to *Figure 32*, the objective reproductions refer to the interpretations and realistic representations at the attraction, which works together to create an atmosphere that allows visitors to experience. The interactions with the objective reproductions onsite enhance their immersive experience, which evokes their multi-sensibilities and their feelings of immersion.

'It was nice to walk inside of these rooms, and there were manikins and the scents they made inside of the room, which was really good! You kind of have that feeling of being on that boat hundreds of years ago, it's not modern experience. Seeing and experiencing a bit of history with all the stuff around the outside, the displays just made the feeling of the old boat...they showed you all the histories, you'll go

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through all about, which was really nice to the picture of history' (Liam, male, aged between 61 to 70, undergraduate degree, retired teacher, tourist from Australia).

From the visitors' subjective perspectives, their understandings and imaginations enhance the feelings of immersion in which they imagine themselves becoming the characters who used to live inside of the ship based on their personal backgrounds.

'It was just like how you could live like that for 18 months getting to Australia, in such a small component, with a family as well! It's just very time sort out thing... It's just amazing! I can't really describe it. It's just so full of amazing things' (Roy, male, aged between 51 to 60, service engineer, local resident at Bristol, travelling with his families).

Apart from the visitors who get an immersive experience on board, two of the interviewees are not able to have the feelings of immersion even though they are satisfied with their experience at the attraction. The reasons are caused by cultural differences and modern intrusions, and they are both Chinese overseas students who study in the UK. The interviewee Lu Zhang describes her feelings as 'watching a movie', because she is not able to imagine herself being part of the scene due to the reason of the lack of a full understanding about the western culture.

'Not really...I mean what they had here were really nice and delegate, you could feel the atmosphere in the Victorian age, but for me, it's more like watching a movie rather than being in there...everything here was perfect...it's just I was not able to feel it. I guess it's because of the cultural difference, which didn't give me that cultural identity... things like the language, the costumes they wear, the decorations on the ship and the food they put on the display...' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist, travelling with her friends).

The interviewee Richard is affected by the modern intrusions during his visit onsite. The modern visitors around him lead to his inauthentic feelings. Instead of being part of the scene, he imagines himself and other visitors as the outsiders who are going to explore inside of an ancient unknown world.

'Not really...I didn't feel like I were a crew or a passenger in the Victorian age, but it definitely brought up my curiosity and interests to explore inside of the ship. It's more like being an explorer or an archaeologist rather than a passenger. Because you couldn't immerse yourself into the scenario while you were surrounding by the tourists who were wearing modern clothes with cell phones or cameras in their hands. It might be more immersive if people around you dressed in Victorian styles, and talking in the old-fashioned way' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist, travelling with his friends).

The finding argues that the factors influence on the visitors' immersive experience from two aspects, which include the productions at the attraction and the visitors' subjectivities. From the organization perspective, the modern intrusions affect the visitors' feeling of immersion that makes it difficult to let them reach to the past. From the visitor's perspective, personal subjectivity and understanding are equally important as the re-created productions on board. The cultural difference decreases the visitors' full understandings of the histories and stories behind the attraction which in turn provides them with fewer opportunities to use their imaginations immersing into the story and becoming part of the scene.

6.3.4 After Visit

This section demonstrates the visitors' perceptions of their hyperreal experience and future travel intentions after they have visited the attraction, which covers the subjects of their perceptions of the traditional museums versus the living museums, their overall experience, recommendations and future travel intentions.

Perceptions of the living museums versus the traditional museums

From the collected data, most of the interviewees prefer their experience in living museums than traditional museums. Firstly, because it presents history in an interesting approach, which allows visitors to get insights into the history more intuitively. Secondly, the form of interactions turns visitors into the performers instead of pure observers, which can increase visitors' immersive experience. As the interviewee Lu Zhang puts it:

'You couldn't smell the aroma of the kitchen, or the scent of the medicine at the Bristol Museum, isn't it? I quite like the way they designed in here, which makes everything merge into scenarios that allows you to experience and explore' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist, travelling with friends).

Additionally, the recreations on board evoke the visitors' multi-sensibilities that enhances their feelings of immersion and authentic experience.

'I do prefer this one, because it's more real. I prefer the way that you can interact with all those things, like the one in here. The thing I like about this type of museum is that you can interact with rather than just looking at stuff...which is a better experience than galleries where you can just look at' (Liam, male, aged between 61 to 70, undergraduate degree, retired teacher, travelling with families from Australia).

Some of the interviewees give neutral responses to their preferences on different types of historical attractions, because they get different experiences from the attractions. Visitors are motivated to visit the traditional museums because they can expand their existing knowledge and gain an insight into

history in depth. Whereas the experience at the living museums enhances the visitors' immersive experience that allows them to turn the knowledge into their personal memories.

'I do appreciate that they put the exhibitions and museum in front of the ship, which you can learn about the historical context before you experience in it' (Judy, female, aged between 51 to 60, undergraduate degree, artist, British tourist).

I do enjoy learning the history of the ship in the museum, which you can learn about the history first, and then you immerse yourself into that recreated environment...It definitely helps me to understand it and memorise it in depth (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist, travelling with his friends).

Overall experience

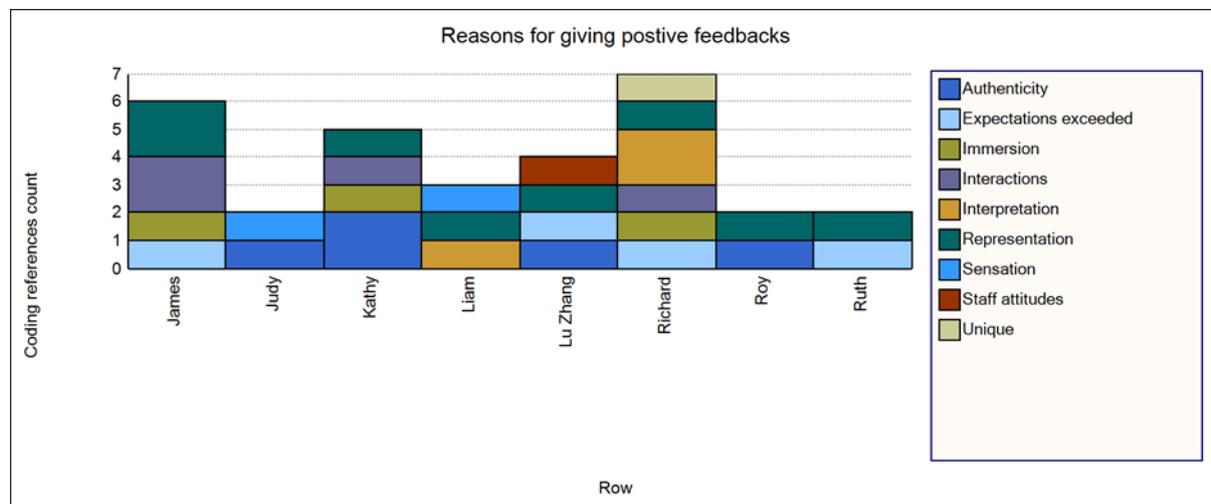


Figure 33 Overall experience

Based on the collected data, all the interviewees give total positive feedback on their overall experience at the SS Great Britain, and some of the interviewees tend to revisit the attraction in the future. As the interviewee Kathy says:

'Absolute marvellous! We came at 11.00am, and we are leaving at 4.00pm. And we really need to come again, there's too much to see! We need to three or four visits! It's so much better than we had anticipated, isn't it?' (Kathy, female, aged between 61 to 70, physiotherapist, British tourist).

According to Figure 33, the scenes and the stories that have been recreated at the attraction arouse visitors the authentic and immersive experience, which exceeds some visitors' expectations after they have visited the ship. The project developing teams have accomplished their aims and purposes to let visitors reach into the past, which is caused by four factors that include the representation, the

interpretation, the interaction, and the staff professional performances onsite. The delicate and accurate recreations have a significant influence on the visitors first impressions on the ship:

'I was impressed by the appearance and the layout of the ship, which was well-produced and splendid! It was like being in an oil painting, and the colours they've used on the decorations definitely reflect the themes of the ship, I've noticed that they've been using the shaded grey colours in the steerage, whilst in the banquet hall area the colours are brighter and richer' (Lu Zhang, female, postgraduate degree, oversea student who comes from the mainland China).

Apart from the appearance and visual effects, the simulated olfactory elements and the soundscape contribute to the visitors' multi-sensibilities that enhance on their feelings of the moment.

'Some places were quite spooky because with around all these manikins, they looked very realistic in alive, and with they got the sound activated area, sounds like the baby crying and somebody 'Shush' you, I thought someone was in there while I was walking in there' (James, male, aged between 51 to 60, postgraduate degree, lab manager, British tourist).

'The scents they created in the ship was a plus to the whole experience. I quite like the bakery room, which made you feel warm and pleasant' (Judy, female, aged between 51-60, undergraduate degree, artist, British tourist).

Additionally, the narratives and interpretation of the attraction enrich the visitors' understanding of the history and stories about the ship. The combination of the interpretation and the representation have portrayed an image of the ship in the Victorian Age that improves the visitors' authentic and immersive experience.

'What touched me the most was the recreations of the stories and history on the ship. You could find the cards of different passengers who used to live on the ship inside of the museum, which you get an insight about their identities, backgrounds and stories. And they had reflected these stories on the ship, where you could find the woman who was giving labour on the lower deck, or the passenger who got sick sitting in the pharmacy room. I was quite amazed by the fact that all these combined together, which created the atmosphere and stories that I could immerse myself in' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, oversea student from the mainland China).

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Furthermore, the interactions with the physical environments add the final link that allows the visitor to step into history which makes visitor become the active performer than the passive observer. The transition enhances the visitors' overall experience and the feelings of immersion.

'The thing I like about this type of museum is that you can interact with rather than just looking at stuff...which is a better experience than galleries where you can just look at' (Liam, male, aged between 61 to 70, undergraduate degree, retired teacher, Australia tourist).

'I thought interactive things were really good, like the toilet doors and it doesn't open, things like that, which was good! They said different things, and I went back and force three times for checking. They said, 'what are you thinking!' I thought that was a good way of saying' (James, male, aged between 51 to 60, postgraduate degree, hotel manager, British tourist).

The staff's attitudes and performances onsite also play as a crucial part to meet the visitors' satisfaction that can enhance their overall experience at the attraction. From the interviewee Lu Zhang's description, the staff's passionate and professional explanation of the ship provides her with an insight into the ship in-depth, which promotes her overall experience at the attraction.

The staff here are really kind and passionate, there was one old gentleman told us the stories and histories about this ship while we were in the banquet hall, seems like he knows everything about the ship! (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate student, Chinese tourist).

Some of the interviewees have low expectations on the attraction based on their previous experience at the traditional type of museums and heritage attractions. After they have experienced onsite, they give highly responses to the attraction because the representation, the interpretation and the interaction provide them with the most unique experience. As the interviewee Richard says:

'I think this one must be the best that beyond my expectations! The experience was very unique, which was different from the normal experience that you can get in the traditional kind of museums. Like the warship at Cardiff, which was an ordinary ship, where you entered the ship, looked around in the captain's room, and that's it' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, oversea student from the mainland China).

This section indicates the visitors' expectations are exceeded after they have experienced at the Brunel's SS Great Britain, which is caused by their immersive and authentic experience at the attraction. The finding reveals that the interpretations and the representations set up the atmosphere and stimulate

the visitors' multi sensibilities, which enhances their immersive experience by the interactions with the physical environments onsite. However, the visitors are expecting more live actors onsite that allows them to interact with a greater range of situations, and their recommendations will be further demonstrated in the next section.

Recommendations and future travel intentions

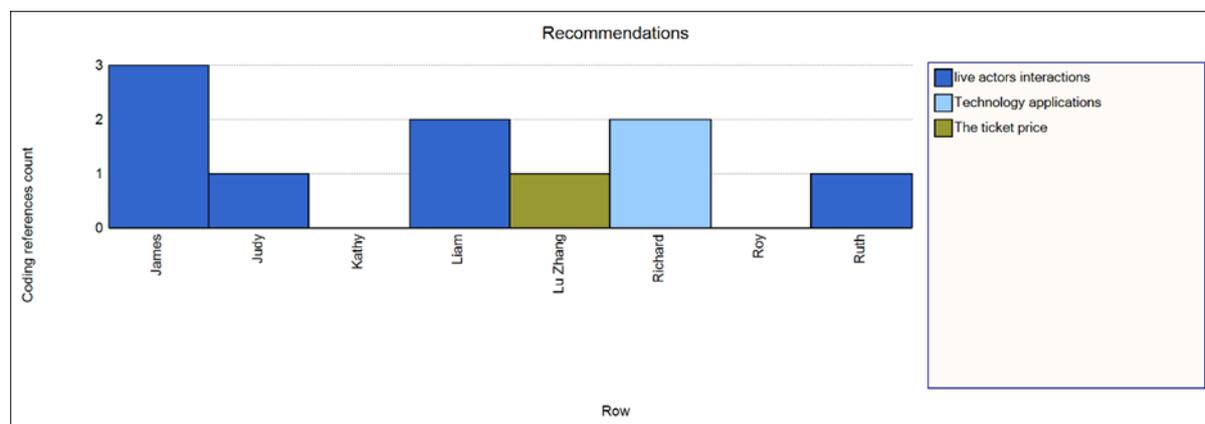


Figure 34 Recommendations

From the previous section, most of the interviewees are satisfied with their experience at the attraction, but some of the visitors suggest increasing the interactions with the live actors onsite for further improvement. According to *Figure 34*, four of the interviewees recommend replacing the life-sized manikins to the real live actors, which can make their experience onsite more realistic. When visitors are 'being there at the scene', they are seeking for communications and interactions with the people who 'come from the past'. The interviewee James talks about his favourite experience at the living museum Black Country Museum, and he describes it as the best attraction that he has been to in the UK because of the interactive activities with the live actors.

'I would always say the Black Country Museum, because it's my favourite museum. I've remembered the Black Country Museum, we go there fair regularly. That one was good, they've done differently with real people, acting as people from the past rather than manikins, so there are people exhibiting skills from the past, there are live performance, and they have people who sitting in the house and tell you what the house was about, in interpretive ways... Having a few people dressing like the people from the past would be quite nice! Replace one or two the manikins to real people' (James, male, aged between 51 to 60, postgraduate degree, lab manager, British tourist, travelling with his families).

Opposite to the interviewee James, Richard holds his suggestions onsite from a different perspective, which he suggests applying emerging technologies such as VR to break the modern intrusions from other visitors.

'But I think if they developed a room with VR, where you could feel the wave on the sea, or being a captain or a sailor in one scene, the experience might be more immersive. the amounts of the tourists will always be more than the amounts of the wax figures or live actors. I think developing a place to separate the tourists with the scenes, a simulated environment, like the Harry Potter Roller Coaster at the Universal Studio, which might help the visitors to become part of the story' (Richard, male, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chinese tourist, travelling with his friends).

Most of the visitors are satisfied with the entrance fees at the attraction, which allows them to revisit the site in one year. However, only one Chinese visitor Lu Zhang suggests reducing the ticket price, because she does not have any intention to revisit Bristol in the future.

'One thing bums me out a little bit was the entrance fee, which I think they should lower it to 10-13 pounds. I know you can visit the site repeatedly in one year, but we don't live here in Bristol, and we probably only come here once...' (Lu Zhang, female, aged between 25 to 30, postgraduate degree, Chine tourist, travelling with her friends).

In differ from the interviewee Lu Zhang, some of the visitors have future intentions to revisit the attraction, which they could gain more knowledge and understandings of the attraction.

'I know we done superficially, it would be really nice to spend more times with the New Museum and do everything properly. I just want to go and see everything. we'll visit here again, I'll bring my dearly beloved husband, he would like to see this!' (Kathy, female, aged between 61 to 70, British tourist, member of the history society in the UK).

The finding in this section suggests that visitors are satisfied with their interactions with the physical environments onsite, but they are seeking for taking part in the interactive activities with the live actors onsite. Once the visitors have become part of the scene, the interactions and communications keep their feelings of immersion lingering. In addition, the finding reveals that the feelings of immersion could get decreased by the modern intrusions from other visitors, as the interviewee Richard suggests, to apply more emerging technologies to blur the line between the reality and the past, but the simulated environment decreases the visitors' interactions with the live actors and the physical environments at the same time.

6.4 Travels in Hyperreality: The Observation Findings

This section focuses on exploring the visitors encounters at the hyperreal world from the researcher's observation onsite, which aims at validating the findings in the previous sections from a different perspective. The section has been divided into two parts from the observing process onsite, which includes the researcher's subjective experience as a pure visitor onsite and the researcher's records onsite as a pure observer. Experiencing as a pure visitor enhances the researcher's understanding and feeling about the attraction that sets up the foundations for the following observation and interview process during the fieldwork. The observation as a pure researcher decreases personal bias, which balances the findings more objectively.

6.4.1 Subjective Perspective

From my personal experience onsite as an insider, the atmosphere and the representation arouse my imaginations that enhances my feelings of immersion onsite. The atmosphere and the landscape beneath the sea and on deck have impressed me the most.

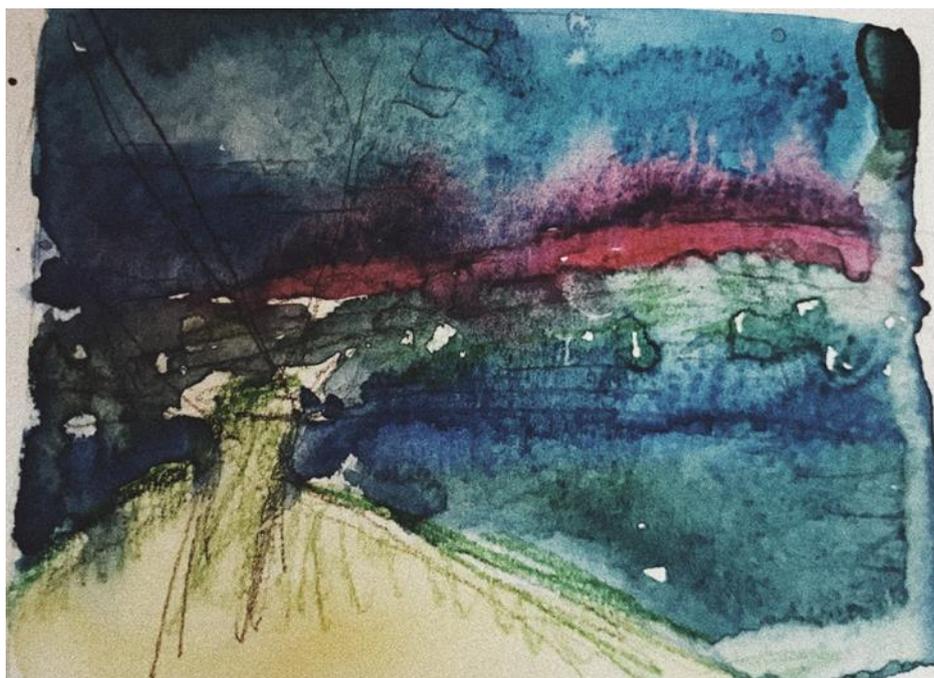


Figure 35 Landscape on board

Wednesday, April 2018 Weather: Windy

'With the wind, and the cow moaning on board, it feels like I was one of the sailors who is travelling on the sea. The sea gull around enhances that kind of feelings. Sitting on board, seeing the buildings and mountains far from distance, with the

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water beneath, everything seems to merge together and becomes a well painted image' (my personal experience from the observation diary).

The quotes from the diary show that the atmosphere is constructed by the sightseeing and the soundscape, and the views of the landscape stimulate my creativities and imaginations, whereas the sounds effects further advance on the feeling of immersion. In terms of the experience inside of the ship, the galley with the delicate replicas of the kitchenware and the food arouse my first attention, following by the sound effects of the manikins and the simulated sounds of the cat and the rats.

'The fireplace looks so real, with the pork chops on the top that makes me want to grab it and eat it (I did grab the food on the top of the stove) ...feels like I was sneaking into someone's kitchen without permission, the chef seems like a little bit angry, which is creepy!'

Additionally, the interactions with the physical environments bring visitor inside of the scene, but I consider myself as an explorer rather than a character who used to live inside of the ship because it is difficult for me to link myself to the Victorian Age.



Figure 36 The dining saloon

'The dining saloon looks amazing, but feels like I am an explore rather than the people who used to live in here, I just can't imagine that I am wearing a Victorian styled dress and becoming part of the scene'.

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The simulated olfactory improves my feeling of the authenticity at the scene, especially in the bakery room.

'The smell of the bakery room is amazing, and I can feel the heat of the oven. The fake bread on the shelf looks so real.'

The olfactory in combination with other sensory reduces the visual effects from the central role, which makes the reproduced bread have been least noticed for me. From my experience inside of the ship, the multi-sensory stimulation enhances the feeling of the real. The interactions with other visitors on board improve my immersive feeling, which turns me to become the co-creators at the scene.

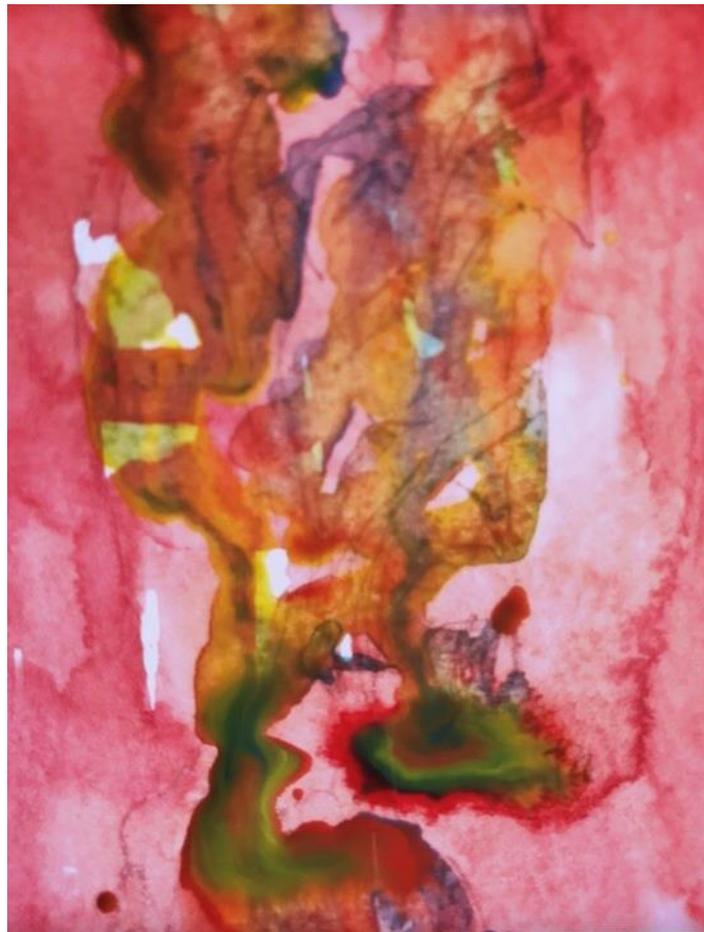


Figure 37 The multi-sensory stimulation on board

'One female visitor (elderly, British tourist) asked me to open the toilet door, then I heard someone was yelling at me, which was interesting, and we all laughed... We were following one visitor(she was like the leader of our exploring team), and we were trying to open each locked door at the promenade deck, it was like there were treasures left behind those doors. That was such an amazing experience!'

6.4.2 Objective Perspective

Table 20 Observation findings

Locations and activities inside of the attraction	Representation	Visitors behaviours
The weather deck	Appearance: The rebuilt architecture, painted in warm colours, artificial farm animals Sounds: simulated animal sounds The entrance to the inside of the ship Staff on board with costumes	Visitors: elderly, and middle-aged groups of visitors Visitor behaviours: talking about the functions of the wheel on board, observing other visitors climb the rigging, taking pictures and waving hands on board
Beneath the sea	Appearance: The original ship with water on the top Sounds: the sounds of the water	Sitting and observing the scale of the ship, taking pictures, looking at the introduction board
The galley	Appearance: replicas of the Victorian-styled furniture, life-sized manikin with costumes, lightning screen effects of the rats and the cats, artificial food and kitchenware, visual effects of the fire Sounds: simulated sound of the chef, the bubbling sound in the pot	Visitors become curious, 'look at this' Looking for the cats inside of the kitchen, younger aged groups of visitors are touching the cupboard to catch the rat, and they are touching the fire, Grabbing the artificial jelly
The storage room	Appearance: replicas of the food and vegetables Olfactory: mouldy smells	Opening the cupboard, seeing the objects inside of the bag
The bakery room	Appearance: reproduced bakery oven in Victorian style, artificial bread Olfactory: aroma of the bread	Picking up the bread on the shelf, observing the oven in old-fashioned style, discussing the smell with their friends
The steerage	Appearance: reproduced Victorian-styled furniture in poor conditions, painted in dark colours, manikins with costumes Sounds effects: women are gossiping with each other, a woman who is giving labour and the sounds of the baby crying Olfactory: simulated filthy smell	Lying on the bed, taking pictures, walking around One younger aged visitor talks to his mom: I want to see the newborn baby! Is it real?'
The toilet	Appearance: the locked door Sounds: simulated sounds of the man shouting at the visitors who are trying to open the door Olfactory: the smell of the toilet	Try to open the locked door repeatedly, laughing, video recording

The dining saloon	Appearance: replicas of the Victorian-styled furniture, manikin, artificial food and tableware, painted in bright and warm colours	Taking pictures, sitting on the Victorian-styled seats, enjoying the great view onsite, playing cards
Go aloft! Climb the rigging!	The crew explain how it works to the visitors before the visitors take part in the activity	Other visitors are watching the visitor who climb the rigging, take pictures One mid-aged male visitor says: 'I wasn't expecting of this
Discovery talks on board	The history and stories about the ship, talked by the crew on board	Asking the authenticity of the decorations inside of the ship, and the crew answers the questions professionally 'It's a picture of it was used to like'.

From the observation as a pure researcher onsite, the attraction is presented in a combination of the physical reproduced Victorian styled environments and multi-sensory simulations, such as the simulated sound effects of the manikins and the simulated olfactory in different locations. Visitors are enjoying the views and taking pictures on the weather deck and beneath the sea because of the landscape and the atmosphere. Visitors get more interactions with the physical environments inside of the ship, such as lying on bed and grabbing the food inside of the galley. The finding reveals that the interactions arouse visitors' curiosity and interest in exploring inside of the ship. The toilet with the locked door is one of the most popular spots at the attraction, where visitors are waiting in lines to hear the 'man' shouting at them inside of the locked door. The soundscape and the simulated olfactory enhance the visitors' authentic feelings, where the visitor asks about: 'Is it real?' when the simulated sounds of a baby crying at the steerage. From the discovery talks onsite, some of the visitors are asking about the authenticity of the ship frequently to the crews on board, which they think the layouts inside of the ship are the original settings. The staff explains it as a symbolic image that represents the glories of the ship at the Victorian Age:

'It combines the symbolic elements to create the atmosphere of the ship at the Victorian Age. The cow on deck and some decorations are from different periods in the history. But they do exist based on the original displayed objects at the museum and the historical records' (One of the crews on board, male, mid-aged).

In comparison with the previous findings in the visitor section, the atmosphere and the representation arouse the visitors' imaginations that refers to the first step of the feelings of immersion. From the researcher's subjective observation onsite, visitors get impressed by the interactions with the physical environments onsite. Similar to the findings from the visitor perspective, the multi-sensory stimulation plays an important role in the visitors' immersive experience onsite. The sound effects and olfactory

enhance the visitors' authentic experience, and when the multi-sensibilities emerge, the visual sensory decreases from its central role. From the researcher experience as a pure visitor onsite, she is not able to get the immersive experience as a character at the Victorian Age because of cultural difference, which is associated with the findings of the Chinese interviewee Lu Zhang at the visitor immersive experience section. Different from the finding at the visitor immersive section, the researcher perceives the interactions with other visitors onsite as the co-creator at the scene rather than the modern intrusions, which enhances the immersive experience.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the visitors' hyperreal experience at the Brunel's SS Great Britain from three perspectives, which include the organization, the visitor and the researcher. The visitors give positive evaluations on the attraction is because of the co-creation values that they have become the co-producers instead of the passive observers through their interactions with the physical environments onsite. Additionally, visitors are satisfied with their overall experience because the organization and the visitors are staying on the same page, and the visitors receive the messages that the organization has delivered properly.

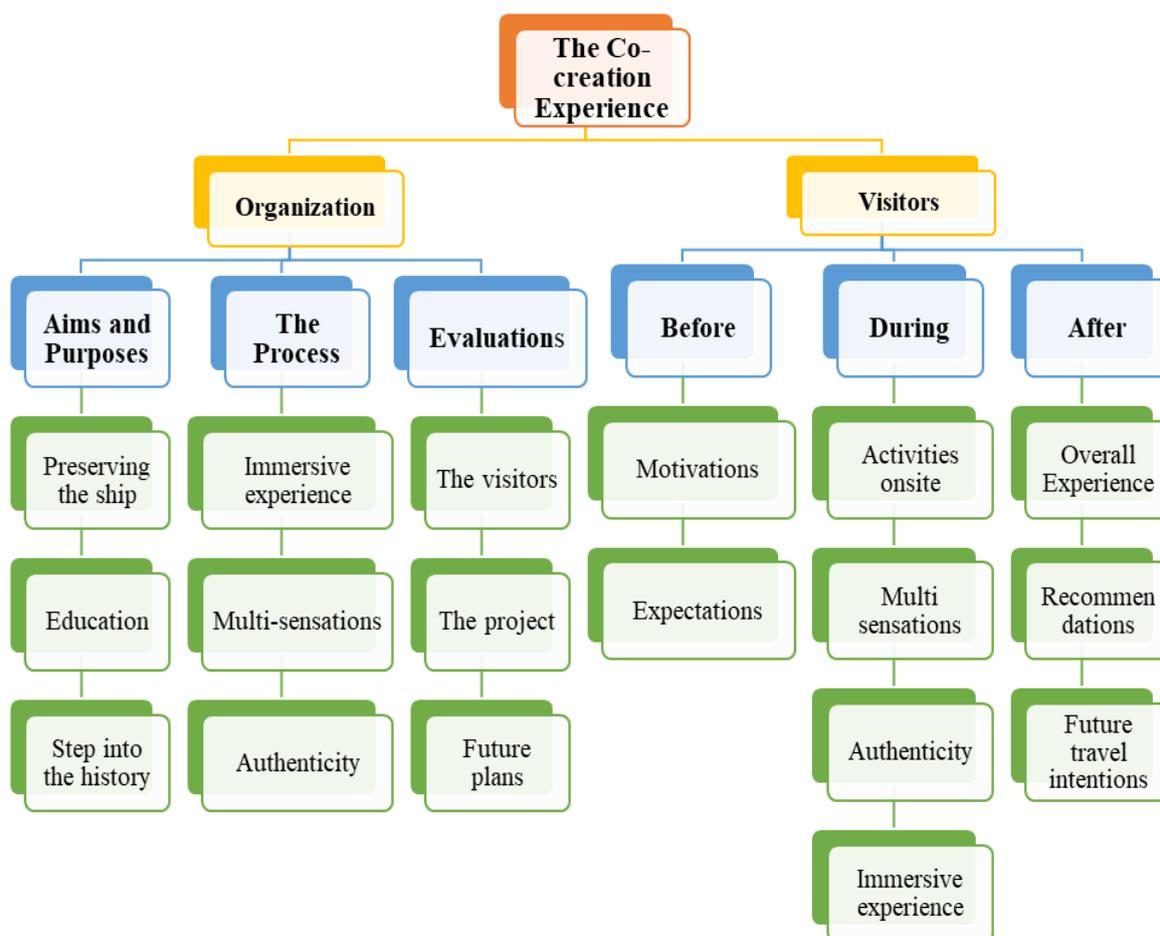


Figure 38 The co-creation experience

According to *Figure 38*, the organization aims at providing a platform that allows visitors to step into history. From the visitors' responses, they get impressed by the form of living museum at the attraction. The diagram of the SS Great Britain is resembling the most to the conceptual framework of the research in the literature review chapter. The findings stress the importance of the multi-sensory stimulation of the visitors' feelings of immersion. Also, similar to the organization perspective, constructive authenticity provides visitors with the most immersive experience at the site. The existential authenticity works as a result at the final step that allows visitors to create their own stories based on their understandings and backgrounds. The immersive experience refers to the recreations that have been produced by both the organization and the visitors, which they can create their personal narratives from their interactions with the physical environments onsite and imaginations. The findings also reveal the modern intrusions affect the visitors' immersive experience, from the organization perspective, the modern intrusion relates to the objects and the themes onsite, while for the visitors, the modern intrusions are caused by other modern visitors. In addition, from the findings in the visitors' immersive experience section, the cultural difference has impacts on the visitors' immersive experience as well, which makes the visitors relatively unable or able to imagine themselves being part of the scene due to their different backgrounds. In terms of the visitors' recommendations onsite, visitors are seeking for more interactions with the live actors onsite, which is associated with the organization's plan in the next step. The interactive forms of visitors' hyperreal experience will be further identified in the next chapter.

Chapter 7 The Interactions: Dharma Legends in Famen Temple

7.1 Introduction and Background

The Famen Temple, one of the cultural symbolic Buddhism attractions in Shaanxi province, is situated in the Famen town, the Fufeng county. The temple attracts large amounts of Buddhists to visit because of the Shakyamuni's relic finger bones that have been buried under the pagoda at the temple. According to the Buddhist scriptures, the Shakyamuni's relics have been brought by the King Asoka from India in 272BC to popularize the Buddhist doctrines to the world. The original temple is built at the North Zhong Dynasty by the Emperor Huan and gets well developed at Tang Dynasty that makes the temple has been reputed as an imperial temple. The underground palace has been built to serve for the relic of Shakyamuni, along with more than 2000 pieces of treasures and relics that have been awarded by the emperors of Tang, which include numerous precious gold and silver objects, rare porcelains and glass, and the fragile silk textile. The underground palace is not opened to the public until the year of 1987 when it has been hit by the thunder during the reconstruction of the pagoda onsite. However, the treasures and the relics have been moved to the museum and the newly built tower at the attraction, which provides visitors with no opportunity to appreciate the mysterious legacy that left by the ancestors (famensi.com, 2019).

In order to keep the legacy alive and bring history alive, the institution 'De Lang' has produced the live performance 'The Dharma Legends at Famen Temple' for the attraction in the year of 2017. In contrast to the traditional types of live performances, the show at the Famen Temple aims at blurring the boundaries between the audience and the live actors that provides visitors with the experience of 'being there' rather than 'seeing it'. In terms of the technology applications and the representation of the show, it combines physical settings with the hologram projection to recreate the scenes that allow the visitors to explore. The script of the show is based on the history timeline of the unforeseen events that have happened at the Famen Temple, which provides a platform for the audience to learn not just about the concept of Dharma but also the interpretations of how the ancestors used to protect the legacy from generation to generation.

Table 21 The interpretations of the show

The Plots	Narratives and Interpretations
The opening ceremony	The Buddhist worship and rituals
Scene one	The origins of the Shakyamuni and the underground palace with the relics bone of Buddha
Scene two	The dancing mudra, the preserving monk dedicates his whole life to rebuild the collapsed pagoda that caused by the earthquake at Ming Dynasty
Scene three	The story of the General Zhu in the period of the republic of China
Scene four	The monk Qing Liang scarifies himself to protect the underground palace from the Red Guards in 1966 (the Chinese Cultural Revolution)

Last scene	The re-constructed underground palace with the Shakyamuni relic finger bone
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Table 21 above presents the interpretations and the narratives of the live performance, instead of sitting quietly and watching the show, visitors are invited to walk along with the live actors through the gate to gate in 70 minutes. Each gate represents a historical time and space as has been explained in Table 21, which turns visitors into the co-producers of the show rather than the passive observers. For example, at the earthquake scene, the visitors find themselves are surrounding by the ancestors who come from the Ming Dynasty; witnessing the tragedy when the monk Qing Liang burns himself in front of the Red Guards to protect the pagoda and the underground palace beneath; joining with the audience who come from the period of the republic China to enjoy General Zhu playing the Shaanxi Opera in front of the 'stage' (Famenwangshi.com, 2019).



Figure 39 The interactive live performance onsite (Source: Famenwangshi.com, 2019 obtained the copyright with the organization's permission)

The interactive live performance brings out a new form that breaks the boundaries between the audience seats versus the stage in front, which visitors become part of the scene by interacting with the live actors and other visitors onsite that makes the live performance is co-created by the visitors, the show itself, and the live actors. Thus, this chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' experience and perceptions of the interactive form of live performance from three perspectives, which include the organization, the visitors and the researcher's observation onsite. The organization section addresses a brief overview of the re-created production that covers the subjects of the aims and purposes, the process, and the evaluations on the interactive live performance. The visitor section is associated with the visitors' experience and understanding of the hyperreal production, which has been divided as before, during and after. The researcher's observation validates the finding from multiple perspectives, which contains the aspects of objectivity and subjectivity. The conclusion is drawn in the final section that covers the significant findings of the research and the co-creation values by both the organization and the visitors.

7.2 Travels in Hyperreality: The Organization Perspective

The section presents the findings of the fieldwork at the ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’ from the organization’s perspective. It begins by laying out the aims and purposes of the organization to develop the interactive form of live performance at the attraction, following by the procedures and process, finishing by the evaluations on their audience and the project as a brief summary of this section.

The interviewee Bin Gao is the chief artistic officer of the live performance ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’. The show is produced and developed by the live performance company ‘De Lang’, who focuses on bringing audience a new way of appreciating the live performances by applying distinct types of techniques, such as the newest emerging technologies and interactive forms of acting.

7.2.1 Aims and Purposes

According to Bin Gao, the primary goal for the organization to producer the interactive live performance at the attraction is to inspire the audience to gain their knowledge about history from a different aspect. The organization encourages the audience to become part of the scene and to turn it into their own valuable memories from their personal understandings and creativities. The interactive form is crucial for the audience as the co-creator of the show because it can arouse their personal empathy by getting involved with the scenes onsite, as Bin Gao describes the experience as ‘*being there*’ rather than ‘*seeing it*’.

‘Most visitors come to the Famen Temple are either Buddhists or people with benevolence, who are interested in knowing the stories and histories of the Sakyamuni and this temple. Some people may say this is such a place to clear your mind and purify your soul. Walking and interacting with the live actors in the performance is the best way to let the visitors to experience and gain knowledge about the history of the Famen Temple... That’s why we are using the interactive approach as a medium deliver the concept of ‘lightning versus darkness’ to our audience, which allows them be part of it and take part in the performance. The initial thought is to present visitors an experience like ‘something really happens to you, rather than something you see from a movie or a show’.

Besides, the organization seeks to present the history and the culture in a novelty form that can motivate and attract more tourists to visit the attraction. From the organization’s own research and fieldworks, the interactive form of live performances by applying the latest technologies has been effectively disseminated at historical attractions in Shaanxi in recent years and visitors are drawn into getting the immersive experiences at such touristic attractions.

‘This new type of show is very popular and trendy in the tourism industry at Shaanxi recent years, especially in the historical attractions. The attractions in the east part

Chapter 7 The Interactions: Dharma Legends in Famen Temple

of Shaanxi have been well developed over the past few years, as you probably have already known ‘the song of everlasting sorrow’ at the Huaqing Palace. That’s quite a popular one. Yet, attractions in the west part of Shaanxi are less popular and are lack of visitors. From our research, we found out that most visitors come to Xi’an or Shaanxi are more interested in visiting attractions in the east part of Shaanxi rather than the west. But if you pay attention to the actual attractions, you will realize there are loads of heritage sites and legacies that are worth to see! That’s why we choose to produce this show at the Famen Temple as our first stop in the west part of Shaanxi’.

7.2.2 The Process

When asking about the narratives of the show during the interview, Bin Gao explains the show is based on prose that has been written by one of the famous authors in China. The author embeds the historical events that have happened at the Famen Temple to provide the audience with a comprehensive understanding of the meanings and stories behind the pagoda and the underground palace at the attraction. However, instead of remaining true to the history, Bin Gao stresses the show is produced as an expressionist symbol that allows visitors to get an insight into the history by experiencing inside of the scene.

‘The show itself is based on a prose, which is called the ‘Buddha at Famen Temple’ and is written by the author Aiying Bai. The events in the prose have actually happened in the history, the author put all the pieces together as a symbol of the Dharma—‘to find the light in the darkness’, which is the message that we are trying to deliver to our audience...You can memorise it and turn that experience into the valuable memory only if you have experienced the stories all by yourself’.

In terms of the authentic representation of the live performance, the organization perceives the term ‘authenticity’ as the feelings of ‘being there at the scene’, which is the ultimate message that the team tends to deliver to the audience. However, it still relies on the objective authenticity that has been associated with the realistic representation of the show, which creates the atmosphere to support the feelings of authenticity.

‘You may have already seen the plot four, the one with the Red Guards and the monk Qing Liang, we tried our best to make it appeared as realistic as possible, which provided the visitors the feeling as if they were there surrounding by the Red Guards in the year of 1966. ... The replica of underground palace is made based on the original one in 1:1.5 size. If you go inside of the tower, you’ll find all the commercial shops and points for donation instead of the ‘real’ underground palace, they have moved all the relics and treasures to the museum, which made us decide

Chapter 7 The Interactions: Dharma Legends in Famen Temple

to recreate it and let the audience to see what it used to like. We wanted to make it appeared realistic, so every piece inside of the underground palace is reproduced based on the original one in the museum’.

Developing emerging technologies is not the core driving force for the organization but is the medium to serve the purpose of bringing about a kind of history that can let visitors immerse themselves in. The organization seeks to provide a platform that allows visitors to become the active co-creators by using their own creativities and subjectivities.

‘In comparison with other similar time of live performance, such as ‘the song of everlasting sorrow’ and the one in Song City, we didn’t use much emerging technologies as they did. As I mentioned earlier, our purpose is to let the audience be in the story and feel it from the bottom of their heart, so we are not focusing on the newest technology applications. But we were quite proud of the Shakyamuni’s Sharipu on the hologram in the end, the concept came from the chairman of the company. When the screen came down from the top, with the Shakyamuni’s hand on the screen, we wanted to deliver the concept ‘the goddess of mercy’ to the audience. And from it, the audience can see which finger is Shakyamuni’s Sharipu. Overall, the technologies are serving for the contents and stories, which means it’s not the main star of the show but the audience, the live performers, and the story itself.’

Bin Gao argues the immersive experience is stimulated by the multi-sensory stimulation rather than the optical aesthetic appearance, which he stresses the importance of the tactile sensors that have been aroused through the interactions with the live actors and the other visitors. The interactive involvements further advance on the visitors’ feeling of immersion that allows them to memorise it as their personal narratives.

‘We want our audience to feel it deeply from the bottom of their hearts by walking with the live actors in 70 minutes, not as ‘The song of everlasting sorrow’ someone may call it as a ‘visual feast’, nor the traditional kinds of live performances. The audience might feel the scenic design and the visual effects are amazing, but they are not becoming part of it, they couldn’t memorise it and turn it into their own stories. That’s what we have developed the show in the interactive form, because we want our audience to get inspired and to get the feelings of spiritual lift after they have experienced in the show’.

7.2.3 Evaluations

The organization considers the live performance at the attraction as a success based on their own research team's observation, surveys and travel agency research from the visitors' feedback on the show. The finding from their research onsite indicates visitors are giving positive feedback because of the interpretations and the interactive form of the show. Additionally, the organization finds out the live performance has delivered its message properly to the audience, which arouses their personal empathy and their feelings of 'spiritual lift' from the interactions with the scene onsite.

'From our research on site, most of visitors were like: 'it was amazing!' or 'it made me cry!' after they experienced in the show. The show has also attracted some celebrities to come, for example, in last month, the actress Siqin Gaowa came and experienced in the show, I found that she started to cry while she was walking along with the preserving monk with the heavy metal chain on his shoulder. We also get some feedbacks from different travel agencies in Xi'an, the most common thing I've heard about is that 'the visitors dig the show'

In terms of the defective factors that need to be further improved, the organization is aware of visitors get exhausted by walking with the live actors in 70 minutes that they are focusing on providing more convenient facilities onsite for their audience. According to Bin Gao, the organization cares about their audience, and they make improvements to promote the live performance every year based on their collected survey data from the visitors onsite.

'They feel very exhausted after walking in 70 minutes, but we've provided facilities for the elderly or the disabilities to use on site, such as the staff onsite will push wheelchairs for them during the whole time. We also make improvements and promote it in every year, the one you've seen is in 70 minutes, actually the previous version was about in 90 minutes. Based on the visitors' feedbacks in last winter, we had made improvements on the costumes, props and lighting effects etc. We've added the opening ceremony at the very beginning in this year, the purpose is to let the audience to clear their mind and get ready to what they are about to experience'.

This section reveals the interaction plays as a crucial part that allows visitors to become part of the scene from the organization's perspective. Also, to create the feelings of 'being there', the organization seeks to encourage the audience to interact with the live actors and the physical environments, which enhances the visitors' feeling of immersion that can turn them into the co-producers of the show through their creativities and personal understandings. In addition, the organization stresses the visitors' immersive experience is associated with the multi-sensors stimulus, which provokes their most authentic feelings of 'as if they were there'. Furthermore, the subjective authenticity relies on the objective authenticity to further advance visitors the feeling of immersion.

7.3 Travels in Hyperreality: The Visitor Perspective

This section seeks to address the visitors' experience and perceptions of 'travelling to the past' in the interactive form of live performance at the Famen Temple, which focuses on exploring the visitors' behaviours and subjectivities of 'being there' from three stages as before, during and after. The first section provides a brief overview of the visitors' information and attitudes before their visits. The second section presents a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' experience and reactions during their visits at the interactive live performance. The last section conducts the visitors' evaluations and overall experience as a conclusion after their visits at the 'Dharma Legends in Famen Temple'.

7.3.1 Visitor Profile

Table 22 Visitor profile

Interviewee	Gender	Age Group	Education	Career	Visitor type	Religion
Jian Zheng	Male	25-30	College	Freelance	Tourist	None
Juying Wang	Female	25-30	Postgraduate	Teacher	Tourist	Buddhist
Miao Jin	Female	18-25	College	Freelance	Local	None
Naqi Zhang	Female	18-25	College	Student	Local	None
Ping Yang	Female	50-60	Undergraduate	Teacher	Local	None
Yebao Guo	Male	31-40	College	Freelance	Tourist	None
Yikai Guo	Male	31-40	Postgraduate	Engineer	Tourist	None

During the fieldwork onsite, there are seven visitors have been interviewed that include four females and three males. Most of the interviewees are in the younger-aged group from the age of 18 to 30. Apart from that, there are three visitors in the middle-aged groups from 31 to 60. According to *Table 22*, the educational backgrounds of the interviewees have been presented on average, which contain the college levels (4), the undergraduate qualification (1), and the postgraduate qualifications (2). In terms of the job occupations of the seven interviewees, there are freelances, teachers, student and engineer. All the interviewees come from mainland China and travel to the attraction with their families, and three of them are local residents. Because the attraction is one of the most popular Buddhist sacred sites in mainland China, one of the interviewees is the Buddhist who has visited the attraction for religious purposes. The visitors' intentions and behaviours before they visit the site will be further indicated in the next section.

7.3.2 Before Visit

This section focuses on exploring the visitors' attitudes and intentions before they have visited the attraction, which contains the visitors' motivations, knowledge about the live performance before their visits, previous similar experience, and travel information checking platforms.

Motivations

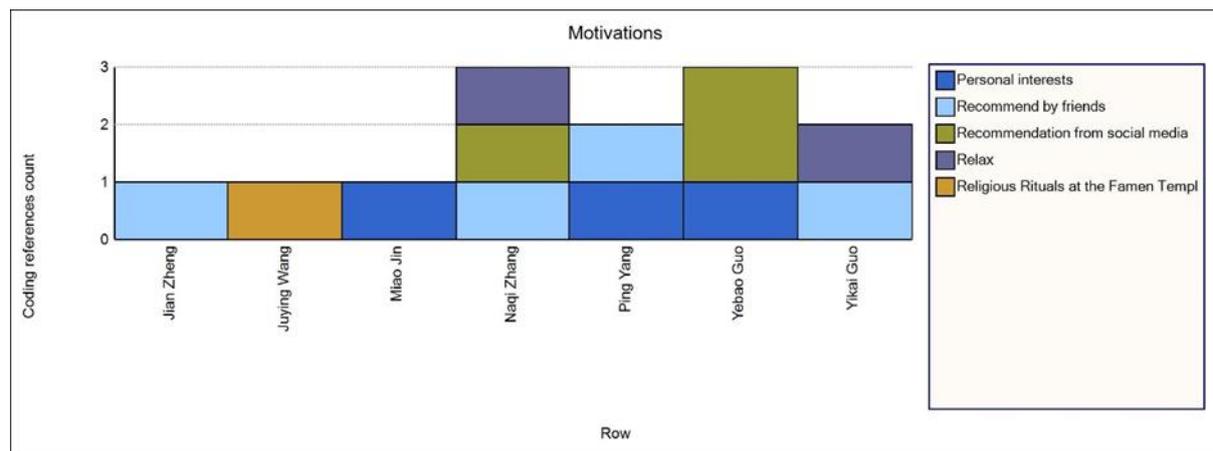


Figure 40 Motivations

According to Figure 40, the informants visit the live performance are primarily driven by the factor of friends and relatives’ recommendations, following by personal interests and social media recommendations. Most of the interviewees are visiting the attraction for leisure entertainment purposes that gives them deficient knowledge about the interactive form of live performance before they have visited the site.

‘We come to Xi’an to have some rest, and my local friend recommends the attraction Famen Temple to me. I’ve been told that it’s religious attraction where you can find your peace in. But I haven’t heard anything about the live performance until on my way here. I saw those big commercial advertising boards while we were driving here along the road’ (Yikai Guo, male, aged 36, postgraduate degree, engineer, tourist from other regions of the mainland China, non-religious).

Based on the collected data, the motivations of visitors’ personal interests are associated with history, religious and live performance. Two of them are local residents, and they seek a sense of belonging and personal attachment with the cultural legacy that has been left by the ancestors in Shaanxi.

‘I’ve heard about the Famen Temple from my parents since I was a kid. I was fascinated by the stories of it. When I’ve heard there’s a show about Famen Temple, I was thrilled. That’s why I come to here and see the show’ (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident).

Apart from the factor of personal belonging, one local resident Ping Yang, who is enthusiastic about the live performances such as the opera, symphony and ballet, pays her visit to the attraction for the new form of the interactive experience because it arouses her interests.

‘My friends told me there was an interactive live performance that based on the stories and histories of the Famen Temple, which made me really wanted to know

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what this type of interactive experience was about (Yang Ping, female, aged 55, graduate degree, teacher at primary school, local resident).

Only one individual interviewee, Jueying Wang, the Buddhist, comes to the attraction for the worship and the rituals that have been held at the Famen Temple, yet she is not aware of the existence of the live performance until she has arrived at the site.

'We were here to attend the biggest Buddhist religious ritual, after that we wanted to see the Buddhist relics—the Shakyamuni's relic finger bone, which represents the symbol of Dharma for us' (Jueying Wang, female, aged 26, postgraduate degree, teacher, Buddhist, from other regions of the mainland China).

This section has indicated that most of the visitors come to the attraction with entertainment and educational purposes, but some of the visitors have not realized the existence of the live performance until they are arriving at the attraction. Except for the interviewee, Yang Ping, who is motivated by the unique form of interactive live performance, but she only gets basic information about the show based on her responses during the interview. In comparison with the findings from the organization's perspective, the core driving forces for the interviewees visiting the attraction are not caused by the creative form of the live performance. Instead, visitors are coming to the attraction because Famen Temple represents one of the most prominent religious attractions in Shaanxi Province, which leads to the question of how the organization defines the audience have been attracted and been motivated by the novelty form of live performance at the historical attractions. Thus, the visitors' existing knowledge about the attraction and the live performance will be further explored in the next section.

Knowledge about the attraction before visit

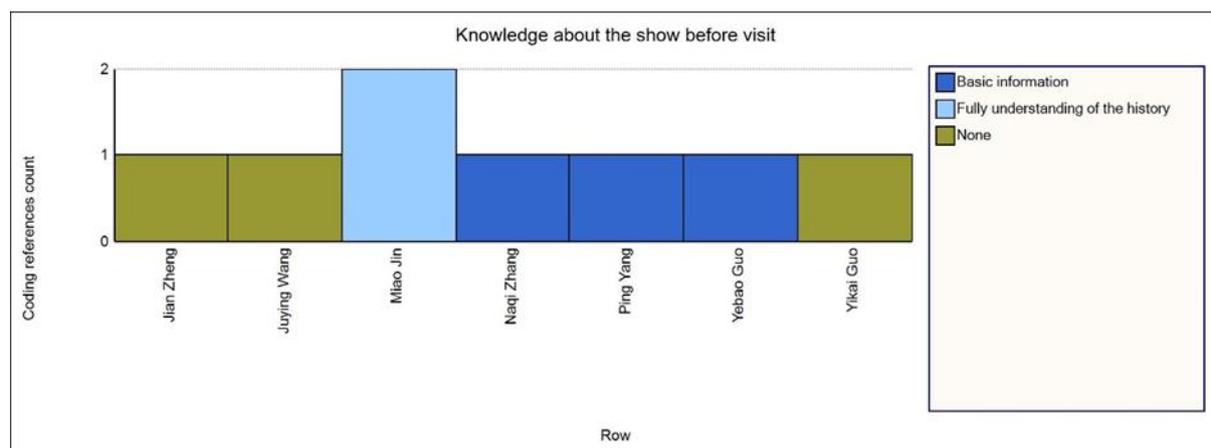


Figure 41 Knowledge about the attraction before visit

The finding reveals that most of the interviewees acquire basic information of the *'Dharma Legends in Famen Temple'*, which refers to the interpretation and the representation of the show. Expect for the

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interviewee Yang Ping who has been mentioned in the previous section, none of the interviewees perceives the interaction form of the live performance.

'I didn't check any detailed information about the show, but I knew the script was based on the historical records and represented in a modern way, things like the holographic projection applications. I read it from their official account's posts on WeChat' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, freelance, who is interested in the mysterious stories of the underground palace at the Famen Temple).

In associated with the previous section, some of the interviewees have not got any information of the live performance until they have arrived at the attraction, which leads to their inadequate knowledge about the show before they visit. In terms of the visitors who obtain comprehensive knowledge about the attraction, it refers to the historical events and interpretations that have happened at the Famen Temple.

'I've heard about the Famen Temple from my parents since I was a kid. I was fascinated by the stories of it. I have kept checking the history and knowledge about the underground palace as my personal interests, and I am a frequent visitor to the Famen Temple Museum (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident).

Similar to the findings from other attractions in previous case studies, visitors enter the site with relatively low expectation, but leave with their expectations exceeded because of the insufficient knowledge about the live performance and the quality of the show.

'I thought the show might be dull, I mean, it was just a temple, but my friend insisted me to come, which was hard for me to refuse him...After I have experienced in the show, I think it was excellent' (Jian Zheng, male, aged 29, college degree, freelance, non-religious, travelling with friends from other regions of the mainland China).

This section proves that interactive live performance is not the core driving force for most of the visitors come to the attraction. Visitors are motivated by the factors of historical interpretations and the famous religious landmark in Shaanxi Province, which leaves them low expectation on the live performance before they have experienced. However, the finding from the organization perspective stresses that the creative form of live performances has been well spread at the touristic attractions in recent years, and the visitors are drawn to the immersive experience that has been provided onsite. Therefore, the visitors' similar previous experience will be further indicated in the next section.

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Previous similar experience

Based on the collected data, increasing Chinese cultural attractions start to the emerging technology applications that provide visitors with an immersive experience in recent years. The immersive experience is associated with emerging technology applications and the form of interactions. In terms of the emerging technology applications, the holographic projection and the augmented reality have been most commonly applied for the live performances that blur the boundaries between the physical reality with the fantastic world.

'My very first experience of this type of live performance was the one at the Tang Paradise Theme Park. The hologram movie was played on the artificial water screen, which looked pretty cool' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, freelance).

'The show at the Huaqing Palace was so stunning, which was like a visual feast. The show was played under the mountain Li at night, and the settings on the stage had combined the holographic projection and the augmented reality. The atmosphere was just magnificent' (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident).

Another novelty form of the live performance, the interactions, aims at arousing visitors the feeling of immersion by merging the audience and the live actors with the scene, which highlights the features of 'no stage' at the theatre. The initial concept of the interaction has been brought up by the director Yimou Zhang in China that he expects his audience to unleash their creativities and create their own stories by being part of the scene.

'The original concept of the live interactive performance was from the famous director Yimou Zhang, from what I've heard, he and his team produced series interactive live performances in different cities, such as the 'Impression Pingyao Cultural Show'. Unfortunately, I haven't experienced in those, but I've tried the one in at the Aquarium in Xi'an, which was in a round theatre without stage. I was drawn into the interactions with the 'undersea creatures' inside of the ocean' (Naqi Zhang, female, aged 18, college student, local resident, visiting the attraction with her dad).

This section further indicates that the creative forms of live performances have been popularized at the Chinese touristic attractions in recent years, which evokes visitors the feeling of immersion in comparison with the traditional types of live performances. Especially the interactive live performance has provided a platform for the visitors to become part of the scene that breaks the boundaries between the audience and the live actors in front of the stage.

Travel information checking platform

From the interviewees' responses, most of them are checking travel information via website, social media and travel-related physical books. The websites such as Baidu or Baidu Baike have been the most frequently used platforms for visitors. Except for the websites, increasing Chinese visitors acquire travel information from social media, such as the WeChat moment.

'My mom usually gets travel information from her friends in WeChat, things like the pictures or videos about attractions that her friends have shared on the Moment' (Naqi Zhang, female, aged 18, college student, local resident, visiting the attraction with her dad).

The mobile application WeChat has presented not only as a simple communication software but also has been developed to provide visitors with the latest information about the subjects they are interested in by embedding the functions of blogs, twitters and Facebook. For instance, users can read blogs from different public accounts based on their personal interests, Yang Ping, mid-aged, finds the blog posts on WeChat are more convenient for her to read than the physical books:

'I used to like reading the guidebooks to check on the travel information, but I guess it's more convenient to use the internet in nowadays, there are diverse blog posts from different bloggers or public accounts on WeChat, such as restaurant recommendations, travel destinations, museums and historical attractions, live performances, art and culture, which is really useful' (Yang Ping, female, aged 55, graduate degree, teacher, local resident, keen on the traditional types of live performances such as opera, symphony and ballet).

A growing number of Chinese touristic attractions have opened their official accounts via WeChat that allows visitors to obtain the upcoming events and exhibitions of the attractions. The interviewee Yebao Guo gains his knowledge about the live performance at the Famen Temple from the attraction's official accounts in WeChat.

'I knew the script was based on the historical records and represented in a modern way, things like the holographic projection applications. I read it from their official account's posts on WeChat' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, freelance, who is interested in the mysterious stories of the underground palace at the Famen Temple).

The finding reveals that numerous Chinese visitors have relied on social media to check travel information. However, from the collected data, the visitors who are seeking for leisure entertainment have not subscribed the attraction's official account in WeChat, which explains the reasons why they acquire inadequate knowledge about the interactive form of the live performance before they have visited the attraction.

7.3.3 During Visit

This section seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' experience and perceptions of the interactive live performance during their visits onsite. It has been divided into four sections to explore the relationships between the visitors' interactions versus their subjectivities, which contains the visitors' most impressive experience and activities onsite, sensations, authenticity and immersive experience.

Activities and the most evocative experience onsite

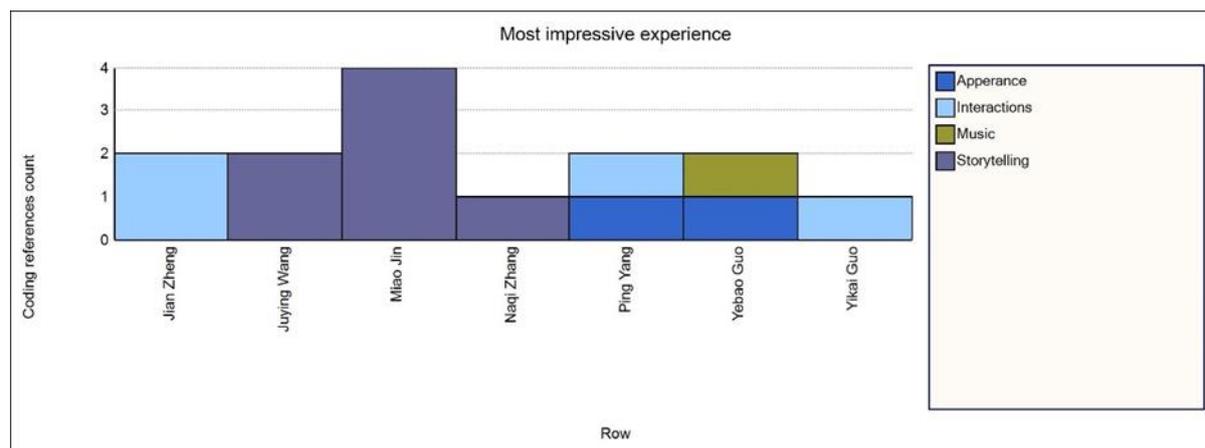


Figure 42 The most evocative experience onsite

The onsite activities refer to the visitors are interacting and walking along with the live actors from scenario to scenario in 70 minutes. According to Figure 42, the visitor's most impressive experience onsite are caused by the interactions, representation and the interpretation of the live performance. The finding reveals that the interactions and the representation onsite triggers visitors' multi-sensibilities that shape their feelings of 'as if they were there' as a consequence. Their favourite scenes refer to the simulated underground palace with the Shakyamuni's eyes opened; the monk Qing Liang with the Red Guards at the Cultural Revolution in China; and the persevering monk with the earthquake at Ming Dynasty.

The narratives and the script of the show have set up the foundation of the historical unforeseen events that have happened at the Famen Temple, which provides visitors with a brief overview of the backgrounds and history at the attraction. The realistic interpretation is associated with the historical accuracy that relates to the themes of the show. which arouses visitors the feeling of authenticity.

'The show was so real, mainly because the stories were based on the historical records.....Like the story of the Cultural Revolution in the year 1966 with the Red Guard, the Buddhist monk Qing Liang gave his life to protect the legacy of the Famen Temple from the Red Guard, where you can find the historical records at the Famen Temple Museum ' (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide

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at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident, frequent visitor to the Famen Temple Museum).

The representation onsite arouses visitors the multi-sensor domains that includes the visual appearance, the physical settings, the holographic projection applications and the simulated sound effects. In addition, the appearances and the rhythm of the sound effects play as supplementary factors to the narratives and the interactions of the show, which co-create a symbolic image of history that leads visitors to reach to the past as the first step of immersion.

'At the last scene, I was deeply touched when the Buddha opened his eyes with the visual effects. Through the darkness, the underground palace appeared through the glass with the yellow lightening effects under my feet, with the beautiful melody of the chords, it really got me.....The atmosphere they created at the last scene was amazing, it surprised me that the Buddha could open his eyes, you know, it was really difficult to describe...(Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, enthusiasm for the mysterious of the underground palace at Famen Temple).

Similar to the findings at the SS Great Britain, the interactions onsite add the final link that allows the visitors to become part of the scene as the co-creator. However, instead of interacting with the physical environments, the interactive activities at the '*Dharma Legends in Famen Temple*' are featuring the connections between the live actors and other visitors, which centralises visitors the feelings of '*being there*'.

'It's my very first time to experience the interactive live performance, and I really like the way of interacting with the live actors! I thought it was a unique experience! During the earthquake scenario, I got so nervous because it was so real where you can literally see the people from past are standing next to you' (Yikai Guo, male, aged 36, postgraduate degree, engineer, tourist from other regions of the mainland China).

This section stresses the importance of the interactions, which further advance visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that allows them to feel the moment and to become part of the scene. Similar to the findings of other attractions in the case studies, the feeling of immersion is associated with the multi-sensor stimulus, which affirms that the representation of the show has set up the atmosphere that can lead visitors to the first step of immersion, which refers to the appearance and the simulated sound effects onsite. The interactions trigger visitors the creativities subjectively that provides them with the feeling of '*actually being there*'. The subjects of the visitor' sensations will be further discussed in the next section.

Sensations

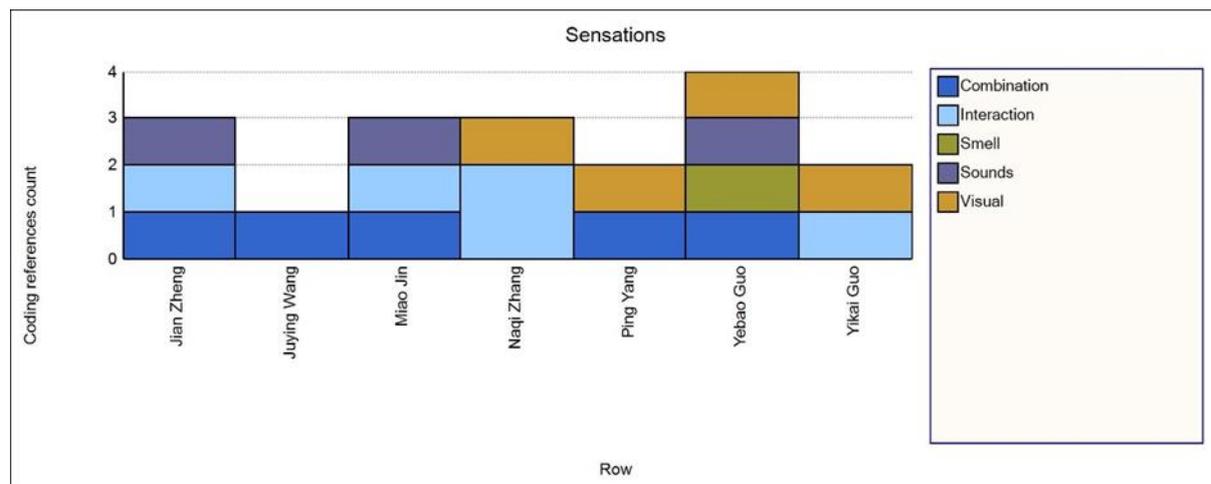


Figure 43 Sensations

According to *Figure 43*, the multi-sensor stimulus plays a central role that triggers visitors the most authentic feelings onsite, and the sightseeing in combination with other senses can provide visitors with the most immersive experience. The visual effects inspire visitors to obtain a brief understanding of their surrounding environments, which unleashes their personal creative imaginations based on their personal realms.

‘My favourite part was the appearance of the underground palace from the darkness, when the light was turned on from the ground, I was impressed and touched on a spiritual level. It didn’t occur to me that there was a rebuilt underground palace was under my feet until they turned on the yellow lights beneath! At that moment, I thought the technology using were brilliant! It really made me thought I was the first person like an archaeologist who just found out the underground palace! (Ping Yang, female, aged 55, local resident, interested in traditional form of live performances).

Whereas the simulated sound effects enhance the visitors’ illusionary feeling, which works together with the sightseeing that creates the atmosphere to further intensity their immersive experience. This step is considered as the second step of the immersion that leads visitors to an unknown world that they are going to explore.

‘At the scene of the earthquake, the transition of the lightning effects from red to dark blue made me really nervous, and you saw the moving animations of the tower collapsed on the screen, at the same time, you heard the sounds of the falling bricks, which made you think the earthquake was happening in front of you’ (Yikai Guo, male, aged 36, postgraduate degree, engineer, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

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Additionally, the live performance has produced simulated olfactory stimuli in the opening ceremony of the show, which cuts off visitors' connections with the physical reality that triggers their similar experience and memories of other attractions that they have used to travel. In combination with the sightseeing and soundscape, it enhances their understanding of the themes and atmosphere about the show.

The sense of smells arouses the 'When the monks started burning the incense sticks at the opening ceremony, which made me calm down and reminded me of the temple that I have just visited. The rituals at the beginning was like a travel machine that invited us to experience in the ancient times at Famen Temple' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, college degree, freelance).

In contrast to the other attractions in the case studies, the interactive involvements become the key instrument that elicits visitors' tactile sensors and movements, which allows them to become part of the scene that works at the final step of the immersive experience. In order to ensure the immersive experience lingering, it requires the visitors' own imaginations and subjectivities based on their cultural backgrounds and personal understandings.

'At the scene of the earthquake at Ming Dynasty, you had to ask people to donate for the destructed tower by following the persevering monk with the heavy iron chain that through his shoulder. You saw the ancient civilians who walked along with you and stood next to you, at that time, I felt like I was one of them who lived in the village at Ming Dynasty' (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident).

This section acknowledges the relationship between the multi-sensor stimulus versus the visitors' authentic feeling of *'being there'*. Similar to the findings from the SS Great Britain, it requires five steps to achieve the visitors' feeling of immersion: the sightseeing provides visitors a general information about their surrounding environments, along with the soundscape to co-creates the atmosphere that leads visitors to the simulated world, the olfactory triggers visitor's memories that improves their understandings on the interpretations of the attraction, the interaction with the live actors and other visitors work as a bridge that allows visitors step into the simulation, and the last step is completed by the visitors' personal imaginations and understandings based on their experience at the attraction. In addition, the finding argues that the interactions with the live actors and other visitors are crucial for achieving the visitors' feeling of authenticity, which converts visitors from the pure observers to the active creators, as the organization's chief artistic officer Bin Gao puts it:

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'We want to present our audience an experience like 'something really happens to you, rather than something you see from a movie or a show' (Bin Gao, the chief artistic officer of the live performance).

Authenticity

The finding indicates that most of the interviewees perceive their authentic experience is constructed by the objective authenticity and the subjective authenticity. According to the interviewees' responses, 'feeling of real' is the result of their immersive experience, but it still relies on their interactions with the physical environments and the live actors onsite. There is only one interviewee who believes in Buddhism understands the term authenticity from the existential perspective, and she is seeking for the realms of existence from a spiritual level that does not relate to the physical reality nor the objective authenticity.

'I guess the experience and feelings are more important to me, because we have already been part of the story, which allows you to get the personal empathy deeply from the bottom of your heart. I was touched by the Dharma wish, which we've learnt about before, seeing it be presented in the performance gives me deep understanding of what Dharam is really about... Like it has been said in the show: Without Dharma, we were like walking in the darkness. The Dharma brings out the hope and brightness for our lives... if you are looking for something legit, the real deal, why bother coming to here?' (Jueying Wang, female, aged 26, postgraduate degree, teacher, Buddhist, who visit to the attraction for religious purposes).

Apart from the Buddhist interviewee who is seeking for the existential authenticity, most of the visitors stress the importance of the objective authenticity that refers to the realistic representation and the interpretation. The factors make visitors perceive the recreated production as the 'real one' have been associated with the historical accuracy and the details of the recreations (materials, textures, colours). From the collected data, the interviewees who are enthusiastic about the history of the attraction are not satisfied with the recreated underground palace that refers to the 'staged inauthentic' representation.

'To be honest, the rebuilt underground palace was lack of accuracy, things like the silk at the original underground palace, they were well made with meticulous skills and high-quality material where you can find the original one at the Famen Temple Museum. The remade silk and the objects were lack of details, which made them were not as delicate as the original treasures' (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident, frequent visitor to the Famen Temple Museum).

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In terms of the visitors' authentic experience, it is constructed by the visitors' interactions with the physical environments and others (the live actors and other visitors) onsite. The physical environment refers to the visual appearance and the sound effects that have co-created the atmosphere of the scenes for its audience to explore, whereas the interactions work as a bridge that arouses the 'more real than real' moment for the visitors.

'At the scene of the monk Qing Laing with the Red Guards, they even drove the real truck into the theatre, where you saw the Red Guards were shouting slogans and walking around you, which was amazing! When the monk Qing Liang burned himself in front of the tower, I thought it was the real fire that you can literally feel the heat' (Yikai Guo, male, aged 36, postgraduate degree, engineer, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

During the interaction process onsite, the live actors' attitudes and performances play as a key instrument that has an influence on the visitors' authentic experience. The professional skills of the main characters convince visitors that they are becoming part of the scene. However, the lack of professional skills and the modern intrusions bring visitors back to reality from the magical world. For example, the interviewee Yang is questioning the authenticity of the 'ancient citizens who come from the past' at the show:

'The actors who played as the main characters were quite professional, and the monks made me think they were the real ones! But the actors who played as citizens or the Red Guards were lack of skills, they didn't even commit themselves to the scene, how could they convince me to be part of the story! I saw one actress wearing Nike when she played as the villager in the year of 1912, because she sat behind me, which made the pair of Nike shoes very noticeable! That was just hilarious!' (Ping Yang, female, aged 55, graduated degree, teacher, local resident, enthusiasm for the traditional types of live performances such as opera, symphony and ballet).

In association with the findings from the previous section, the last step of the visitors' feelings as 'being there' is aroused by their personal understanding and experience from the interactions onsite. At this stage, the interactive live performance is completed by the visitors' personal imaginations and memories, which stimulates the most immersive and authentic experience onsite.

'My favourite part was the appearance of the underground palace from the darkness, when the golden light was turned on from the ground, I got touched from the spiritual level. At that moment, I thought the technology using were brilliant! It really made me thought I was the first person like an archaeologist who just found

out the underground palace!' (Ping Yang, female, aged 55, local resident, keen on the traditional type of live performances).

The finding in this section suggests the importance of the constructive authenticity, and the subjective authentic experience relies on the objective authenticity from numerous interviewees' responses. Similar to the findings at the SS Great Britain, the objective authenticity has set up the foundation to convince visitors to believe *'it is real'* as the first step, whereas the *'more real than real'* moment is generated by the visitors' interactions with the physical environments and the live actors onsite. In order to keep the feeling of immersion lingering, the visitors' subjectivities play as key roles that allow them to turn their encounters at the attraction into their own stories as the final step of *'being there'*. Different from other attractions, the concept of existential authenticity emerges from the collected data at the Famen Temple because of the religious believe, and the Buddhist visitor seeks for the realms of existence and the feelings of *'spiritual lift'* that has no connection with the physical environments. In summary, the multi-sensor stimulus trigger visitors the authentic experience, which brings their immersive experience as a result. Thus, the visitors' immersive experience will be further explored in the next section.

Immersive experience

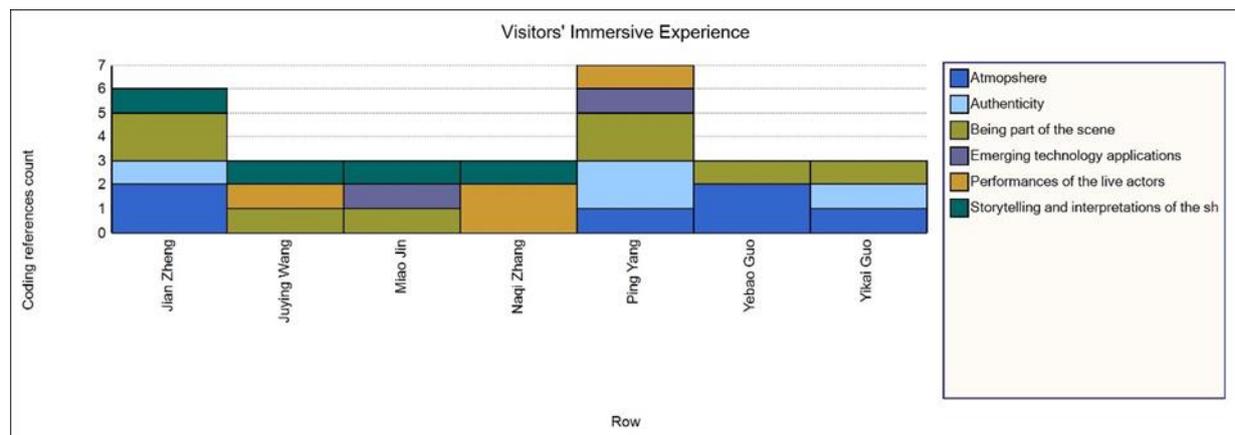


Figure 44 Immersive experience

As it has been shown in *Figure 44*, the visitors' immersive experience is caused by their interactions with the physical environments, the live actors and other visitors onsite, which arouses in these visitors the authentic feeling of being part of the scene. In association with the previous sections of this chapter, the atmosphere is constructed by the representation and the interpretations of the show, which stimulates visitors the visual sensor and soundscape that leads them to the first step of *'being there'*.

'The opening ceremony at the very beginning is like a travel machine, with the sounds of the bell, which brings us back into the history and makes us merge into the story...and in the last scene, when the Buddha opened his eyes with the lighting effects, I was deeply moved. Mainly because the music at the last scene was so

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touching, and with the underground palace appeared through the glass under my feet, at that moment, it really got me and gave me the feeling of being part of the story' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, keen on the mystery of the underground palace at the Famen Temple).

The interactions with the live actors and other visitors further advance on the visitors the experience of being part of the scene, which blurs the boundaries between the visitors and the live actors. The live actors' attitudes and performances onsite are associated with the visitors' authentic feelings, which convinces visitors to believe that *'they are part of the scene'* rather than *'they are seeing the show'*.

'The live actors' passionate and professional skills made you believe that they were the characters who came from the past.....The scene with the monk Liang Qing who brunt himself in front of the Red Guards, which feels like I was there at the scene and witnessed the tragedy that truly happed in the history' (Naqi Zhang, female, aged 18, college student, local resident, visiting the attraction with her dad).

Apart from the live actors, the interactive form encourages visitors to create their own stories by unleashing their creativities and imaginations. In correlation with the previous section, this step has transferred the visitors to become the active co-creators based on the visitors' personal realms, which completes the last step of the feeling of immersion.

'When I saw other visitors, especially one old lady who was standing next to me, she was bowing and praying to the God with those monks in the ritual, it really got to me and brought tears to my eyes...I think that's made the interactive show unique, I really like it' (Jian Zheng, male, aged 29, college, freelance, none religious, who keeps weeping at the last scene).

The findings of this section provide an important insight into the role of the interactions that arouses visitors the most immersive experience. In comparison with the findings from other attractions, this chapter stresses the values of the interactions that have been constructed by both the live actors and the visitors, which entails the power of the individual's subjectivity that keeps visitors the feeling of immersion lingering based on their personal realms and understandings. The interaction with the physical environment evokes visitors to step into the simulated world, yet the live actors and the visitors make further improvements on the feeling of immersion that allows them to actually *'being there'*. Similar to the findings from the organization perspective, the live performance has achieved its goals by applying the interactive form that arouses visitors' subjectivity and creativity and which enables the simulated production to be co-created by the visitors versus the producers. Most importantly, it refers to the values of the combination between the subjectivity and objectivity.

7.3.4 After Visit

This section seeks to address the visitors' perceptions and future travel intentions after they have experienced in the live performance. It focuses on discussing their perceptions of the interactive live performance, their overall experience, recommendations, and their future travel intentions.

Perceptions of the interactive live performance

From the collected data, the majority of the interviewees prefer the interactive form of the live performance, because it presents the history in a more intuitive way. In addition, the interactions enhance the relationships and connections of the visitors with the live actors and other audience at the scene, which turns visitors become the active performers rather than the passive observers.

'At the last scene, you saw the golden underground palace suddenly appeared under your feet, and you saw the Shakyamuni's closed eyes opening in front of you, at the same time, you kept hearing the chants by the monks, then you took part in the ritual by following the monks and other Buddhist visitors to bow and pray to the Shakyamuni, which purified your soul and made you feel the Dharma wish..... by the end, it feels like everything has merged into a story' (Jueying Wang, female, aged 26, postgraduate degree, teacher, Buddhist, traveller from other region of the mainland China).

On the contrary, two of the interviewees are keen on the traditional types of live performances and museums, because they can experience the traditional type of live performances without the intrusions and the interruptions from other visitors that allows them to enjoy the show with educational purposes.

Like in a ballet show, or a music conference, I could sit there quietly to enjoy the actors' professional performances and art, not like the interactive live performance, which was all about the newest technologies... The thing I like about the traditional live performance is that I can sit there quietly with no distractions, and I could enjoy the stories and soak in as much as possible' (Ping Yang, female, aged 55, undergraduate degree, teacher, local resident, keen on traditional type of live performances).

The finding reveals that most of the interviewees perceive the interactive live performance could not replace the original historical attraction but plays as a supplementary role so that the presented material enhances their understandings of the histories and stories that happened at the Famen Temple. Most importantly, the interactive form provides a platform that allows the visitors to turn the stories into their own memorable experiences.

'I prefer to see the real pieces in museum. I think after seeing the original site and the museum, this type of interactive live performance is a plus to the attraction...

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The museum gives audiences a general and basic background of the history, otherwise, you couldn't get what they are trying to say in the show. Once you get familiar with what happened back at that time, you can totally immerse yourself in the scenario' (Miao Jin, female, aged 24, college degree, tour guide at the Shaanxi History Museum, local resident, frequent visitor at the Famen Temple Museum).

Overall experience

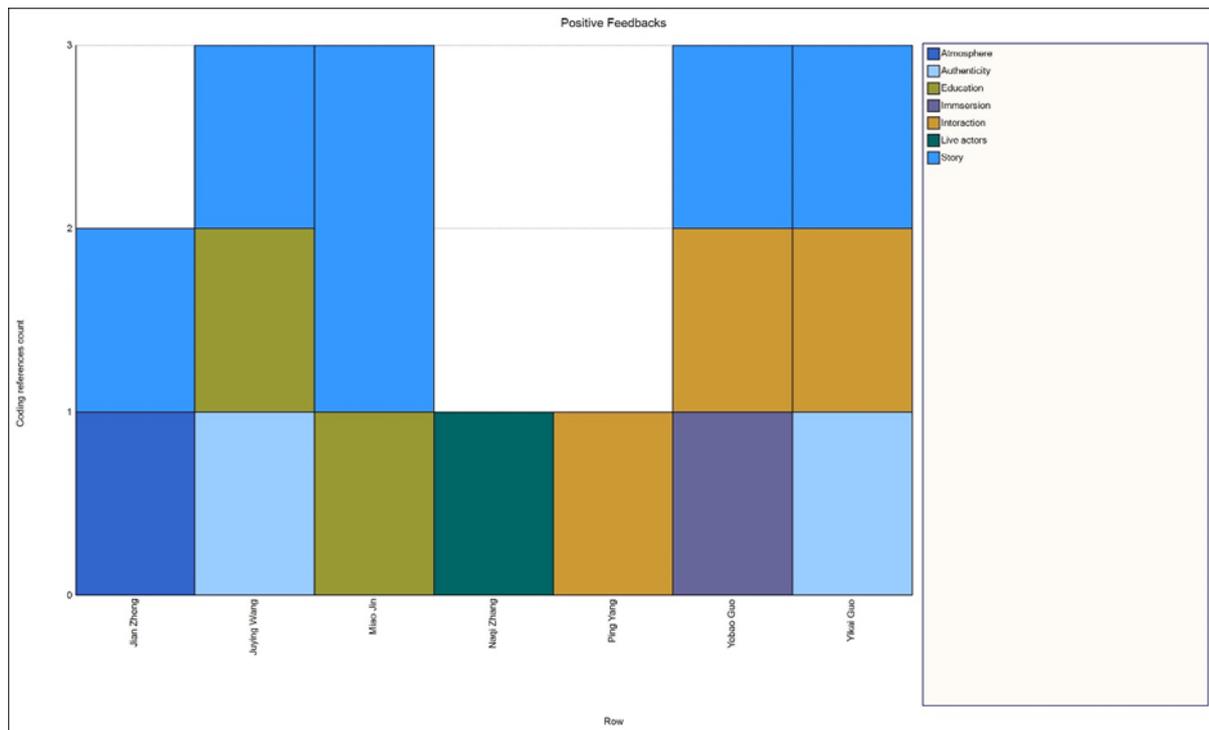


Figure 45 Overall experience

Based on the collected data, most of the visitors give positive feedback on their experience of the live performance at the Famen Temple, but one interviewee gives her neutral feedback on the live performance due to the duration the show that makes her difficult to adapt to the interactive form of the show.

'I was thrilled and excited when it started! But 70 minutes was too long, and I got so exhausted after the show finished. The way they represented was new to me, which was tricky for me to adjust myself to the new form of live show' (Yang Ping, female, aged 55, undergraduate degree, teacher, local resident).

According to Figure 45, the developers have achieved their goals that allow their audience to step into the past based on three factors, which contain the interpretation, the representation, and the forms of interactions. The interpretation and the representation construct the foundation of the live performance that stimulate visitors' sightseeing and soundscape and provide them with a brief overview of their

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surrounding environments. The interaction with the physical environments leads visitors to become part of the scene as the first step of the feelings of immersion.

The opening ceremony at the very beginning is like a travel machine, with the sounds of the bell, which brings us back into the history and makes us merge into the story...and in the last scene, when the Buddha opened his eyes with the lighting effects, I was deeply moved. Mainly because the music at the last scene was so touching, and with the underground palace appeared through the glass under my feet, at that moment, it really got me and gave me the feeling of being part of the story' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, keen on the mystery of the underground palace at the Famen Temple).

Apart from the interaction with physical environments, visitors are becoming part of the scene by interacting with the live actors and other visitors. The interactions blur the boundaries between the audience seats and the stage as *'being there'* instead of *'seeing it'*, which makes the visitors and the live actors co-create the stories together that provides visitors with the most unique and immersive experience as a result. The interactions arouse visitors' subjectivities and creativities that make their behaviours and performances have impacts on other visitors at the site - for example, the interviewee Jian Zheng keeps weeping at the last scene because of other visitors' performances:

'I couldn't tell the feeling in the end, I don't know, I guess that was a deep connection from the bottom of my heart...the whole experience was superb! When I saw the other visitors, especially one old lady who was standing next to me, she was bowing and praying to the God with those monks in the ritual, it really got to me and brought tears to my eyes' (Jian Zheng, male, aged 29, college, freelance, none religious).

In addition, the live actors' professional performances play a crucial part that can convince the visitors to believe they are becoming part of the scene. The live actors are working as a bridge that connects the audience and the *'civilians from the past'* because of their professional performances that brings up the history vividly.

'The live actors were so good, especially the monk Liang Qing who brunt himself in front of the Red Guards to protect the tower and the underground palace at the period of the Cultural Revolution in China. It feels like I were there at the scene and witnessed the tragedy that truly happed in the history' (Naqi Zhang, female, aged 18, college student, local resident, visiting the attraction with her dad).

In association with the findings from the visitors' motivation section in this chapter, the result argues another factor that has impacts on s the visitors' exceeded expectation is their insufficient knowledge

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of the live performance before they have visited the attraction. Except for one interviewee, Yang Ping, who comes to the attraction because of her personal interests, which leads to her neutral feedback because she is not satisfied with the chaotic scenes of the interactive activities onsite. The factors that need to make further improvements and the visitors' recommendations will be indicated in the next section.

Recommendations and future travel intentions

The previous section demonstrates most of the visitors are satisfied with their overall experience at the live performance because the form of interaction stimulates their feelings of immersion and arouses their personal creativity. In terms of the factors that need to be further improved, it includes the chaotic and confusion of the scenes, the duration of the show (70 minutes), and the technical issues of the representation onsite. The factor of the confusion at the chaotic scene affects visitors' immersive experience the most, which refers to the scene with the earthquake and the large amounts of visitors on site. At the earthquake scene, the show is played at multiple directions that cause confusions to the visitors.

'I think it was a little bit confused and chaotic after the tower was collapsed. Because there were different stories playing at the same time from different directions. The stories at the front was about the tower was destroyed due to the earthquake, and the citizens had to help each other to survive in the tragedy. But all of the sudden, another story was played on the right side of the room at the same time. When you struggled to figure out what had happened on the right side, another scene appeared on the left! It was difficult to concentrate and catch up all the scenes at the same time' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, college degree, freelance, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

In addition, the finding argues that the chaotic and intrusion from other visitors decrease the feelings of immersion, which leads to visitors' inauthentic feelings that bring them back to reality from the illusionary world.

'There were so many visitors on Saturday, and I think they were not connected well from scenario to scenario, you had to walk really fast to catch the next scene, especially when there were too many people...the crowds decreased my immersive feelings and experience'(Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, college degree, freelance, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

Furthermore, the technical issues are associated with the poor qualities of the speakers, which effect on visitors' sensibilities that reduces their immersive experience and their overall experience. Similar to the findings at the '*Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality*', the technology applications can enhance visitors'

experience of *'being there'*, yet the quality and the technical issues have impacts on their multi-sensor domains that cease their feelings of immersion.

'The sounds of the speaker were too loud that made me couldn't hear clearly, especially at the scene in the period of the Republic of China, where the Adjutant Ding played the Shaanxi Opera on the 'stage' with the villagers who sat behind you. The sounds of the Shaanxi Opera were so loud, I couldn't hear what the villagers were saying clearly' (Yebao Guo, male, aged 48, college degree, freelance, travelling with his friends from other regions of the mainland China).

The findings in this section stress the crucial role of the interactions and the individual visitors who co-create the live performance because the physical environments and the live actors on site can lead the visitors to create their interpretations based on their personal realms and understanding. The representation and the atmosphere evoke visitors' imagination that allows them to step into the history and to become part of the scene, whilst the onsite interactions enhance visitors' authentic feelings of *'being there'*. The co-creation values of the visitors' subjectivities have emerged as the final link of immersive experience, which keeps the feeling of immersion last by the visitors' subjective creativities and understandings that turn the stories into their unique and memorable experience spiritually and socially. Similar to the findings of the SS Great Britain and the Dali museum, the simulated production is not the core driving force for most of the visitors come to the site, which leads to their low expectations on what they are going to encounter at the attraction that exceeds their expectations as an outcome.

In association with the findings from the organization perspective, the visitors' immersive experience and their feelings of *'being there'* correspond to the aims and purposes of the producer who seek for providing a platform that allows visitors to become the co-creator of the show from the interactions onsite. In terms of the visitors' sensibilities, the producer focuses on the multi-sensation development that relates to the findings from the visitor aspect in this chapter. The authenticity is constructed from the perspectives of the subjectivity and the objectivity. For the producer, the subjective authenticity relies on the objective authenticity that provides visitors with the feelings of being there. Different from the producer perspective, increasing Chinese visitors get familiar with the creative forms of live performances and digital experience at historical attractions in recent years, yet acquiring the digital experience is not the initial motivation for most of the visitors come to the site.

7.4 Travels in Hyperreality: The Observation Findings

This section aims at validating the findings of the previous sections from a different perspective, which has been divided into two parts based upon the researcher's observation onsite. The first section contains the researcher's subjective experience as a pure visitor, and the findings are presented from the

researcher's personal observation diary and her drawings. The visual materials entail the researcher's subjective reflections on her surrounding environment as an insider. The second section includes the researcher's objective recordings onsite as a pure observer. The subjective phase enhances the researcher's understandings and feelings about the attraction as a pure visitor, which sets up the primary foundation for the following process of the research activities onsite. While the objective observation phase decreases the researcher's personal bias, which validates the previous findings as triangulations.

7.4.1 Subjective Perspective

Before I have visited the interactive live performance, I consider it as a visual technology feast based on my previous similar experience at the Huaqing Palace. During I experience the show as a pure visitor onsite, the immersive experience emerges at the opening ceremony of because of the atmosphere and the visitors onsite, which is corresponding to the feeling of stepping into the history.



Figure 46 The opening ceremony

Figure 46 illustrates my feelings of the opening ceremony, the representation and the interactions have raised my imagination and curiosity about the mysterious world that I am going to explore as the first step of immersion. Also, the olfactory simulation has intensified my authentic feeling of 'being there' as an insider.

1st June 2018, Weather: sunny

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'When the monks open the stone gate, it feels like an ancient and mysterious world is opened in front of us. You can hear the chants by those monks, smell the olfactory of the burnt incense, and then you walk along with the chanting monks through the gate, everything has merged together that feels like they are guiding you to step into the history' (the researcher's personal impression on the opening ceremony).

The interactions with the physical environment make further improvements on the immersive experience because the atmosphere is generated by the visual appearance and the simulated sound effects. The realistic appearance in combination with the narratives and the soundscape at the scene persuades me to believe that I am being part of the scene as *Figure 47* presents below.

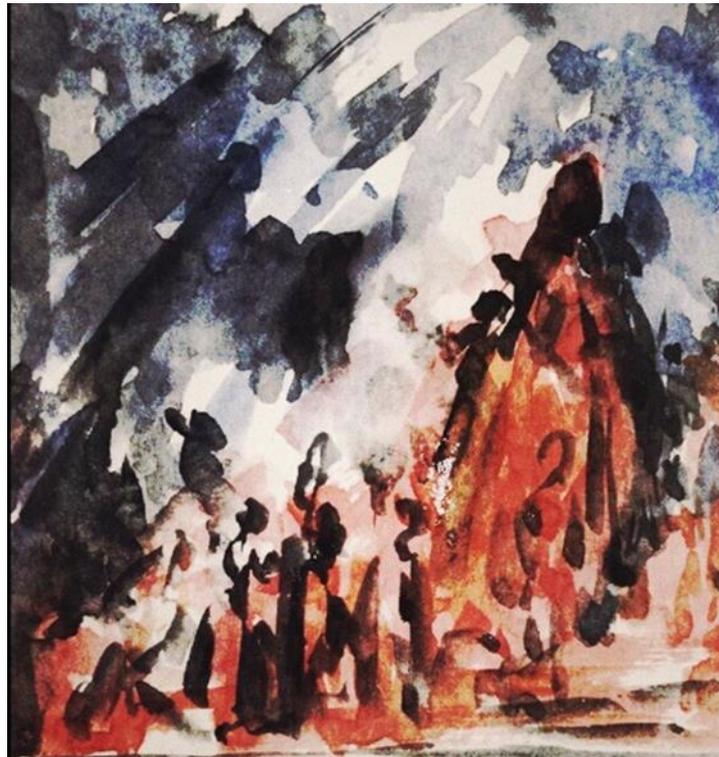


Figure 47 The earthquake scene

'You see the blinking light effects with the red and black colours with the collapsed tower animations on the wall, at the same time you hear the sounds of the falling bricks with the shouting of the villagers, then you are walking with them to avoid the earthquake subconsciously, which is so real!'

Apart from the interactions with the surrounding environments, the interactive activities with the live actors further intensify my feelings of being in a *'more real than real'* moment. The live actors' performances play as the key instrument during this process that is associated with authentic feelings and emotional responses. At this stage, the multi-sensor stimuli are aroused by the physical environments and the interactions with the live actors, which further advances on my immersive experience.

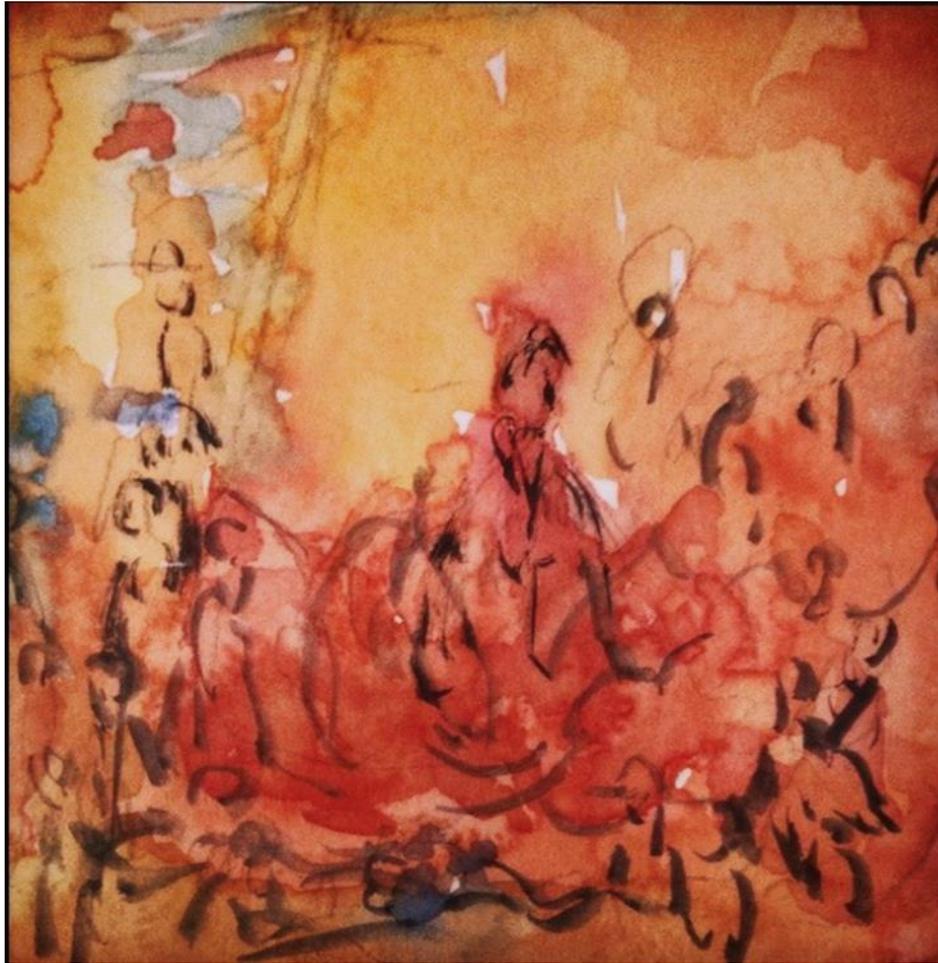


Figure 48 The red guards with the monk Qing Liang

'It feels like I have been transferred into the Chinese Cultural Revolution period, those creepy Red Guards! They drove the truck onsite, they are walking around with you, and they are shouting slogans at you and blaming on you, feels like I did some horrible things to them (Apparently, I was not). But I saw some visitors are joining their groups and repeating their slogans, which is interesting to see...When the monk Qing Liang burns himself in front of the pagoda, I see some of the visitors start to cry, which brings the tears into my eyes. I got so sad that makes me difficult to believe such tragedy is happening in front of me!'

The theme of the visitor's subjectivity and creativity has emerged, instead of being the passive outsider, the interactions lead visitors into the simulated world that allows them to believe they are being part of the scene as the active insider. The finding also stresses the importance of the interactions among the visitors themselves because their behaviours and activities onsite have impacts on my personal emotions. My feeling of immersion has reached the peak at the last scene because it is the recreation by both the physical environment, the live actors, and most importantly, the audience. The appearance of the

reproduced underground palace with the golden Buddha mimics the scene of the original site that has been found in the year of 1987 that triggers my sightseeing. Whilst the background music and sounds arouse my emotions from a spiritual level, walking alongside with the monks in their rituals intensifies my experience of becoming part of the scene. The interactions with other audiences keep the feeling of immersion lingering, which turns the encounters at the show into my personal narratives and interpretations.

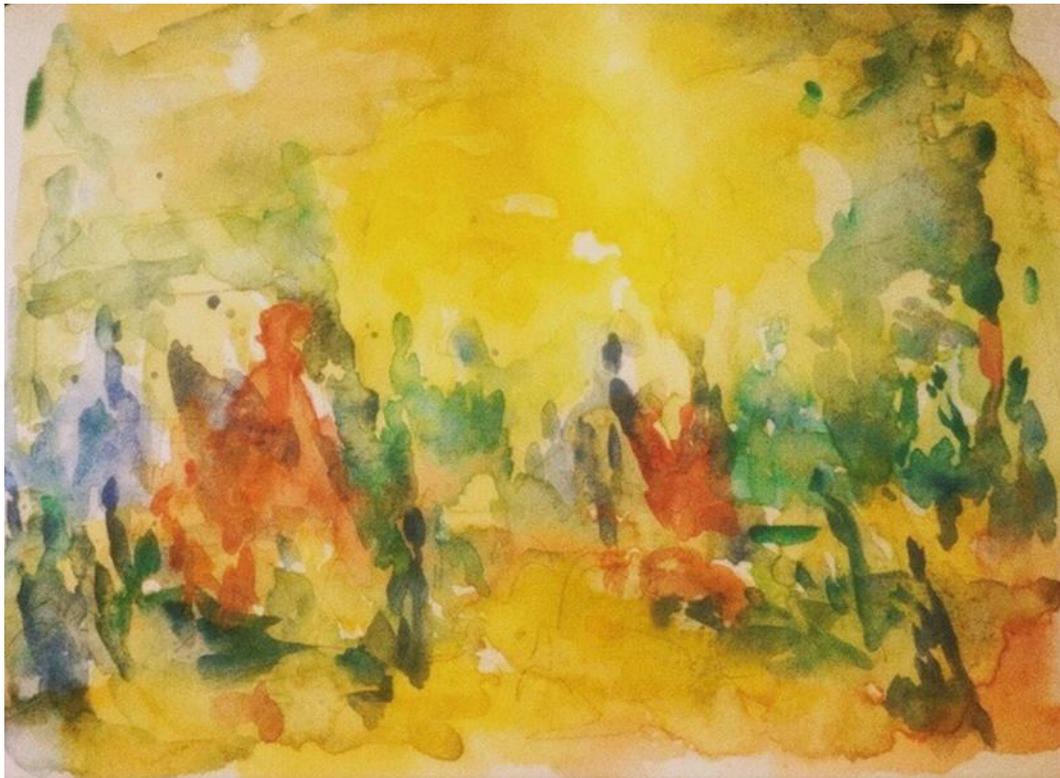


Figure 49 The interactions at the last scene

'I get touched by the visitors who attend the worship together with the live actors! At that moment, everything has merged into an illusionary sphere, where you could see the golden Buddha is opening his eyes with the underground palace beneath, alongside with the chanting monks around, and you are surrounded by these visitors who bend their knees and praying to God in the ritual. I guess that is the time in which the term 'spiritual lift' occurs to me as Umberto Eco describes, and that is the time that makes me fully understand the meaning of travels in hyperreality'.

7.4.2 Objective Perspective

Table 23 The observation findings

The plots	Representation	Visitors behaviours
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Chapter 7 The Interactions: Dharma Legends in Famen Temple

<p>The opening ceremony</p>	<p>Appearance: The stone gate at the entrance of the theatre hall, the physical settings and props Sounds: background music and the introduction of the show in Chinese and in English, and the sounds of the water The olfactory: the burning incense Activities: the interactions with the ‘priest’, such as sprinkles the ‘holy water’ to the audience</p>	<p>Taking photos, video recording, attending on the worship together with the monks</p>
<p>The origins of the Shakyamuni</p>	<p>Appearance: holographic projection with the red and golden colours of the lightening effects Sounds: The sounds of the bell, the chants by the monks, the pre-recorded dialogues of the characters through the speaker Activities: walking along with the live actors</p>	<p>Following the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang, standing closely to the live actors onsite, taking pictures of the emperor One female visitor says: ‘it’s different from the one in Ping Yao!’</p>
<p>The earthquake</p>	<p>Appearance: the golden dancing Mudra, animations of the collapsed tower on the holographic projection, the simulated moonlight, scenes from multiple directions, the lightening effects in red and blue Sounds: the sound of the falling bricks of the tower, the dialogues via the speaker Activities: Walking and interacting with the monk and the ancient citizens from Ming Dynasty</p>	<p>One visitor says: ‘the moonlight scene is so real!’ One mid-aged male visitor shares the scene on his WeChat Moment. Less visitors are taking pictures in comparison with the previous scene when the earthquake occurs Visitors are complaining about the chaotic of the scenes from multiple directions Some visitors are complaining the poor quality of the speaker: ‘I can’t hear them clearly!’</p>
<p>The story of the General Zhu</p>	<p>Appearance: the combination between the physical settings with the holographic projection in blue lightening effects Sounds: the Shaanxi Opera, themed songs Activities: the ancient villagers who site behind of the audience</p>	<p>Having a rest, sitting at the corner of the theatre, touching the reproduced architectures onsite, complaining the sound effects of the speaker</p>
<p>The monk Qing Liang with the Red Guards</p>	<p>Appearance: the red lightening effects, the reproduced physical tower, the fake fire, the truck Sounds: the slogans Activities: live actors are riding bicycles and driving truck to the site Shouting the slogans while they are walking around with the visitors</p>	<p>Taking pictures and video recording when the truck appears onsite, joining the Red Guards and repeating the slogans, touching the destroyed statues and the figures of the Buddha onsite, some of the visitors start to cry when the monk burns himself in front of the tower</p>

<p>The underground palace</p>	<p>Appearance: the reconstructed underground palace with the relics and treasures beneath through the glass, the status of the golden Buddha (opens his eyes when the underground palace appears), golden and yellow lightening effects</p> <p>Sounds: the chants and the theme song of the show</p> <p>Activities: the worship and the ritual</p>	<p>Walking slightly on the underground palace with conscious, observing the treasures and relics closely, joining the worship, some of the visitors start to weep during the ritual, keeping applause until the show ends</p>
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From the observation as a pure observer onsite, the appearance of the show is constructed by the technological application and the physical settings such as the re-produced underground palace. In comparison with the findings from the visitor perspective, the last scene with the underground palace and the scene with the Red Guards and the monk Qing Liang impress visitors the most because they start to interact with the live actors and other visitors on site, such as taking part in the ritual; following the Red Guards; shouting out the slogan with the Red Guards. Most of the visitors get confused by the scene of the earthquake because the chaotic factor has impact on the visitors' overall experience. From the observation results, some of the visitors are complaining about the poor quality of the sounds effects that similar to the findings in the visitors' recommendation section. During the observation onsite, there is one western visitor coming to the attraction with his Chinese friend who keeps explaining the narratives of the show, yet he is keeping distance with the live actors and the crowds of the visitors during the whole time. In association with the findings of the SS Great Britain, cultural differences limit visitors' imaginations and immersive experience of being part of the scene. However, it needs to be indicated in future studies because of the small numbers of the informants based on the case studies.

From the subjective perspective, the finding proves the process of the immersive experience is associated with the visitors' sensibilities and their surrounding environments. Firstly, the representation and the narrative have set up the atmosphere as the foundation that allows visitors to step into history as the first stage of the feelings of immersion. Secondly, the interactions with the physical environments further enhance the visitors' multi-sensibilities that lead them to become part of the scene, whereas the interactions with the live actors make efforts on intensifying their feelings of authenticity. Finally, the interactions with other visitors onsite arouse the individual visitors' emotions that keep their feelings of immersion lingering. The combination of the interactions from three dimensions has influences on the visitors' multi-sensibilities most, which allows their immersive experience to reach the peak. The visitor's subjectivity plays a crucial stage because it involves with the visitors' personal creativities and imaginations that brings out the values of the co-creation experience from the visitors' aspect.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter reveals the value of interactions in the visitors' immersive experience, which involves the physical environments, the live actors and the visitors onsite. In comparison with the traditional types of live performances, the visitors have become the active co-creators instead of the passive observers that generates the values of the co-creative experience, which achieves the organization's aims of providing a platform to enrich the visitors' experiences that allows them to *'being there'* rather than *'seeing it'*.

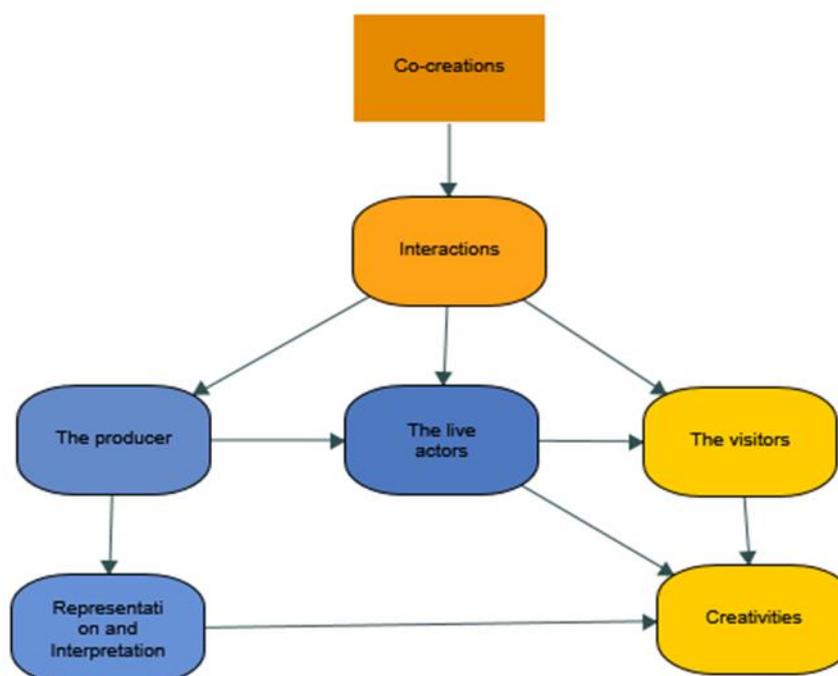


Figure 50 The co-creation experience

The finding also demonstrates that visitors provide positive feedback on their experience at the live performance because of the co-creation values, which turns them into the active co-creators of the scene. According to *Figure 50*, the core driving force for the organization to produce the production is to enrich the visitor's experience that allows them to become part of the story from the interactions. From the interviewees' responses, the interactive form arouses their feeling of immersion that provides them with a unique and memorable experience onsite. The findings from both perspectives stress the importance of the interactions that are constructed by the objectivity and the subjectivity. In the process of the interactions with the physical settings and the live actors onsite, visitors generate their memorable narratives based on their personal realms and understanding. From the objective perspective, the visitors' interactions with the physical environments and the live actors onsite blur the boundaries between the

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producers and the audience, which co-create an image of the moment of immersion. From the subjective perspective, the value of the co-creation experience refers to the individual visitors explore their own meanings of life on a spiritual level, which is the moment of self-discovery through the visitors' experience onsite.

Chapter 8 Discussion

As it has been mentioned in the literature review chapter, prior studies stress the importance of the immersive experience at hyperreal attractions from the visitors' perspective. However, there are inadequate numbers of empirical studies that provide an in-depth understanding of the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience versus the hyperreal attractions. The most remarkable result from the current research reveals the meanings of *'travels in hyperreality'*, which is composed of both objectivity and subjectivity; the organization and the visitors. Also, four themes have emerged from the case studies that refer to representation, imagination, sensations, and interactions. Additionally, the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments and individuals on site have stimulated the visitors' multi-sensory domains that have influences on their perceptions of authenticity. Most importantly, the finding stresses the visitors' creativities and subjectivities add the final link to the feeling of immersion as the co-creators of the hyperreal productions. Particularly, the significant contributions and findings of the current research include:

- The finding of the *'Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality'* argues the developments of emerging technologies at the present stage cannot deliver a fully immersive experience to its audience, which raises the questions of the role of technology applications at such hyperreal attractions. Also, the finding reveals the digital production is not the core driving force for most of the visitors come to the attraction. The findings from the other three case studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of *'travels in hyperreality'* from multiple perspectives.
- The case study of the Tang Paradise theme park stresses the importance of the visitors' subjectivities and imaginations that relate to the ocular sensory stimuli, which produces the first step of the immersive experience.
- The finding of the SS Great Britain reveals the role of the multi-sensory stimulation through visitors' interactions with the physical environments during their visit onsite that have influences on producing the immersive experience. The finding also demonstrates the importance of the combination of multi-sensors, especially the olfactory, which has impact on the visitors' authentic experience.
- The interactive live performance *'The Dharma Legends in Famen Temple'* further proves the crucial role of the individual visitors as the co-creators, which they have completed the process of immersion through their interactions with the live actors and other visitors subjectively.

In order to provide a comprehensive comparison with previous studies in the literature review chapter, this chapter covers the visitor experience, the hyperreal productions, and the meanings of *'travels in hyperreality'* in tourism studies. The immersive experience from the visitor perspective has been divided into three sections as before, the during and the after. The hyperreal productions focus on

exploring the digital representation and the reconstructed physical environments from the organization perspective

8.1 Travels in Hyperreality: Visitor Experience

This section corresponds to the previous studies of the literature review chapter and the findings of the case studies, which focus on discussing the visitors' hyperreal experience versus the hyperreal productions. The first section aims at comparing the findings of visitors' travel intentions before their visit with the prior studies, which includes the visitors' profile, motivations, existing knowledge about the attraction and expectations. The second section discusses the visitors' immersive experience during their visit onsite which refers to the sensation, authenticity, and feelings of immersion. The last section draws attention to the visitors' perceptions of their immersive experience after their visit that is associated with their attitudes of the hyperreal attractions versus the traditional museums.

8.1.1 Before Visit

This section makes a comparison with the visitors' behaviours and travel intentions before their visit based on the research findings and the prior studies, which aims at providing an overview of the potential audience and their attitudes at such hyperreal attractions. The section is constructed by the concepts of the visitors' profile, their motivations, existing knowledge about the attraction, and expectations.

Visitor profile: the potential audience

The results from the case studies indicate that the tourists who visit the attractions are relatively young from the age of 18 to 50 except the visitors at the SS Great Britain who are elderly consumers from the age of 61 to 70. Most of the interviewees are in higher educational backgrounds with stable occupations who are visiting the site with their friends or families. In terms of the related previous studies, several researchers suggest the potential audience of such hyperreal attractions are the post-tourists with the characteristics of younger age, high disposable incomes, higher educational degrees, individual tourists, and keen on emerging technology applications (Urry, 2005; Smith, 2007). In comparison with the existing literature, the current research confirms that most of the visitors who have been interviewed are relatively in higher educational backgrounds with stable incomes. However, the findings of the case studies reveal that there are potential audiences in the elderly age group who are interested in visiting such hyperreal attractions. Additionally, the findings of the four case studies argue that most of the tourists visit the attractions with their friends or families instead of travelling alone. In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the potential visitors, their motivations for visiting the attractions will be further discussed in the next section.

Chapter 8 Discussion

Motivations

Based on the collected data from the case studies, most of the tourists visit the attractions is because of the recommendations by their friends/families and website advertisements. The finding from the current research further proves the importance of the individuals' creativity and subjectivity before they have visited the attraction (Urry, 1990). For instance, the finding of the Tang theme park indicates that few female visitors imagine themselves '*stepping into the history*' by bringing their Chinese traditional Hanfu to merge with the themes and scenes onsite. Similar to the findings of Urry (1990), the majority of the visitors are seeking for leisure entertainment as '*things to do*' at the travel destinations. Apart from that, the finding reveals that most of the interviewees pay a visit to the attraction is because of the factor of '*landmark or famous attractions at the travel destination*' rather than their special interests as previous studies have demonstrated (Hollinshead, 1998; Smith et al., 2010). In terms of the fewer interviewees who have special interests of the attraction, the core driving force that motivates them to visit the attraction refers to the contents and interpretations of the attraction instead of the digital productions that do not support the findings of the previous studies (Urry, 2002; Pitman, 2004). An unexpected finding has emerged from the four case studies that shows most of the interviewees (include the visitors who have personal interests) are not aware of the hyperreal productions of the attractions before they visit, which leads to the questions of their existing knowledge of the attraction before they visit that will be indicated in the next section.

Existing knowledge about the attraction before visit

The visitors' previous existing knowledge of the attraction further indicates the fact that the emerging technology application is not the core driving force for them to visit the attraction. The findings stress that the majority of the visitors, even the visitors who have personal interests of the attraction acquire inadequate knowledge about the hyperreal productions, which is in contrast to the potential audience are seeking for the novel digital experience from the previous research (Urry, 2005; Smith, 2007).

However, the internet and social media have become the most common platforms for the visitors to check travel information before they visit the site, which corroborates the previous studies that the post-tourists rely on the emerging technology applications such as social media, internet, mobile applications, and software programmes (Urry, 2002; Hollinshead, 1998; Smith et al., 2010). One unanticipated finding signifies social media such as the WeChat Moment has become the most commonly used platform for the Chinese visitors to check travel information, while western visitors prefer to check destination information online such as the official website and TripAdvisor. In association with the previous studies, the finding reveals that the Chinese visitors have a closer bond with their families and friends that influences their travel decisions in comparison with the individual western visitors (Chung et al., 2015). Aligning with the discussions from the previous sections, the questions of the post-tourists' identities, characteristics, and motivations have raised.

Chapter 8 Discussion

Expectations

According to the findings of the four case studies, most of visitors are not aware of the existence of the hyperreal productions before their visit, which do not support the previous research findings that the post-tourists are seeking for an extraordinary digital experience at such hyperreal attractions (Rojek, 1993; Urry, 2002; Smith, 2007). However, the current research finds out the majority of the visitors have previous similar hyperreal experience at the mainstream tourist attractions, and they are familiar with the new forms of digital representations such as augmented reality, living museums, theme parks, and virtual reality. The findings also stress visitors are interested in the concept of becoming part of the scene that allows them to understand the history (painting) more intuitively. In comparison with the prior studies, the research argues that the novel forms of the hyperreal productions have become a trend at tourist attractions in recent years that makes the visitors are aware of the existence of such hyperreal experience, yet the widespread applications lead to the extraordinary experience have become part of the visitor's ordinary daily life.

Additionally, the current research is questioning the distinction between the post-tourists versus the traditional tourists at the hyperreal attractions, and the finding reveals that most of the visitors are the '*traditional mainstream*' tourists but with the post-tourists' characteristics. The majority of the visitors have relied on the technology applications to acquire their travel information, and they are familiar with the digital experience and the hyperreal attractions based on their previous similar experience. Yet, digital productions are not the core driving forces that motivate them to visit the attraction, which does not support the previous studies of the post-tourists travel intentions and motivations. Does it mean we have become the postmodern consumers who are now living in the postmodern condition that the symbolic representation blurs the line between the traditional tourists and the post-tourists' as Baudrillard claims? However, in contrast to Baudrillard, the finding reveals that the individuals can create their subjective hyperreal experience before their visit as Rojek (1993) has suggested.

Furthermore, the finding confirms the technology-based simulated environments have become a new form of representation at diverse types of tourist attractions (Linchrou *et al.*, 2008). The diffusion of the innovation turns the '*fantastic illusion*' into a mainstream trend in the tourism industry, but the finding stresses that visitors are drawn into the concept of becoming part of the scene instead of the latest technology applications. Instead of focusing on one ocular based virtual environment, the findings of the four case studies suggest reconsidering the definition of the hyperreal attractions from multiple perspectives that include the physical environments, the technologies, the live actors, and the visitors themselves. The visitors' perceptions and experience in such environments will be further discussed in the next section.

8.1.2 During Visit

Previous studies have mentioned *'travels in hyperreality'* blurs the line between the dream and reality that provides visitors with the *'more real than real'* moment (Flyverbom and Reinecke, 2017; Rodaway, 1994). The *'more real than real'* experience stimulates visitors' personal subjectivities that provide them an in-depth understanding of the attraction by interacting with their surrounding environments actively. However, different from Rodaway, the current research argues that achieving the authentic feelings of *'being there'* requires the original reference. *'Becoming part of the scene'* is the essence of visitors' feelings of immersion that proves the previous findings by Ozel and Sokemen (2017). Another important finding from the case studies is the importance of the visitors' subjectivities that add the final link to the process of immersion based on the visitors' personal understandings and their encounters onsite, which proves Wohlfeil's (2018) previous study. The research has further developed a comprehensive understanding of the immersive experience that relates to the factors of sensations and authenticity. The visitors' interactions with the physical environments and staff onsite evoke their multi-sensory stimulation that arouses their authentic feelings, which can provide them with the strongest immersive experience as a total outcome. In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the visitors' immersion process, this section is divided into sensation, authenticity, and the visitors' immersive experience.

Sensations

Prior studies have noted the importance of the visitors' internal realms through their interactions with the external factors during the process of immersion. The current research further proves that the feeling of immersion is constructed by the visitors' personal realms and the external factors (Agapito *et al.*, 2013; Carbone, 1994; Morgan *et al.*, 2010; Rodaway, 1994). Similar to the findings of Bitner (1992) and Agapito *et al.* (2013), the external factors refer to the visitors' surrounding environments that include representations, artefacts, human interactions, and live actors' performances. The finding further argues that the visitors create their personal images through the ocular sensor and their personal realms that are based on their understanding and interactions onsite (Singer, 1966; Morgan *et al.*, 2010).

Several researchers stress that the visual sensory plays as the domain role in visitors' immersive experience, and the combination of at least three sensors (ocular based) further intensify the feelings of immersion (Agapito *et al.*, 2017; Agapito *et al.*, 2012; Xiong *et al.*, 2015; Dias *et al.*, 2017). The current research agrees with the previous findings that visual effects allow visitors to get a general information about their surrounding environments, yet the findings of the four case studies also indicate the importance of other sensory domains such as the soundscapes, the olfactory and the tactile (Dann and Jacobsen, 2003; Gibson and Connell, 2004; Zhang, 2017). An unexpected finding of the case study at SS Great Britain highlights the role of the olfactory stimulation that effects on the visitors' authentic feelings. Additionally, when visitors are *'being there'* as the co-creators, the visual sensation has been decreased from the central role during the process. As Agapito *et al.* (2013) demonstrates that there is

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inadequate knowledge of the relationship between the visitors' internal sensor domains with the external factors of their surrounding environments, the following section will further discuss the multi-sensory stimulation and the visitors' immersive experience that are based on the findings from the four case studies and the literature review.

The findings of the four case studies clarify that visual effects play a crucial role in the early stage of producing the immersive experience, which have set up the atmosphere and the themes of the attraction that allow visitors to get familiar with their surrounding environments. Similar to the previous research of Bogicevic *et al.* (2019), the case study of the Tang Paradise theme park further develops the relationship between the sightseeing and the visitors' personal realms, which refers to the visual effects stimulate visitors' imaginations that allows them to create their hyperreal experience in mind as the first step of immersion. The case study of the Dali VR exhibition proves that the connections between the visual sensation versus the visitors' imagination in producing the immersive experience, yet the technical issues such as the light leaks and the focus problems bring visitors back to the physical reality from the optical illusionary world that decreases the visitors '*feelings of absence*'.

In terms of the soundscapes, all the findings of the four case studies indicate that the simulated sound effects enhance the atmosphere and the themes at the attraction, which leads the visitors to step into the history (painting). The finding confirms the conceptual framework of the atmosphere and the '*tourist ears*' by Gibson and Connell (2004), which emphasize the role of the soundscape that can shape tourist space both aurally and physically. The research further stresses that the combination of the sightseeing and the soundscape intensify the atmosphere and the themes at the attractions that guides the individual visitors into the hyperreal world as the second step of the immersive experience.

An unexpected result from the case study of the SS Great Britain stress that the simulated olfactory play a crucial part of the visitors' immersive experience during their visit onsite, which disagrees with the findings of Hoven (2011) and Dia *et al.* (2017) who suggest that the scene is the least noticed at the tourist attractions. In contrast, the findings match the earlier conceptual framework by Dann and Jacobsen (2003), which proves the smell triggers the visitors' memories that arouses their emotions that have impacts on their authentic feelings at the attraction. Besides that, the current research finds out that the olfactory allows the visitors to have a better understanding of the interpretations and atmosphere at the attraction that triggers their intentions to interact with the staff and environments onsite to become part of the scene.

The tactile refers to the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments and the humans onsite that allows them to '*being there*'. Also, the case study of the SS Great Britain presents the visitors' interactions with the physical environments that converted them from the pure observers to the active performers. The case study of the interactive live performance stresses the interaction works as a bridge that links the internal factors with the external factors that allow visitors to become the co-producers at

the scene (Bitner, 1992; Agapito *et al.*, 2013). Additionally, the finding of the interactive live performance stresses the power of the individual visitors' interactions that makes improvements on their authentic feelings of 'being there'. In terms of the visitors' interactions with the computer-based 3D environments in VR, the finding of the virtual Dali's exhibition argues that the development of the emerging technology could not fully stimulate visitors' multi-sensations at the present stage because the technical issues have ceased the visitors' feelings of immersion as the previous studies have stressed (Cheong, 1995; Valente *et al.*, 2018).

Most importantly, the current finding confirms that the visitors complete the last step of immersive experience through their personal realms, which is consistent with the previous studies of Morgan *et al.*, (2010) and Goldstein (2010). The findings from the interactive live performance reveal that the last step is completed by the visitors' personal imaginations and understandings based on their experience at the attraction. Additionally, the theme of cultural differences has emerged from the case study of SS Great Britain, the finding suggests that some of the Chinese visitors are unable to imagine themselves becoming part of the scene of the Victorian Age because of their different cultural backgrounds and they are lack of familiarity with the icons of the era.

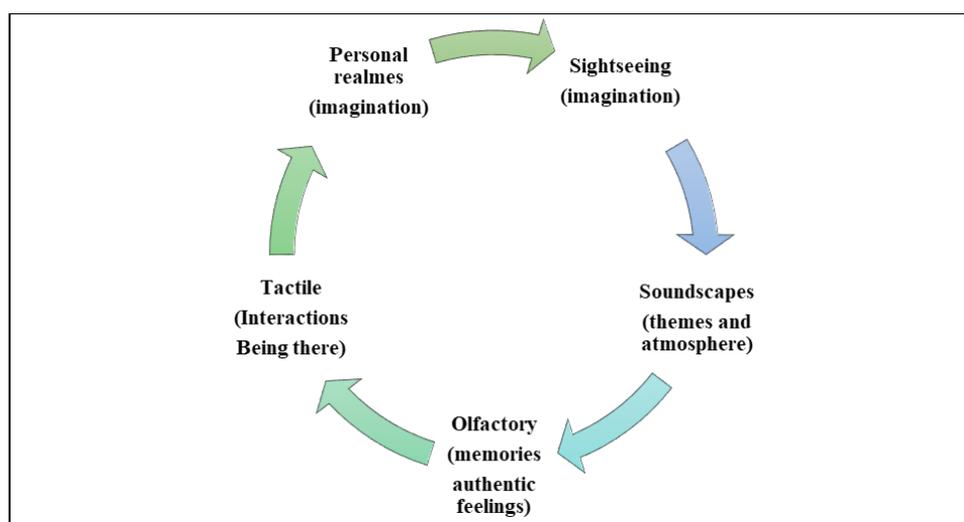


Figure 51 Sensation/immersion process

Similar to the previous research, the four case studies further indicate that visitors' ocular sensor plays as the central role at the early stage of immersive experience (Agapito *et al.*, 2017; Agapito *et al.*, 2012; Xiong *et al.*, 2015; Dias *et al.*, 2017). The research also stresses the importance of other sensor domains that are associated with the prior studies by several researchers (Gibson and Connell, 2004; Dann and Jacobsen, 2003; Zhang, 2017; Bogicevic *et al.*, 2019; Hoven, 2011). In addition, the research identifies the interrelationship between the multi-sensory stimulation versus the visitors' immersive experience as Figure 51 presents, which suggests the immersive experience is a dynamic process. The visual effects have built up the atmosphere and the themes of the attraction that arouses visitors' subjective imagination as the first step of the immersion process. The simulated sound effects enhances the

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atmosphere, which leads visitors to the hyperreal world. At the same time, the simulated olfactory triggers visitors' memories and enhances their authentic feelings and experience, and their interactions with the surrounding environments and humans onsite allow them to step into the hyperreality and to become part of the scene. Most importantly, the finding finds out the visitors themselves add the final link to the immersion process as co-creators which keeps their feelings of immersion lingering to complete the last step of the immersive experience. In association with the previous findings of Morgan *et al.* (2010), the first step and the last step relate to the internal factors, while the interactions with the physical environments and the humans onsite evoke visitors' multi-sensations that refers to the external factor. Furthermore, the finding from the virtual Dali exhibition argues that the development of the emerging technology application such as Virtual Reality could not deliver a fully immersive experience that satisfies visitors' multi-sensory stimulation, and the technical issues have limited the visitors' immersive experience and authentic feelings. The food and the taste sensation have not been included in the case studies, and the current research suggests future studies should focus on exploring the interrelationship between the taste and the immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions.

Authenticity

As previous researchers have suggested, the hyperreal attraction is associated with the existential authenticity that replaces the original objects, which provides visitors with a '*more real than real*' moment without any reference (Wang, 1999; Steiner and Reisinger, 2006; Cary, 2004; Knudsen *et al.*, 2016). However, the current research stresses the importance of the constructive authenticity as Buchmann *et al.* (2009) have argued, which entails the existential authenticity still relies on the objective reference that stimulates visitors' the most immersive experiences.

In terms of the objective authenticity, the current study finds out the realistic representation of the recreations have built up the foundation that persuades visitors to believe '*it is real*'. Similar to the previous research of Ram *et al.* (2016), the authentic representation refers to the historical accuracy and the realistic appearance (texture, details, materials, and colours) of the recreations. Besides that, the finding of the Tang Paradise Theme Park clarifies that the modern intrusions and the unrelated interpretations have negative impacts on the visitors' authentic experience that leads to their inauthentic feelings.

In association with the findings of the previous section, the visitors' interactions with the physical environments evoke their multi-sensory domains that influence their authentic experience. From the constructive perspective, the finding further proves that authentic feelings have relied on the objective authenticity (Buchmann *et al.*, 2009; Cohen, 2007; Zhou, 2018). The findings of the SS Great Britain and the interactive live performance highlight the authentic experience is associated with the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments and the live actors onsite, which provides them with a symbolic image of what the history used to be. The atmosphere is constructed by the appearance, the

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sounds effects, the olfactory simulation, and the interactions that add the final link to make efforts on the visitors' authentic experience. During the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environment and the humans onsite, the 'more real than real' moment emerges.

In contrast to previous findings, the current study considers that existential authenticity is the last step of the visitors' authentic experience, and it is based on the visitors' personal imaginations and understandings. Both findings of the SS Great Britain and the interactive live performance indicate the subjective authentic feeling is aroused by the visitors' personal backgrounds and understandings, where they can create their own stories through their imaginations and memories. 'Being part of the scene' triggers visitors' creativities and imaginations that keep their authentic and immersive feelings lingering. An unexpected result from the interactive live performance at the Famen Temple confirms the previous finding of Ram (2016) that the personal attachment and the existential authenticity is associated with the religious touristic attractions.

In terms of the visitors' authentic experience at the virtual attraction, the finding of the Dali museum reveals that most of the visitors are keen on the concept of '*step into the painting*' without questioning the authenticity, which is in contradiction to the previous findings that visitors give negative feedback on the inauthentic experience that the emerging technologies provide (Paquet and Viktor, 2005; Cheong, 2001; Prideaux, 2002; Mackellar, 2014). However, the current study finds that most of the visitors prefer the concept of '*stepping into the painting*' rather than the emerging technology applications. Additionally, the technical issues and the movements from point to point decrease the visitors' authentic feelings of becoming part of the scene. From the collected data, some of the visitors prefer the augmented reality to the virtual reality because it provides them with more authentic feelings through their interactions with physical environments and live actors onsite. The finding further indicates that the computer-based virtual environments could not provide visitors with a fully authentic and immersive experience at the present stage.

This section stresses the importance of the constructive authenticity, and the subjective authenticity relies on the objective authenticity, which entails the symbolic simulated environment is a reflection on the physical reality. The current study has further developed the relationships between the objective authenticity and the subjective authenticity. The objective authenticity has set up the foundations that convince the visitors to believe '*it is real*'. The visitors' interactions with the physical environments function as a bridge, which guides them to the '*more real than real*' moment. At this stage, the visitors' subjective imaginations and understandings play as key roles that allow them to create their personal stories, which enhances their feelings of '*being there*'. In association with the previous section 8.1.1, visitors are familiar with the digital experience at the hyperreal attractions without questioning the authenticity of it, yet the current study at the Dali Museum argues that emerging technology applications are not the core driving force that motivates the visitors to the attraction. The findings also indicate that

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emerging technology application such as Virtual Reality is unable to provide visitors a fully authentic experience of 'being there' at the present stage because of the technical issues.

Immersive experience

Prior studies demonstrate to provide a fully immersive experience that requires both the organization and the visitors themselves to make their efforts. tom Dieck *et al.* (2016) define the provider and the customer construct the visitors' experience of becoming part of the scene as the co-creators. The current study further confirms that the external factors and internal factors play are equally important that can bring visitors a fully immersive experience. The external factors refer to the realistic representations, the atmosphere, the settings and the staff at the hyperreal attractions, whereas the internal factors are in association with the visitors' personal realms. Similar to the findings of Jung *et al.* (2015), the realistic representations bring visitors higher personal innovativeness, which intensifies their overall experience of immersion. In addition, the findings of the four case studies are consistent with the previous studies of Yung and Latimore (2017), which stress the importance of the interaction process that works as a bridge to bring visitors into the illusionary world. Furthermore, the findings further prove the previous studies of Redhead (2011), who suggests the visitors' subjectivities and imaginations play the central role to achieve the last step of immersive experience. The case study of the SS Great Britain indicates that the Chinese visitors are satisfied with the realistic representation at the attractions, yet they are unable to immerse themselves in the scenes because of cultural differences. Similar to the finding of the SS Great Britain, the observation finding of the interactive live performance reveals that one western visitor keeps a distance of the interactions onsite during the whole time.

Although the previous studies have mentioned the importance of the interactions during the immersion process, there are inadequate empirical studies to explain the interrelationship between the interactions with the visitors' subjective personal realms. From the previous findings, most of the studies focus on exploring the interaction through the aesthetic appearance of the virtual environments, which demonstrate the visualization stimulates visitors' imaginations that arouse their feelings of immersion (Penfold, 2009; Wan *et al.*, 2007; Chung *et al.*, 2015; Jung *et al.*, 2015; He *et al.*, 2018). However, the current research reveals the importance of the multi-sensory stimulation as the previous sections have stressed, which refers to the visitors' interactions with the physical environments and the live actors that evoke their multi-sensors and allows them to become part of the scene.

Furthermore, the finding of the virtual Dali exhibition argues the virtual environment could not satisfy the visitors' feelings of immersion because the technical issues are unable to let the visitors explore freely inside of the virtual world as an avatar. The finding further proves the concept of Zhou *et al.* (2008) who emphasize the importance of the physical environments and humans that can arouse visitors' multi-sensory stimulation to convince them to believe they are becoming part of the scene.

This section indicates the importance of the interactions during the process of immersion, the findings of the SS Great Britain gain an insight of the interrelationship between the immersive experience and the visitors' interactions with the physical environments, which stresses the crucial role of other sensor domains beyond the ocular sensation. The meanings of the individuals through their interactions onsite have emerged from the case study of the interactive live performance, which highlight the roles of individual visitors that can influence others and created their personal stories through the interactions. In terms of the visitors' subjectivities and imaginations, the finding of the Tang theme park suggests that visitors can create their hyperreal experience through their personal realms at an early stage, yet the organization fails to deliver visitors a immersive experience because of the inadequate interactions and the poor performance of the staff onsite. The virtual Dali exhibition can lead visitors to the more real than real moment, but it fails to keep the visitors' immersive experience lingering because of the technical issues and the time restriction. The current research suggests the aesthetic representation and the realistic appearance have set up the atmosphere as the basic external factor that enables visitors to step into the history (painting) at an early stage of the immersion process. Most importantly, the interaction process is associated with the visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that triggers their feelings of authenticity to become part of the scene, which can lead them to become part of the scene. Furthermore, the research proves that the visitors' personal realms add the final link to the immersive experience as the co-creators at the scene.

8.1.3 After Visit

This section focuses on the visitors' attitudes on the hyperreal attractions and the traditional type of museums after they have visited the attraction. The finding stresses that hyperreal productions work as an extension of the original site that improves the visitors' overall experience, yet it could not replace the original objects/attractions associated with the previous findings of Prideaux (2002) and Mackeller (2014). The four case studies find out that most of the visitors perceive the hyperreal attractions as an entertaining platform that allows them access to the history more intuitively, while the traditional types of museums provide them with a better understanding of history. The finding of the SS Great Britain confirms that the British visitors are keen on the extraordinary experience on board because of the multi-sensation stimulations, which is similar to the previous studies of Duttentag (2010) and Rodaway (1995). However, the result from the Tang Theme Park indicates that most of the Chinese visitors prefer the traditional museums to the reconstructed replicas because of the objective authenticity. The different attitudes between the British tourists and the Chinese tourists raise the questions of cultural difference, yet the finding reveals that most of the Chinese visitors are not satisfied with their experience at the Tang theme park because of the poor-quality representation and the insufficient interactions, thus the cultural difference between the British tourists and the Chinese tourists needs to be further explored in future studies.

An unexpected finding has emerged from the four case studies that reveal visitors are more interested in the concept of the hyperreal experience than the immersive technologies, which does not support the previous findings of emerging technology applications can attract more tourists to visit the cultural attractions (Jung and tom Dieck, 2018; He *et al.*, 2018; tom Dieck *et al.*, 2016; Huang *et al.*, 2013). As it has been stressed in the earlier sections, most of the visitors are familiar with such hyperreal attractions, yet immersive productions are not the main reasons for them to visit the attractions. Does it mean they do not care about the experience they can acquire at the attractions?' 'Or does it mean they perceive the extraordinary hyperreal experience as a normal experience that they can get anywhere? The interrelationship between the visitors' travel intentions versus digital productions is required to be further indicated in future studies.

Furthermore, the findings stress visitors are looking for more interactive activities at such hyperreal attractions. Apart from the technical issues and the time restrictions, visitors at the virtual Dali tour are seeking for more interactions that allow them to explore freely inside of the virtual world. Therefore, similar to the previous study of Cheong (1995), the research suggests the tourism industry should make more efforts on gaining an insight of its audience rather than developing the latest immersive technology applications and then defines it as the visitors' immersive experience of '*travels in hyperreality*'.

8.2 Travels in Hyperreality: The Hyperreal Productions

In association with the previous studies, the current research confirms that the hyperreal productions have been popularly spreading in the tourism industry in recent years (Yung and Lattimore, 2017; Cheong, 1995; Berger *et al.*, 2007). Some of the researchers (Guillet and Penfold, 2013; tom Dieck *et al.*, 2018; Huang *et al.*, 2012) indicate that the immersive technologies can attract more tourists to visit the attractions and enhance the awareness of the branding, yet the findings from the current research argue that most of the visitors are not aware of the existence of the hyperreal productions before they have visited the attractions.

In addition, most of the prior studies suggest that the emerging technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and computer-based virtual environments could separate the illusionary fantasy from physical reality that bring visitors the most immersive experience (Hobson and Williams, 1995; Nechvatal, 2001; Guttentag, 2010; Huang *et al.*, 2013; Trojan *et al.*, 2016; Wan *et al.*, 2007). The current case study of the virtual exhibition at the Dali Museum proves that the well-produced representation and the realistic appearance in the simulated environment can stimulate visitors' ocular sensor that leads them to the immersive experience. Similar to the previous findings of Kaplan (2013), the technical problems are the biggest issues that decrease the visitors '*feelings of presence*'. The research further

indicates that the technical issues have ceased the visitors' *'feelings of immersion'*, which is unable to deliver them a fully immersive experience.

Most of the previous studies examine that visitors give positive feedback on the digital productions by applying quantitative research methods such as questionnaires and surveys (Chu *et al.*, 2012; Jung *et al.*, 2015; Singh and Lee, 2009; Huang *et al.*, 2010; He *et al.*, 2018; Jung *et al.*, 2018; Chung *et al.*, 2015). In different from the previous findings, the current study clarifies that visitors are giving positive feedback on the concept of hyperreal experience instead of the emerging technology applications. As it has been stressed in the previous section, the interaction plays a crucial role that allows visitors to become part of the scene. The finding of the virtual Dali tour discovers that the virtual reality is unable to trigger visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that allows them to explore freely inside of the virtual environment.

Several previous studies demonstrate that the emerging technology applications have become the future in the tourism industry, yet the only deficiency is the technical issues (Kaplan, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2010; Singh and Lee, 2009; Jung *et al.*, 2015). In contrast, the current study argues that the technical issues are the biggest problems that ceases visitors immersive experience that brings them back to physical reality, which makes the questions of 'Can the emerging technology applications bring visitors the most immersive experience, and 'is there any other possibility to deliver the feelings of immersion to the visitors?' come into light.

The finding of the Tang theme park explores the combination of the reconstructed architecture can stimulate visitors' ocular sensor that arouses their imaginations as the first step of immersive experience. The result of the SS Great Britain discovers visitors can *'reach into the past'* through their interactions with physical environments without the emerging technology applications. The finding also underlines the importance of other sensor domains beyond the ocular sensor, especially the olfactory stimulation, which intensifies the atmosphere of the visitors' surrounding environments that enhances their authentic experience. Furthermore, the interactive live performance stresses the meanings of individual visitors through their interactions with the live actors and other visitors onsite, which turns them to become the co-creators of the scene. The findings of the four case studies suggest that *'travels in hyperreality'* is constituted by both objectivity and subjectivity; the organization and the visitors themselves; their interactions with the surrounding environments and the individuals onsite. Most importantly, the findings reveal that a fully immersive experience requires the multi-sensor stimulus, which makes the question go back to: 'Can the latest emerging technology applications fully deliver so-called *'the immersive experience in hyperreality'* to the visitors?'

8.3 Travels in Hyperreality: The Co-creation Experience

Based on the findings of the four case studies, the research defines ‘travels in hyperreality’ is constructed by both objectivity and subjectivity; the organization and the visitors themselves. As previous studies have suggested, visitors are the sole creators of the hyperreal experience, and their subjectivities and creativities add the final link to the last step of the immersive experience that blurs the line between the producers versus the visitors (Namin, 2012; Campost *et al.*, 2018; Agapito *et al.*, 2013; Sfandla and Bjork, 2012). Similar to the prior studies, the research further proves the interactions work as a bridge that links visitors to the hyperreal productions, which stimulates the visitors’ sensibilities and emotions that allows them to become part of the scene (Prebensen *et al.*, 2013; Tan *et al.*, 2014; Campos *et al.*, 2016; Prebensen and Xie, 2017).

In addition, several researchers have recommended the emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality can enhance on the process of interactions that leads to the visitors’ most immersive feeling of becoming part of the scene as the co-creators (Mossberg, 2007; Mossberg, 2008). As has been indicated in the previous sections, the current study at the Dali Museum disapproves the prior research by Mossberg (2008). Furthermore, the findings of the four case studies are consistent with Ihamiaki (2012) and Mokono (2013), who demonstrate the active interactions are associated with the multi-sensor stimulus, which can arouse visitors’ emotions and cognitive feelings that allows them to ‘*stepping into the history*’ rather than ‘*observing it*’. The previous studies have divided the co-creation experience as before, during and after, which relates to the inner factors and the external factors (Anton *et al.*, 2018; Tan *et al.*, 2013). However, as it has been mentioned in the literature review, the interrelationship between the interactive activities and the visitors’ subjectivities can turn them into the co-creators of the scene that requires to be further explored (Agapito *et al.*, 2017; Campos *et al.*, 2018). The following section will provide a comprehensive understanding of the co-creation experience as before, during and after from the findings of the four case studies.

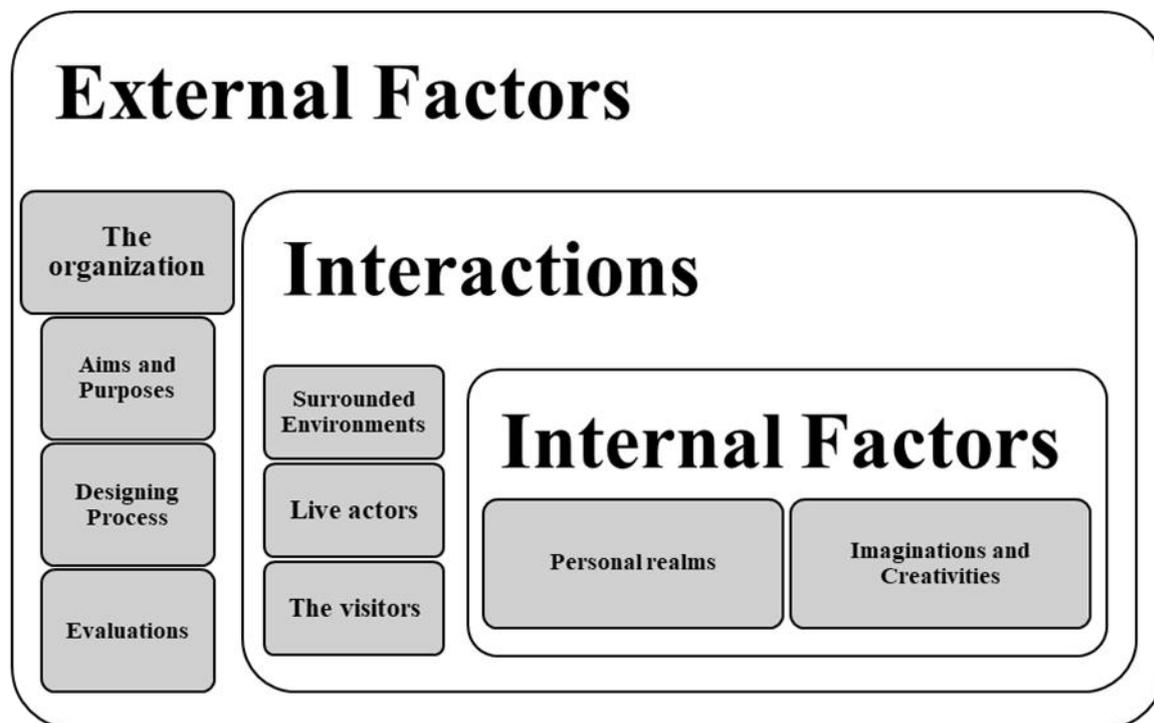


Figure 52 Travels in hyperreality: the co-creation experience

According to *Figure 52*, the external factors refer to the organization’s contributions to the hyperreal productions that include their aims and purposes, designing process, and the evaluations on their developed productions and audience’s perceptions. In terms of the internal factors, it has been associated with the personal realms and imaginative creativities, which occurs the most at the before and after stages. The interactions involve both the organization and the visitors that are constructed by the physical environments, live actors and other visitors onsite. During the interaction stage, the onsite activities turn the visitors into co-creators of the scene, which further leads them to the next stage that they can create their own meaningful narratives through their imaginations and personal understandings.

In terms of the external factors, the Tang Paradise Theme Park has reconstructed the replicas of the architectural complex of the Tang Dynasty. Visitors can reach to the past by interacting with the physical environment and the live actors on-site. However, the organization fails to deliver visitors a fully immersive experience because of the inauthentic representation and inadequate interactive activities. The finding shows that objective authenticity and realistic appearance have huge impacts on the visitors’ feeling of immersion, and the live actors and staff play important roles to persuade visitors to become part of the scene.

In comparison with the Tang theme park, the SS Great Britain manages to provide visitors with a fully immersive experience because the providers make efforts on understanding their audience. Also, the organization has simulated multi-sensor stimulation to evokes visitors’ multi sensations that enhance their authentic feeling of ‘being there’. In different from the other three case studies, the producer has developed the simulated olfactory that reveals the importance of other sensor domains beyond the

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sightseeing. Visitors become the co-creators of the scene by interacting with the physical environments on-site, and the realistic appearance and multi-sensor stimulation have set up the atmosphere that intensifies the visitors' feeling of immersion. In terms of the interactive activities on-site, the finding shows that visitors are expecting more interactions with the live actors instead of the manikins.

In contrast to the other three attractions, the interactive live performance at the Famen Temple shows the power of individual visitors and the live actors on-site. Visitors are becoming co-producers by interacting with live actors and other visitors during the show. The new form of live performance turns visitors into active insiders instead of passive observers, which blurs the line between the audience and the performers. The producers stress that the show could not be achieved without the individual visitors, and the fully immersive experience of 'being there' has emerged through the visitors' interactions and activities at the scene.

The Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality is based on a three-dimensional virtual environment that separates visitors from objective reality. The organization has embedded nine symbols of Dali inside of the virtual world that highlights the symbolic values. Visitors can explore inside of nine virtual attractions from point to point as avatars. The findings confirm the realistic appearance and the simulated sounds effects have set up the atmosphere inside of the virtual world, which provides visitors with the more real than the real moment. However, the technical issues and the time restrictions have ceased the visitors' feeling of immersion. Additionally, visitors are expecting to explore freely inside of the virtual world instead of moving from point to point. Most importantly, the results show the organization does not have a comprehensive understanding of their audience. The producers claim visitors are motivated by digital productions, but the finding reveals that the virtual productions are not the core driving force for them to visit the attraction.

From the visitors' perspective, the research reveals that the SS Great Britain and the Famen Temple have successfully provided the visitors with the most immersive experience. The organization and the visitors are metaphorically staying on the same page, which entails that the visitors receive the messages that the organization has delivered properly. The SS Great Britain and the interactive live performances aim at delivering visitors an experience of '*stepping into the history actively*' rather than '*seeing it passively*' that allows their visitors to create their personal narratives through their interactions with the physical environments and the live actors onsite. From the visitors' responses at both attractions, they are keen on their experience at such hyperreal attractions that enhance their understanding of history more intuitively. However, the attractions of the Tang theme park and the Dali Museum fail to provide visitors with a fully immersive experience because both organizations focus on the representation and the emerging technology applications without fully understanding the meanings of developing such hyperreal productions, which have not met their visitors' expectations and satisfaction. From the visitors' feedback on both attractions, they are more interested in the concept of '*travels in hyperreality*' rather

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than the representation/digital productions, and they are expecting more interactions with their surrounding environments and the live actors onsite. The findings of the Tang theme park stress that fewer visitors who are enthusiastic about the history and culture of the Tang Dynasty have created the hyperreal experience through their imaginations before they have visited to the attraction. Additionally, they are bringing their costumes to merge with the themes and atmosphere of the attraction, which entails the importance of individuals' subjectivities and creativities as the co-creators.

The producers of the SS Great Britain create the most immersive experience for the visitors through multi-sensors simulations that include the sightseeing, soundscape, the olfactory and the tactile, which stresses the importance of other sensor domains besides the single ocular sensation. From the visitors' responses onsite, the interactions with the physical environments bring an extraordinary experience as being on the ship at the Victorian Age. In addition, visitors at the attraction are more drawn into the simulated olfactory and tactile rather than the aesthetic appearance of the recreations that are associated with the organization's developing process. The interactive live performance aims at merging visitors with the scene through the interactions with individuals onsite. The live actors' performances and attitudes play as crucial roles during the interaction process that convenience their audience to believe they are becoming part of the scene. In terms of the movements and interactions with other visitors, the visitors' most immersive experience of *'being there'* has emerged. The findings from both attractions prove that to achieve a fully immersive experience, it requires multi-sensor stimulus and the interactions. Furthermore, the current study indicates that during the interactive stage, visitors are using their imaginations the least because they have already become part of the imagination. In terms of the virtual Dali tour, the organization is proud of their virtual tour that has provided a new platform for their visitors to appreciate art, yet the technical issues and the time restriction have decreased their feelings of immersion that brings them back to the reality from Dali's dreamy world. Because of the insufficient interactions and the technical problems, it unable to keep the visitors' feeling of immersion lingering that fails to inspire the visitors to become the co-producer through their personal realms. Similar to the Dali Museum, the Tang theme park fails to allow their visitors to merge with the scene because of the inadequate interactive activities and the poor performance of the staff onsite, which entails the poor qualities of the external factors have influence on the visitors interaction process that unable to turn them into the co-creators through their personal realms in the last step.

At the last stage, the visitors have become the co-creators of the hyperreal experience through their personal imaginations and understandings. Their encounters and interactions onsite have become abstract and symbolic that turn into their valuable memories and have an influence on their future travel intentions. In addition, from the findings of the SS Great Britain and the interactive live performance, the cultural difference has impacts on the visitors' immersive experience subjectively, which shows some visitors are unable to imagine themselves being part of the scene due to their different backgrounds.

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This section has stressed the importance of the roles of individual visitors during the co-creation process, yet it still has to rely on the external factors and their interactions onsite. The current research suggests that the organization's aims and purposes in developing the hyperreal productions have shaped the hyperreal experience for the visitors. From the visitors' responses, they are more interested in the concept of becoming part of the scene rather than the latest technology developments being deployed. The interaction process has an influence on the visitors' personal imaginations and creativities, which requires the multi-sensor stimulus and the individuals' activities that leads the visitors to become part of the scene. The visitors create their own valuable meanings and narratives based on their personal realms as the co-creators, which keeps the feelings of immersion lingering at the last step of '*travels in hyperreality*' that highlights the values of the individual visitors as the co-creators..

Chapter 9 Conclusion

This research has argued that hyperreality is an ultimate outcome of processes of signification in partnership with individual experience. The effective, cognitive and emotional aspects of the production of realities need to be examined in more depth and in a way that deepens the understanding of the relationships between subjectivity, agency, and individuality. The research has made hinges upon the means of production of the hyperreal and how these means to function as agents that control simulation and responses and thus enable individual hyperrealities to be realised. Hyperreality is always a contingent construct that is co-created by tourists, managers and organisations, attractions representations and interpretations.

Similar to the previous studies, the findings of the Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality entails the emerging technology applications can partially provide visitors with an immersive experience, yet the technical issues have ceased the visitors' feeling of immersion that brings them back to physical reality. However, the current research stresses that the technical issues of the VR device have temporally limited visitors' immersive experience as the co-creators, and the time limitation has decreased the effectiveness of visitors' creativity and imagination. It leads to the result that visitors are unable to fully co-create the scene with the virtual environment based on their personal understandings and backgrounds in a subjective level.

The findings of the other attractions in the case studies provide possibilities for the tourist industry to develop the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions. Visitors at the Tang Paradise Theme Park provide negative feedback on their experience onsite, yet the findings reveal the importance of the individual visitors' subjectivities and activities that they have produced the feeling of immersion through their personal imaginations. Imagination is associated with the visual sensation of the landscape, which refers to the first step of immersion created by the visitors' mind. Through the imagination process, visitors create their stories of becoming part of the scene by their surrounding environments and their imaginations. The findings of the SS Great Britain and the live performance Dharma Legends at Famen Temple find out the role of the interactions onsite that evoke visitors' multi-sensor domains and leads them to become part of the scene. In the process of interacting with the physical settings and live actors onsite, the visitors generate their memorable narratives based on their personal realms and understanding. From the objective perspective, the visitors' interactions with the physical environments and the live actors onsite blur the boundaries between the producers and the audience, which co-creates an image of the moment of immersion. From the subjective perspective, the value of the co-creation experience refers to the individual visitors explore their own meanings of life on a spiritual level, which is the moment of self-discovery through the visitors' experience onsite.

The research has provided a comprehensive understanding of 'travels in hyperreality' from the visitors' perspective, which stresses the meanings of the individual visitors as the co-creators that add the final

link to the feeling of immersion. To deliver a fully immersive experience to the visitors, the research has suggested the crucial role of interactions that are associated with the visitors' interactions with their surrounding environments and individuals onsite. The research has made a contribution to provide an interrelationship between the multi-sensory stimulation versus the visitors' immersive experience onsite, which highlights the importance of other sensor domains instead of one single ocular stimulus. Most importantly, the research confirms that hyperreality will become the future trend in the tourism industry, yet it argues to reconsider the role of emerging technology applications at such hyperreal attractions. The current study has indicated that the latest digital productions such as Virtual Reality could not fully evoke visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that brings them the most authentic and immersive experience at the current stage. Instead of developing the technology applications, the research suggests that organizations should make more efforts on understanding their audience and developing immersive experience from the visitors' perspective. This finding has important implications for developing the hyperreal experience at tourist attractions in the future, which brings possibilities for immersive experience development such as the reconstructed physical theme parks, living museums, and interactive live performances. Most importantly, the research demonstrates the interactions with the individuals onsite can intensify visitors the immersive experience that provides them with an authentic feeling of 'being there'.

9.1 Contributions

The contributions of the thesis are mainly:

- Defining the hyperreality in tourist cultural attractions: The research reveals '*travels in hyperreality*' is constructed by both the organization and the visitors, the subjectivity and the objectivity, and four themes have emerged from the collected data that refer to the representation, imaginations, sensations, and interactions.
- Identifying the role of the emerging technology applications: The current study finds out that the latest digital productions such as the Virtual Reality could not fully evoke visitors' multi-sensory stimulation that provides them with the most authentic and immersive experience at the current stage. Additionally, the research argues that digital productions are not the core driving force for the tourists to visit the attractions.
- Visitors immersive experience: The research provides a comprehensive understanding of the interrelationship between the visitors' immersive experience and the multi-sensor domains that suggest the immersive experience is a dynamic process. The visual effects have built up the atmosphere and the themes of the attraction that arouses visitors' subjective imagination as the first step of the immersion process. The simulated sounds effects that enhances the atmosphere, which leads the visitors into the hyperreal world. The simulated olfactory triggers visitors' memories that enhances their authentic feelings and experience, whereas the visitors'

interactions with their surrounding environments and humans onsite allows them to actually *'being there'*. Most importantly, the research reveals the visitors' subjectivities add the final link to the hyperreal experience that highlights the co-creation values. However, cultural differences have influences on the visitors' personal realms that decides whether they can fully immerse themselves as the co-creators at the hyperreal attractions.

- The role of the individual subjectivities in the co-creation experience: The research reveals the importance of the interaction process that allows visitors to add the final link to become the co-creators of *'travels in hyperreality'*.

9.2 Limitations

In terms of the limitations of the research, several questions are still required to be further explored in future studies:

- Hyperreality in the postmodern theories: The thesis does not engage with providing a comprehensive understanding of the hyperreality in the postmodern theories. As the research has found out the simulation at the cultural attractions is constructed by both the objectivity and the subjectivity, yet it could not represent the ontology and epistemology of the contemporary world that requires more rational empirical studies to prove.
- The post-tourists: The definitions and characteristics of the post-tourists require to be further examined and identified in future studies. The current four case studies are focusing on the landmarks and the popularly spreading tourist attractions that most of the visitors are the traditional types of tourists but with the postmodern characteristics. Therefore, the research suggests that future studies should make more efforts to find out the extraordinary experience and the post-tourist's intentions at the rural attractions and the abandoned spaces that are separated from modern societies.
- Multi-sensor domains: The food and the taste sensor have not been included in the current research that needs to be further explored to find out its interrelationship with the visitor's subjectivity and the immersive experience.
- The Cross-cultural theme: the theme of culture different has emerged from the current research. However, because of the small scales of the informant of the four case studies that require to be further examined with quantitative research methods such as questionnaires and surveys.

9.3 Recommendations

In terms of the recommendations for the attractions in the case studies, the research suggests the Dali museum should make more efforts to understand their visitors before they have developed the digital products. Instead of developing the latest technology applications, the organization should focus on improving their visitors' immersive experience such as adding more interactions with the virtual

environment that allow them to explore freely inside the surreal world instead of moving from point-to-point. The findings of the Tang Paradise Theme Park reveal that the organization should make improvements on the staff and live performances onsite. Besides that, visitors are expecting more interpretations and interactions that relate to the themes of the Tang culture. Visitors are satisfied with their experience at the SS Great Britain, yet from their responses, they are expecting more interactions with the live actors that can enhance their feeling of being there. The interactive live performance Dharma Legends in Famen Temple has blurred the lines between the visitors versus the live actors that turn the visitors into the co-creators of the hyperreal production. However, the poor quality of the speakers and the confusion of the scene that has been played from multiple directions require to make further improvements that provide visitors with the most immersive experience of being there.

The recommendations of the research are making relate to the development of an adequate theory to assist in understanding the processes and interactions that create tourist experience. It is necessary to develop a theory that covers the entire domain of the visitors' immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions that considers these elements within the wider context of the whole range of activities, experiences, and outcomes that occur within the tourist encounter. Understanding such complexity inherently requires nuanced and in-depth empirical studies that ought to be led by qualitative and ethnographic studies. At present, the current research argues that the immersive experience at the hyperreal attractions is not only associated with the digital representations at the attractions, but also the visitors' encounters and interactions onsite that constructs '*travels in hyperreality*'. Most importantly, the visitors' subjectivities and imaginations play as crucial roles that add the final link to the co-creation process. However, as has been shown in the literature review, quantitative questionnaires and surveys are the most common way of obtaining data with which to study the visitors' perceptions and experience of hyperreality in tourist attractions. Verifying and testing the perception and experience of tourists by using scales and numbers does not obtain the most comprehensive understanding and does not allow for the voice of the individual subject to be heard in the research process. The research suggests that future studies should make more efforts on exploring the individual views and perceptions, motivations and interpretations of visitors. This further exploration requires to be undertaken in a context in which the important characteristics of the postmodern and of the post-tourist are brought to the fore of the understanding of humanity in general and of the specific settings of tourism. Understanding tourism requires a deeper appreciation of the nature of the societies within which it takes place, which also needs to take account of the fact that tourist encounters are moments in space and time where consumers have chosen to focus their attention on meaning and signification that has implications for their responses to representations and simulation. Visiting attractions is one of the outcomes of filtering the range of available representations and the willing tourist is prepared to interact, learn, play and engage differently to how they might outside that specific setting.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Hyperreal Attractions

<i>Art exhibitions/galleries</i>	<i>Contents</i>	<i>Layouts</i>	<i>Visitor experience</i>
<i>Olafur Eliasson (2003)</i> <i>The weather projects</i> <i>Location: Tate Modern,</i> <i>London</i> <i>(Tate.org., 2003)</i>	The Sun Simulated sunset against sea, Reflections in Edvard Munch's paintings Simulated haze and fog	Physical settings: Semicircle of light, mirror, window	The spiritual and emotional attachment to nature in a romantic tradition. Enable the visitors to understand the experience itself
<i>Olafur Eliasson (2019-2020)</i> <i>The weather projects</i> <i>Location: Tate Modern,</i> <i>London</i> <i>(Tate.org, 2019)</i>	The rainbow, Simulated rainbow-the illusion of the rainbow	Physical settings: a punctured hosepipe, a vast wall covered with Icelandic moss	Visitors can walk through the tunnel of fog and kaleidoscope of mirrors to experience the coloured shadows on the walls
<i>Celeste Boursier-Mougenot (2015)</i> <i>'Acquaalta'</i> <i>Locations; Palais de Tokyo,</i> <i>Paris</i> <i>(ContemporaryArtDaliy.com, 2015)</i>	Indoor exhibition: simulated lakeside landscape, a scene for an imaginary journey	A combination with physical space with technology applications Zombiedrone-a video signal processing system	Lakeside landscape leads the visitors into an experience with tactile, visual and auditory Change the visitors' perceptions of space Visitors enter a stream of image both mentally and physically
<i>Carsten Holler (2006-2007)</i> <i>The unilever series: Test site</i> <i>Location: Tate Modern,</i> <i>London</i> <i>(Windsor, 2011)</i>	The slides experiential life Practical and alternative means of transportation	Indoor exhibition: Slider installation	Loss of control, vertigo and delight feelings from the sliders
<i>Carsten Holler (2005)</i> <i>Carousels</i> <i>Location: The new museum,</i> <i>New York</i> <i>(Higgins, 2011)</i>	The carousels	Indoor exhibition: A full-scale fairground carousel with mirrored surface	The feeling of delight, dizzying, fun and vertigo
<i>Carsten Holler's mushroom sculptures (2011)</i> <i>Location: The new museum,</i> <i>New York</i> <i>(Yoo, 2014)</i>	Series of mushroom sculptures	Sculptures of mushroom painted in bright colours Side room filled full filled with huge fungi	The feeling of travelling in Alice in Wonderland
<i>Giant psycho tank (1999)</i> <i>Location: The new museum,</i> <i>New York</i> <i>(Corbett, 2011)</i>	Simulated 'dead sea' Floating experience	Body-temperature salt water is built inside of the museum	Sensation: floating from nothingness without any sounds or smell
<i>The fun house: The beach studio snarchitecture (2018)</i> <i>Locations; museum in Washington D.C</i> <i>(Didero, 2018)</i>	A new form of exhibition Simulated beach scenes with pools, gardens and houses	A kidney shaped pool filled with thousands of recycle plastic balls to recreate the atmosphere of the water and the beach	Visitors can jump into the 'sea' with donnet shape swim ring
<i>Water world: Hiroshi Sambuichi</i> <i>Underground water (2015)</i> <i>Location: Copenhagen</i> <i>(Acance, 2017)</i>	Experience world in the underground water	Installation of light, grass and glass walls	The experience of dive inside of the water-a journey through underground sea of light and darkness.
<i>Art Safiental horizontal-vertical (2018)</i> <i>Locations: Safiental,</i> <i>Switzerland</i> <i>(Spears, 2018)</i>	14 pieces of artworks aligned with the great nature of Swiss mountains	Artworks in combination with the vertical orientation of the natural space	Let the visitors to explore, get inspired, interact and find meanings in such spaces.

Appendix

<p><i>Rainbow church by Tokujin Yoshioka (2010)</i> <i>Location: Seoul (Etherington, 2010)</i></p>	<p>Inspired by Matisse, a glass window made of 500 crystal prisms to create the rainbow effects</p>	<p>Crystal prisms, eight-metre-high installation</p>	<p>Visitors can inspire and feel the light with all senses.</p>
<p><i>The Bedroom of van Gogh Chicago art institution and Airbnb (2016)</i> <i>Location: Chicago (Hunter, 2016)</i></p>	<p>A physical three-dimensional replica of Van Gogh's painting: 'The bedroom'.</p>	<p>Physical space, objects and furniture recreation with vibrant colour and styles just like it appears in Van Gogh's painting</p>	<p>Visitors can live inside of the 'painting' rather than passively observe it.</p>
<p><i>The dream of Dali Virtual Reality (2016)</i> <i>Location: the Dali museum, St. Petersburg, Orlando (Dali.org, 2016)</i></p>	<p>A virtual environment replica of Dali's one famous painting</p>	<p>Virtual Reality device</p>	<p>Virtual tour for tourists to go inside and beyond Dali's painting. The tourists could explore the recreation of the painting along with entering the tower and floating around Dali's surrealist landscapes in 360 degrees.</p>
<p>Film tourism attractions</p>	<p>Contents</p>	<p>Layouts</p>	<p>Visitor experience</p>
<p><i>The TV show 'Friends' Central Perk coffee house replica</i> <i>'Monica's bedroom, Joey and Chandler's homes in Airbnb</i> <i>Location: Beijing (Chen, 2018)</i></p>	<p>The replica of the coffee house 'Central Perk' in 'Friends'</p> <p>The replica of Monica and Chandler's room for the movie fans to live in</p>	<p>Physical layouts, recreated furniture and layouts based on the original movie</p>	<p>For the movie fans to live inside the scenarios, visitors can drink coffee and listen to 'Phoebe' play guitar, and there is 'Rachel' and 'Gunther' serve coffee to the visitors.</p>
<p><i>Harry Potter Studio</i> <i>Location: UK/ Universal Studio, US (Wbstudiotour.co.uk, 2018)</i> <i>(Waysdorf and Reijnders, 2016)</i></p>	<p>The one in the UK keeps the scenes in the movie, where allows the movie fans to get familiar with the shooting process</p> <p>The universal studio recreate the village of Hogsmeade and urban neighbourhood of Diagon Alley.</p> <p>The virtual rides in the movie</p>	<p>Physical settings in combination with emerging technologies.</p> <p>Background sounds: the themed music in the movie</p>	<p>Visitors become part of the scenes, the virtual ride allows the visitors become part of the performers in the story.</p>
<p><i>Lord of the rings</i> <i>Location: New Zealand (Buchmann et al., 2009)</i></p>	<p>The 'Middle Earth' atmosphere and stories</p>	<p>Reproductions through multi-layered simulated environments</p>	<p>Visitors can active participant with the activities on site, which brings the most fulfilling and spiritual meanings to the visitors.</p>
<p><i>Forbidden City replica in film industry</i> <i>Location: Hengdian, China (Yan, 2011)</i></p>	<p>The replica of the Forbidden city in China that allows the filmmakers and producers to shoot films and TV shows.</p> <p>It also opens as a tourist attraction, where the visitors can interact with.</p>	<p>Physical reproduction based on the original site.</p>	<p>Visitors can see some of the shooting process on site, get involved with movie stars.</p> <p>The reproduced furniture allows the visitors to touch, sit on and interact with.</p>
<p><i>Ghibli Museum, mitaka</i> <i>Location: Japan (Ghibli-museum.jp/en, 2019)</i></p>	<p>Replica and real physical sites based on the animations produced by the Japanese animation Studio Ghibli. The post popular attractions include the replica of the Catbus from My Neighbor Totoro (1988), a coffee store, rooftop garden, and a</p>	<p>Physical reproductions based on the environments and settings in the animation.</p>	<p>Different types of activities on site, get involved with the simulated environments.</p>

theater for exclusive short films by Studio Ghibli.

<i>Heritage sites/Museums</i>	<i>Contents</i>	<i>Layouts</i>	<i>Visitor experience</i>
<i>The Metropolitan Museum of Art</i> <i>Location: New York</i> <i>(Metmuseum.org, 2019)</i>	The exhibition and objects are displayed and designed according to their original background and history to fit into the atmospheres. For example, in the Chinese art and culture section, the pieces of artwork are displayed in a simulated indoor Suzhou style garden.	Physical combinations with the pieces of artworks and objects. Background music (Roman Catholic themed music in the exhibition of “Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination”)	Feeling the atmosphere and histories of different culture and regions. Travelling back to the history and becoming part of the stories (Walking through the Temple of Dendur)
<i>Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum</i> <i>Location: Boston</i> <i>(gardnermuseum.org, 2019; Smith and Zimmermann, 2017)</i>	Multi-sensory museum, such as the sounds of the fountains, the scents of the plants from the country yard, the collection of visual and decorative arts.	Different media, multiple associations and interpretations in the physical environment. Concert at the Tapestry Room late night.	Evoke a sense of wonder, personal connections. Foster personal meanings-where the visitors make interpretations for themselves. The feelings of transported to a wonder world.
<i>The Sky Museum of Island Life</i> <i>Location: Kilmuir, Skye, Scotland</i> <i>(Skyemuseum.co.uk, 2019)</i>	Living museum. A recreation and portrayal of people’s lifestyle in an old Highland village 100 years ago.	Outdoor museum, Wax figures, physical recreated layouts and settings, the recreated cottage, black house living space based on the history.	Giving visitors a sense of how people used to live 100 years ago in Skye. The experience of ‘stepping back into the old Highland village in the past’.
<i>The Beamish Museum</i> <i>Location: Durham, UK</i> <i>(Beamish.org, 2019)</i>	Living museum. Recreation of the story of the people of North East England in the 1820s, 1900s and 1940s.	Outdoor museum, Multi-sensory experience design. Traditional food, recreated steam trains, co-op shops, and carriage driving experience.	Experiencing and interacting with the history alive.
<i>Brunel’s SS Great Britain</i> <i>Location: Bristol, UK</i> <i>(Ssgreatbritain.org, 2018)</i>	Living museum. The life of living inside of the ship in a Victorian age.	Multi-sensory experience design in physical space. The simulated smell of the bakery room, the pharmacy room and the kitchen. Wax figures, living actors with costumes, and the simulated sounds of people who lived in the past. Recreated Victorian style furniture on the ship based on the original objects. Under the water section: the recreation of diving inside of the water atmosphere.	Interacting and involving the scenes in the ship from multiple sensory dimensions.

Appendix

<p><i>Shakespeare's Globe Theatre</i> <i>Location: London, UK</i> <i>(ShakespearesGlobe.com, 2015)</i></p>	<p>Reconstructed theatre based on the original one. Live performance 'everyone in the world is an actor' bring the performers and audience together</p>	<p>Living actors with costumes all plays are based on the Shakespeare's scripts</p>	<p>Interactions with the live actors, joining into the play as if they were travelling back to the Shakespeare's theatre in the 16th century. The performance is accomplished by both the audience and the performers.</p>
<p><i>The Dharma Legends in Famen Temple</i> <i>Location: Xi'an, China</i> <i>(DharmaengendsInFamenTemple.com, 2019)</i></p>	<p>Interactive live performance Recreation of the underground palace and the stories that happened in the Famen Temple in history.</p>	<p>Holographic applications with physical settings Live actors with costumes</p>	<p>Visitors become the co-creators of the story by walking and interacting with the live actors from scenario-to-scenario in 70 minutes.</p>
<p><i>Mogao Grottoes and Pure Land project</i> <i>Locations: originally in DunHuang, China</i> <i>(Kenderdine, 2014)</i></p>	<p>A virtual recreation to bring the Mogao Grottoes alive for the visitors easy to access, because the original one is too fragile to open in public.</p>	<p>Virtual reality, laser scanner, texture capturing Combination of the animations and murals</p>	<p>Providing visitors with better opportunity to involve themselves with the attraction. A better understanding of the culture in the history.</p>
<p><i>Maiko and Geisha Tour</i> <i>Location: Kyoto, Japan</i> <i>(Veltra.com, 2019)</i></p>	<p>Creating the opportunities for the tourists who visit Kyoto to dress up as a traditional Geisha and walk as a Geisha in the Gion area</p>	<p>Traditional Japanese Kimono and hair style</p>	<p>Experiencing the traditional way of putting on Geisha's makeup and dressing up in a Kimono. Visitor can play as a Geisha and walk on the street, which makes others think they get lucky to see the 'real' Geisha in Gion and want to take pictures together</p>
<p><i>North Song Dynasty Theme Park</i> <i>Location: Zhengzhou, China</i> <i>(Ong and Jin, 2017)</i></p>	<p>A three-dimensional physical environment reproduction based on one famous painting 'Qingming Shanghe Tu' by the Song Dynasty artist Zhang Zeduan.</p>	<p>Physical reproduced street according to the painting. Live actors on the street with costumes</p>	<p>Visitors get the feeling on both 'travelling inside the street in the painting' and also 'travelling back to the past'.</p>
<p><i>Tang Paradise Theme Park</i> <i>Location: Xi'an, China</i> <i>(Tangparadise.cn, 2019)</i></p>	<p>Recreating an image of the glorious age of Tang Dynasty in China The reproduction is built based on the original 'Royal Hibiscus Garden' in Tang Dynasty.</p>	<p>Reproduced architectures, artificial lake in the Park's centre 3D waterscape show in the evening Evening Tour Live performance</p>	<p>Visitors get insight on the life of emperors and royal families back in Tang Dynasty.</p>



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Information Sheet & Consent Form

Research Study

You are being invited to participate in a research study explore how exhibition presentation styles influence tourist experiences. Before you decide whether you want to take part in this research, this participant information sheet will help you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you.

Please take time to read the following information carefully and if you have further questions, please contact the researcher (contact details are on the last page of this sheet). It is important for you to understand that you do not have to take part in this research, and that if you do decide to take part that you are free to withdraw at any time during the research process. If you want to withdraw during the research process, please contact the researcher before the 1st of the June 2018. If you decide to be involved with this research, please sign the declaration on the consent form. After you sign the consent form, please leave it at the collection point where you can find it at the exit of the exhibition. If you want to retain a copy of the information sheet and consent form, please contact with the researcher and leave your email address. A copy will be sent to your email address later.

Purpose

The aim of the research is to explore how tourists perceive their experiences in cultural attractions. In particular, the objectives are:

To identify how the new technologies (virtual/augmented reality) are applied in the cultural attractions that are produced by the leading organizations. To be specific, the cultural attractions include both heritage attractions and art galleries which have already developed hyper-reality on site, such as the Shakespeare's Globe Theatre or the 'Dreams of Dali' in the Dali museum.

Appendix

To explore how emerging technology applications influence on the sensory dimensions of tourist experience on site.

To analyse how the tourists' perceive the concepts of authenticity and hyper-reality experience from the virtual stimulation environments in the cultural attractions.

To identify the tourists' motivations, expectations, preferences and satisfaction levels in their experience of hyper-real worlds in cultural attractions.

To explore the identities of the different audiences and their relationships with hyper-real environments in the cultural attractions.

Procedures

Observation will be conducted on site with the site managers permission, before video recording/ photography/informal conversations, visitors will be informed of the research before they take part in it. During the interview section of the project, participants in the study will take part in a one-to-one interview, either face-to-face or over social media. The narrative interview will be conducted, and all participants are encouraged to speak freely and openly. An audio recorder will be used during the interview. Participants may pause or end the interview at any time if they do not wish to continue. All interviews will be conducted by researcher Chen Chen from the Faculty of Business & Law, University of the West of England.

It is your right to decide whether or not to join this research. The purpose of this information sheet is to help you understand the purposes and details of this research, and let you to make an informed decision as to whether or not to take part in it. If you decide to be involved, then you need to read and sign the consent form. Please note that you can withdraw at any time during the research process (two weeks on site) without giving a reason, and you can tell the researcher if you want to retain the information that you provided before or allow them to destroy it. If you feel unwell during the interview of the research, please seeking help from the staff and medical personnel on site.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

All interviews will be treated as confidential. In presenting and publishing the data, all interviewees will be anonymized. All the data that is collected from the visitors on site will be confidential and no individuals will be identified in any publications.

The transcripts of the interviews will be stored securely in researcher Chen Chen's personal folders on the University of the West of England's server. All the data that the researcher have collected from visitors on site will be used only for the research purpose. In addition, all the data the researcher obtained on site will be stored securely on my personal secure folders held on the university's network servers.

Appendix

At the end of the research, the researcher will contact you via email to let you know the study has ended and thank you for your contribution. The results of the study will be used for the thesis and peer-reviewed journal articles, and the researcher will send you a brief summary of the findings.

Research Funding

The project is self-funded.

This research project is approved by the UWE, FBL Research Ethics Committee. For further information or to seek clarification, please contact either my supervision team or the ethics committee. The contact details are provided as following:

Research Ethics Administrator: ResearchEthics@uwe.ac.uk

Supervision team: Professor Tim Hughes - Tim.Hughes@uwe.ac.uk

Dr. Dan Knox - Dan.Knox@uwe.ac.uk

The Researcher Contact Details

Name: Chen Chen

Email address: chen5.chen@live.uwe.ac.uk

Tel: 0044 7821964076

To give your consent to taking part in this research, please read the statements below and if you agree, please print your name, date and sign the form and return it to Chen Chen.

I have read and understood this information sheet

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study

I have had my questions answered satisfactorily

I understand that I am granting permission to become a participant in this research study

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give an explanation”

Name (Print).....

Name (Sign)

Email

Date.....

Appendix 3 Interview Transcripts

The Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality

Organization Perspective

Dreams of Dali Manager Interview Transcript 1

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Before we start the interview, could you introduce yourself a little bit?

My name is Pam Whiteaker, and I am the director of the visitor experience at the Dali museum in St. Petersburg.

2. In general, what is the purpose of developing the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

The purpose was to show through Dali's interest in science, maths, in continue his art into a lot of different mediums. So using the new technology of the day, we think it would be the greatest, because he was always looking for new things.

3. How did the group design this project?

We looked to virtual reality because we had a gentleman on our board, the Silverstein, and they are out of San Francisco, and they offered to develop a virtual reality experience for us using piece that we have selected. Their hopes are allowing the visitors in another way to view and enjoy the existing art of our artist in a way that embrace technology. So what they did was they took a team and actually using the archaeological reminiscence of *Millet's 'Angelus'* by Dali, they imagined using virtual reality: what it might be like in the mind of Dali behind the scenes?

So you'll see much I think at least nine symbols that Dali used repeatedly throughout his career that you will encounter on these, and you have the ability to push yourself forward to a lot of different things. We also included things like Alice Cooper we have on hologram, sculpture or object that has Alice Cooper's brain, and that even included his music as background. So it's a visual pleasure of the types of things that Dali used, using it in a new form of technology-virtual reality. We did find that we want to make sure that the visitors knew what they were seeing and why, it would be included in there, so we have one entire panel and handouts that talk about different symbols, and where else they can find them in the work and why it's important.

4. You have mentioned virtual reality for several times, what do you think about the emerging technology applications for the organization?

I think that using technology, technology that becoming available to the visitors is really important as another way to connect with your visitors. Visitors, we were just talking about, who with today's visitors, and if you have visitors especially who have the ability to have the virtual reality in their own homes, why not use that to further explore what they are visually seeing on canvas. So we embrace that, in fact we are looking at augmented reality as well, and a variety of other things. We even included, we have an audio tour, which is an app that people visit the museum can use, it also has the ability to connect them with the library, and a variety of other things. So it's just embracing the new technologies now available, and allowing the visitors to see even more of what the essence of our collection is.

5. What have you known about the visitors' feedbacks of the virtual reality exhibition so far?

We know it's a huge success, because we don't extend the hours longer so everyone has the chance to do it. We know the visitor will get disappointed if they don't get the chance to. It's not for everyone, but there's a good percentage that do want to see what this might look like, so we've been very pleased with the response to it. Most people walk away in 'Wow', which they could see another elements of the mind-set of the artist. And all of different things, which seems to open up how they look at art and how they could extend it even more so, which is right in the field of what Dali did. He didn't confine himself to simply painting on canvas, he was a writer, and he did set designs, and even for film, worked on developing film with the Marx brothers. So his concept of what is art and how to share his ideas are definite not limited to paints on canvas. So this, it's natural.

6. I really like the concept of travelling inside of the painting. It is genius!

Yeah, I agree. So far our visitors do as well. So much so that in next month, we'll actually extending the hours, so more people can come in and see it. And for the evening hours, we also have it open as well.

7. Any plans for other virtual reality exhibitions in the future?

We maybe adding more virtual reality, but we are also looking at augmented reality and other types of technology to see. We are not just locked into one, we think that just like Dali, we want to explore a lot of different options, and see what have there, and currently in our strategic plan to look at more technologies, and how it could match for our artist, and what might be a better way for visitors to connect, or more additional way for the visitors to connect to the art.

Dreams of Dali Manager Interview Transcript 2

Phone interview via skype

Date: 07/Sep/2018

1. Before we start the interview, could you introduce yourself a little bit?

Sure, my name is Kathy Greif, my role of the Dali Museum is the chief operating officer, and before that, I was the chief marketing officer.

2. In general, what's the purpose of developing the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality for the museum?

We wanted to extend the experience of Dali, and to give our visitors new ways of understanding his art and of understanding the expensive medium that he used by creating something modern, so a new way of looking at art and appreciating it.

3. How did the team design the interpretations and representations of the programme? Any interesting stories behind the scene to share?

We were working very closely with our partners, the Silverstein and Partners, who are the developers, they were the concept creators and developers. They actually had the idea of doing this and brought it to us, and then we agreed on the paintings that we would go quote inside through virtual reality, because it was a good landscape and it gives the creators the ability to use their imaginations, things like you can go inside of the towers, you can go beyond the landscape. That painting was part of the exhibition that we were gonna be doing at the time, and that was a Disney in Dali exhibition, and we wanted to introduce it at that time. Basically had a month in advance of the time as we were talking about starting to work on it, that's why we select that particular painting.

4. How did the team design the exhibition experience in order to provide the visitors most immersive experience?

Like I said, that was the concept from very beginning that our partner developed, so they really wanted to go inside of the painting, which was the basis of the concept. So from there, it was just kind of various decisions on how fast you go from one point to another, and which aspect of view would be seen first, and then they wanted to introduce other iconic elements of Dali, like the elephants that are far of the distance, they would bring those, for the user closer to them, we also embedded things like the Alice Cooper hologram, and other items that aren't existing in the original painting. For example, you wouldn't see inside of the tower on the original painting, so we wanted to use our imagination and create our own artwork in a sense by liberating other iconic works of Dali and embedding them into the experience.

5. And what do you think about the role of the technology applications for developing the museum or exhibitions?

While more and more, we know from studying of our visitors directly as well as the industry, the museum industry in general, they are very interested in technology and digital experience as a way. An additional way to appreciate art, not to replace the existing original artworks, but to augment the experience. So we've been experimenting with things like the Dreams of Dali and others. And we are continuing to invest in it because we know that museum visitors are very interested in digital experience.

6. Based on the last question, what have you known about the visitors' feedbacks of the virtual reality exhibition so far?

We've been gathering insights on that, and every visitor gives it high rate. For many visitors, it's their first time trying the virtual reality, so we are not only introducing them to a new way of appreciating art, we also introducing them the rapid growing of technology platform. So it's really great way for us to educate the community in the world at large, which is in fact our mission. So we've made some changes along the way, in terms of how we present the experience based on the visitors' feedbacks and our own observations. But in general, both from online comments and from surveys that we do on site, we know that it's a very highly rated experience from our visitors.

7. And any plan or change on the VR exhibition in the future? Because from my interviews and observations on site, some of the visitors were complaining about the experience time was too short.

We have already had it online, so unfortunately I guess the visitors didn't get told the information or given that handouts there... but we have a handout that let people on site know that you can download the experience with your own virtual reality device, or even in a 2D fashion with your phone or in your computer, and the 2D video has about five and half minutes, so it's about twice as long as you've seen on site, and if you have your own virtual reality device, such as HTC VIVE, you can download it and it's unlimited, there's no time limit, you can go inside and do it for thirty minutes if you want.

8. Any other plan on developing virtual reality exhibitions that are related to Dali in the future?

Yeah, we are not currently exploring additional virtual reality at this point, but we are exploring augmented reality and other new emerging technologies to do with Dali and with his paintings.

Interviewee Alicia

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here?

I came here to visit my friends Maria, and we were actually here with another friend, we met in Petes Ct originally, and I have fascination for Salvador Dali since I was a young girl. This is something that we want to do for a very long time together.

I haven't heard about the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality before...

2. Normally, what kind of platforms do you use to check the information before you travel to the destinations?

The official website.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

While before we even went to virtual reality through the landscape of Salvador Dali, looks like the desert in Jordan that we got to experience for so many times. The experience overall is kind of like going back to that moment, but in a different way, the experience is very different. Because I really enjoy Dali and listening to the voice, then noticing Alice Cooper in the background, which is like where am I.

4. Which part is your favourite in the VR exhibition?

I really like the background voices that actually speaking of his memories, like his father wants him to go to the school and then it goes into inside the actual monument, and then there's like the stairs that you are trying to decide should I go down the stairs, or should I go over there... It looks like a cliff, and then I just jump out, and there's the vast desert, and at the same time, I like to hear the Alice Cooper music, and the memory of his father, and that wonderful relationship they had.

5. So did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing that?

Completely.

6. And have you ever experienced other exhibitions or museums like this before?

My last one was the one in the Animal Kingdom, you played as an avatar, where they see you kind of like a stationary bike, and they have a full virtual headset, it feels like you are in the jungle as an avatar, and you are flying onto the creatures, and you are experiencing the water,

and being attacked by other animals, the sky, you really feel like you are flying, that's a longer experience, I think it's up to five to ten minutes. That's just wow!

7. In comparison with this one, which do you prefer?

It's very different, because for this one, my connection with Salvador Dali, it's just, I feel like I am living in the world with somebody that I have admired very much. While the Disney one, I love the jungle and the environment, it's just like something I enjoy.

8. So do you have any recommendation for the exhibition for further improvement?

Maybe longer time...Actually, because I am smaller frame, the headset didn't fit, so I had to keep doing this during the whole time, and I didn't like that. Also I would like to move around a lot more, because that's why I really enjoyed the one in the Disney one, which I could really move around my body, and really feel I was in there. For this one, I could sense my hands were on my head, which I wish I didn't have to do that.

Interviewee Carson

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

I haven't heard of the virtual reality, but I heard of the museum. I came to town before, maybe three or four times, I heard about this museum but I have never been here. So this is the first time I want to come and see it.

2. Have you checked information about this museum before you came here?

Not really, I did go to the website to see where it is....

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

It was really cool, and I like it a lot. It wasn't just one piece, it had multiple pieces of Dali's work of arts. The animation really brought it into life, I thought it was very cool.

4. And what impressed you the most?

I like very detailed it was. When you step into the piece of art, it really brought it into life. It's a new way to see the older kind of things. I got the feeling of travelling inside of the painting, and I like it a lot.

5. What do you think of the background music?

I like it, it was a little haunting, but I think it fits the surrealism of the painting.

6. Is it your first time to use the VR device?

No, and I think the device is easy to use.

7. In comparison with the original painting, which do you prefer?

Actually I like them both, I like to see the original painting first, you know, just experiencing it as a painting, and how the artist originally intended to be seen. Then going into the virtual reality, to get into a more modernized feel of the painting. It really breaks down the wall that there when you look at the painting, literally the wall.

8. Do you have the same kind of experience (VR or AR) before?

Yes, through gaming, you know some VR games that I play about. Also, I have the very similar experience in the National Geographic Museum in Washington DC, they have augmented reality exhibition there.

9. What do you think of that, and which do you prefer in comparison with this one?

While it was very similar, but the one in the National Geographic Museum, it was of a temple that some place you couldn't go. It wasn't artistic representation of the place, so it's very interesting to actually feel like you went there. So it's kind of different experience, but I think they are both very good.

10. So have the VR exhibition met your expectations?

Yeah, I don't know this is existing here, so I think it's a plus to the museum, I think it's very good.

11. And do you have any recommendation for the further improvement?

I like if the VR experience have more times of course, but overall it was a great experience. The one thing for improvement I guess would be the technical optical challenge, I suggest to use the free motion around the virtual reality space instead of going to set locations from dot to dot, like you can control it, if I want to walk forward I can walk forward, if I want to fly up in certain levels, and I can go all the way up to the tower. That would be a lot more immersive for me.

Interviewee Emma

Date: 02/Sep/2018

- 1. What makes you decide to visit the Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality, and where have you heard of this exhibition?**

The lady downstairs told us there was a virtual reality exhibition while we were buying the tickets, and we decided to go and have a look at it.

- 2. Also about the Dali museum, where have you heard of it?**

Online. Because we came to St. Petersburg, and we said what is here to do, and we found there's a Dali museum. We know there's one in Spain, and we said let's have a look.

- 3. What type of platform did you use to check the destination information?**

I just went to Google and searched for St. Petersburg things to see. That's it.

- 4. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?**

Brilliant! It was really good! I felt that I was going to the middle of the desert and I was falling down, God it was amazing! The only thing I'm not satisfied with is that three minutes were too short.

- 5. Which one impresses you the most in the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?**

The telephone ringing. That really blows my mind! Also, it's up the top of the tower and looking down to see the shadows.

(Her friend): I have to say the elephants were amazing!

A: I haven't see the elephants unfortunately...

- 6. Did you have the feeling of travelling to the painting while you experience that?**

I've seen the original painting with the audio guide, but the virtual reality version is better experience! I guess that adds different aspects to it, the virtual reality version is more entertainment than art per se, but it's interesting and good experience!

- 7. Have you experienced the same kind of exhibition before? And if it's your first experience, did you find the device is difficult to use?**

Yes, experiencing in the painting. The only thing was a little awkward was the focusing, besides that, everything else was fine.

- 8. In comparison with the original version, which one do you prefer?**

I always go to the art galleries to see the original paintings, but it's a nice addition. If you have one or two famous pieces of art like that, it's fine. You can't see the virtual reality in the whole collection.

- 9. Have you ever experienced other cultural attractions like this before?**

Yes, we've been all over the world, like British Museum, The Louvre, the one in the New York, and we've done Van Gogh. But this one is good. It's really different from the ones that I have

experienced before. This is really good. Because it's only Dali, it's interesting. You pay attention to one painter, and you focus on that and you learn about it, which is nice, it's not like a huge museum like Louvre with so many different artists. This one is brilliant and impressive!

10. Have this one met your expectations? And do you have any recommendations for the exhibition's further improvement?

Yes! I haven't really finished to see the whole tour yet, so I don't think I have any recommendation.

Interviewee Julia

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here/

We came just for the museum, cause he's both our favourite artist, and we are here for the week, didn't know they have virtual reality over there. I've been to the Dali museum when it was the old facility, so it is all new.

2. So it's not your first time to visit here?

This facility, yes.

3. Normally, what kind of platforms do you use to check the art exhibitions or galleries etc.?

Their official website.

4. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali virtual reality?

It was really cool, really cool! My headset started to come off while I was watching...that was such a bummer....

5. Did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing the VR space?

Yes, there were two parts where you go past the people, which was like being in the crowd. That was interesting! The elephants impressed me the most, I watched that for a while, I knew I was supposed to go to the bubble, but I just kept watching. It's like being in there, and it was really cool!

6. What do you think of the background music?

That helps. It's nice to hear all the sounds around, which is really cool!

7. In comparison with the original painting, which do you prefer?

I like them both for different reason, I mean, I like being in front of them, but that's VR version really enhances your perspectives on what you've seen.

8. Do you have the same kind of experience in other art galleries or museums?

No, this is my very first experience of VR tour in the painting.

9. Do you think the device is difficult to use?

No, the staff gave good information, and all you have to do is to follow the dot and keep going, yean, it was very easy.

10. Do you have any recommendation for the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality for the further improvement?

Make it longer...

Interviewee Kevin

Date: 2/9/18

1. Where have you heard of the dreams of Dali in virtual reality?

My colleague.

2. And what kind of platform do you use when you check the travel information?

Internet, I guess.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the dreams of Dali in virtual reality?

It's amazing, and I like the whole atmosphere. I was amazed by how real it feels!

4. Based on the last question, do you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you experience it?

I like the background and the music of it, which makes me feel more real than real!

5. In comparison with the original painting over there, which do you prefer?

I like the version of virtual reality.

6. Is this your first time to use the virtual reality device, and do you find it difficult to use?

No, I don't think it's difficult to use.

7. Have you ever experienced other attractions like this before?

No, this is my first time, and I find it's amazing!

8. So it has met your expectation? And do you have any further recommendation for the Dreams of Dali?

Yeah, definitely. The only thing I'm not satisfied with is the waiting queue, and I think it's too long and too crowded!

Interviewee Maria

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here?

I've lived in this area, and I've been to the museum a lot of times. I've heard of it before, but I've never been to the virtual reality exhibition.

2. Normally, what kind of platforms do you use to check the information before you travel to the destinations?

I use the website, but sometimes I check the information via travel advisor. And I like to do research on blogs or publications that are relative to me.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

I like it and I think it's great. I wish it would be longer.

4. Which part is your favourite in the VR exhibition?

I like the Milky Way and the stars. I think the mimic is one of the most powerful ways of contextualizing your stories within not just the reality or world, but the whole universe. So to me, whenever I see it depict in real life, it's like tremendous, symbol substance.

5. So did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing that?

Completely.

6. In comparison with the original painting, which one do you prefer?

For me it's both, because I think, it's like saying do you want to have a chocolate bar or read a book about how chocolate is procedurally made. Both are interesting and satisfying, in very different ways, and they help you understand each other, you know what I mean.

7. And have you ever experienced other exhibitions or museums like this before?

The last one I did was at the Jordan museum, which is an archaeological exhibit, so you could put yourself in a desert that remote in many tours, and also the castle, there are many tours you can't go physically, but this gives you the chance to visit.

8. In comparison with this one, which do you prefer?

That's difficult to compare, but I will say, the one thing was better about the one I did in Jordan was that they didn't have time restriction, and also, there is a whole room that you can walk around, but here you can't walk around or move your body...

9. So do you have any recommendation for the exhibition for further improvement?

Actually I think it could be wireless, because while I was spinning in my chair, and I was spinning into the wire...

Interviewee Mark

Date: 2/9/18

9. Are you visitors or local resident?

I'm out of travelling.

10. Have you ever heard of the 'Dreams of Dali' before? And what makes you come to visit?

I have heard about it before, and I have done it before! So, this is not my first time, but I've gone through it several times, and it's one of my favourite part of the exhibit.

11. So, you check the information of the 'Dreams of Dali' through what kind of platform?

I gone online, and you can do it without 3D, but I checked and looked at on the Internet as well, so that's kind of interesting, and the painting itself. I read a lot about the painting itself too, and which is of course on the exhibit here too.

12. Could you tell me your overall experience of the 'Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality'?

I really enjoy it, and I think it is a very interesting model to be art idea that you get inside of the painting, and look around, and become part of the artwork for certain periods of time. It is very interesting to me, and I hope that they will, people will do that with more pieces of artwork.

13. So, what's your favorite part inside of the painting?

I think it's the towers, and it's hard to say, I try to go to all the different points, but I find myself going to the top of the tower, and it's when you looking out over the glass expands, and can look 360 degrees, I think that's usually where I spend most of my time, on the top of the one or two structures.

14. Did you have the feeling of travelling to the painting while you experience that?

I think so, and I think it helps to read a little bit about the painting, and get a little bit background of the painting, and I think it helps some of the symbolism, it's in there fits well. For example, Alice Cooper, the figure that's sitting in one of the towers, but I don't think he was in the original painting, but apparently, he became friends with Dali at some point, and Dali apparently admires his music, so that adds further kind of twist or dimension to it.

15. So, do you think that it's better experience in comparison with the traditional way of watching the original painting?

Yeah, the phone has symbolism, and then to start with the boy standing there holding hands with his father, again, not in the original painting, but it's adding more.

16. And are you satisfied with the music in the background?

Yeah, I think so, I mean, when you go there, there's an Alice Cooper song in there for a while, but I think that's only through part of it. When you get up to the very top, you hear the wind and the glass expands, I think it's very important to the painting to have sound add to your all feelings, you hear the wind, and kind of the vastness of the area that you are in.

17. If you can recall your first-time experience, what do you think of the Virtual Reality device?

I think it's fine now because I've done it for a few times, but I do remember that the first time I did it, I wanna say I didn't get through.....I think there are more than ten points that you can focus on, I maybe have went through about half of the painting the first time. I didn't pace myself really well, and I wasn't sure exactly how to navigate my way through the painting, because my three minutes were up, and I didn't even go through the half of it.

I like how they don't dictate to you what's specific order of the world that you have to go through, but that being said , if it's your very first time, and you are not really timing yourself, you don't know how much time you have left, you might find yourself not getting to see all the different angles.

18. In comparison with the original painting over there, which do you prefer?

Well, that's hard.... because they are so different, I mean, the original painting that I feel, I like and I enjoy, and I read a little bit about it, there are couples of different interpretations on some of the symbolisms and what Dali was trying to express of the original painting. But, of course, the original painting is the outgrowth for the video itself, but I would have to say, just from the certain amount of time that I have spent, I spend more time in the video probably than looking at the painting. I can't say that I like it necessarily better than the painting, but I suppose if you measure the amount of time I spent in the video as compare to standing and looking at the painting, I definitely spend more time in the video. And I do come back, part of the reason I got here today is trying to get here right at the start, so I don't have to wait in line. I do kind of plan my trip and my time of day when I get to the museum around.

19. Do you have the similar kind of experience like the 'Dreams of Dali' Virtual Reality?

I really have not, and it's the only Virtual Reality, the only time I've ever done any Virtual Reality, so....

20. How about Augmented Reality?

No, never have done that neither...so nothing to compare with there really...

21. Do you have any recommendation to the 'Dreams of Dali' Virtual Reality for further improvement?

Not really, I really enjoy it, and I'm sure if I was a little more technical and I knew a little bit more about how they create the Virtual Reality, there might be something that I could suggest, but I'm very happy with the way it is now, and I would love to see them do that with more artwork.

Interviewee Matthew

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here?

I've never heard of the museum before, I didn't know it's in Tampa. I came here to visit a friend, and he recommended me the museum.

2. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

Google.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

It's definitely very unique experience. This is my very first experience with Dali, any Dali painting and artworks...I found it's very interesting like his whole work and perspective on how he came up with these paintings, and it's very interesting to see his perspective through his eyes in a way, and it's definitely very unique and great experience.

4. Which part impressed you the most in the VR exhibition?

I have to say it has different features that you can go in, it's not just like you see what around you, and you can actually go into the structures and explore the different areas.

5. What do you think of the background music?

I think it fits well with the whole experience.

6. Did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing that?

Yes, I mean, the whole atmosphere, the music combine with the features that you are able to go through the painting itself, like you can feel yourself inside of the painting, It's not like looking from outside of the painting as a viewer.

7. In comparison with the original painting, which do you prefer?

The virtual reality one, and the device is easy to use.

8. Is anything upset you during the whole experience? Do you have any recommendation for the exhibition for further improvement?

It seems a little bit... I don't know it's just my screen, it seems a little bit blurring... I wish it would be more in higher definition. Overall, the experience is good. The timing is good, I've managed to get to the whole thing, and go back to few things and everything.

Interviewee Mia

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here?

My mom, brought the tickets from the internet, and we came here because she likes art.

2. What kind of platform do you use to check the destination information before you travel?

Just Google, and sometimes the museums official website.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali virtual reality?

The virtual reality was really good, but through the organization to get the tickets is a mess, but the thing itself is really good!

4. Which part is your favourite in the VR exhibition?

The elephant part, the elephants were on the stilts, and they were walking next to you. The background music was really good, some of the transitional sound was a little bit rough though...

5. What do you think about the details in the virtual world?

The details are really good, like the lobster phone and the rings, and the interviews in the background.

6. Did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing that?

Yeah, and I like this one better in comparison with the original one, because it's interesting. It's cool to get being inside of the painting, seeing it from different angles, and being like merged in it instead of staring at it with like five people in front of you.

7. Did you have the same kind of experience before?

I think so...but I couldn't remember specifically what...but I think I've done something like this before...And I like this one more, because the colours, the music, how details it was, how you could explore different parts of it.

8. Was there anything upset you during the whole experience, and do you have any recommendation for that?

Mine was a little blurry, and they couldn't fix it...Besides that, it was all good.

For the virtual reality, they can be able to adjust the blurriness or concentration or something...and just to be more organized about how people get in the line...The three minutes are pretty good, and you can see everything, and I've managed to go through everything in it.

Interviewee Nora

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality? And what makes you decide to visit here?

I have friends who really love Dali, and there are certain museums of Dali in Spain, and we are visiting here, we decide we have to get over to the Dali Museum.

2. Have you checked any information about the museum before you came?

No.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

I love that, it just needs to be a little longer.

4. Which part did you enjoy the most?

It was actually when you were getting inside, when you went inside of the tower and you looked down, you looked all around, and you walked through the stairs inside of the tower, and I just got to the telephone when it ended...So I don't know....

5. Did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you were experiencing it?

Yes, it was so real!

6. Did you find the device was difficult to use? Because I found you were struggling with headset while you were experiencing it...

There was no sound, I had to take it off, and made it work to start over.

7. When they fixed the device, what did you think of the background music and sounds in the painting?

It was fine, when the phone was ringing, I was struggling to follow the sound and to find out the phone...when I finally found it, and it was over.

8. So is it your first time to experience the virtual reality?

No, I have did it once with the race car type of thing couple years ago, but this one is going really fast. Because you are spending time outside, and finally you get the time, you get up, and you are like 'Wow, this is really cool!' it's like okay you are done, next.

9. In comparison with the original painting, which do you prefer?

The going inside of the painting. That's cool! When you look at the painting on the wall, there are distances. But in this, it's like you are inside of a world from the perspective of the first person.

10. Do you have any recommendation for Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality for further improvements?

Have more of them, and just a heads up, don't spend too much time at the beginning just standing there, you need to get into it. You know, because I lost a lot of time outside, by the time I got inside, I didn't get much time...

Interviewee Ryan

Date: 2/9/18

1. To start with the question, where did you get the information about the 'dreams of Dali' virtual reality?

I've heard of this place from my friend.

2. Could you tell me your first impression and overall experience of 'dreams of Dali' virtual reality please?

I think the amounts of the devices are not enough for the visitors, I mean, there are only three devices, and there are probably 20 visitors are waiting in the queue. I guess one visitor probably only has three minutes to experience in that, the time is a little bit short for me...because there are too many things that you can explore inside of the virtual world...If you want to look at the details in some specific points, the time will not be enough for you to finish the whole tour. But, overall, the experience was amazing!

3. What do you think of the device? Did you find that it's difficult to use?

I think it's okay, I have used the VR device before, so it's easy to use. The only thing that I'm not satisfied with is the device is a little bit light leak...I think the brand SONY PS VR provides better virtual experience than this one.

4. Did you have the feeling of travelling inside of the painting while you experience it?

Not really, the same issue, the light leak through the device, when I look around in 360 degrees, I always can see my feet through the headset...and if I look forward with the device, I can see that there is a cabinet in the front of me. To be honest, the concept of experiencing inside of the painting is so cool, but the only thing I'm not satisfied with is the VR device.

5. In comparison with the traditional type of painting, which do you prefer?

Besides the light leak issue of the device, I prefer the virtual version better. Because you can explore in the virtual world and have a close look at the details of the painting, for instance, the material of the towers, and the shape of the crow in the sky, and I give credits to the modelling. This provides better immersive experience than the original painting, which I think it's unique! And it allows us to explore in a three-dimensional environment that upgrades the original painting in a deeper level.

6. Do you have any other similar kind of experience like the Dreams of Dali in Virtual Reality?

I've tried augmented reality in living museums before, and it's totally different type of experience.

7. And what do you think about the living museum experience? Which do you prefer?

I prefer the augmented reality much better than the virtual reality, mainly because in the live museum, you can explore freely without the time limits, you can touch or interact with the objects in the live museum. I've heard that there are certain VR devices allow you to interact and touch the stuff through the handle. For example, in the dreams of Dali, when you walk by the tower, you can hear the phone bells ringing. If you can pick up the phone instead of just hear the phone ringing, I think that will be more immersive!

8. Has the Dreams of Dali met your expectations, and do you have any recommendation for the exhibition?

Overall, I'm quite happy with the VR experience that they provide, before I've tried it, I thought it's a type of animation without any details, I never thought they could make the appearance of the details in the painting seems so real. And I'm impressed with the experience that they design in the dreams of Dali, which allows you to explore freely in the virtual world by pointing to the dots.

The only thing I'm not satisfied with is the light leak of the headset, and the time limits of experiencing in the painting. It's only three minutes! I've tried VR before, so I'm familiar how it works. But for the visitors who have never tried the VR before, it will take longer time for them to get used to the device. While I was waiting in the queue, I noticed that one visitor only focused on one dot and didn't even have the time to turn around to explore, he didn't know he can turn around in 360 degrees. I think the staff on site did not explain clearly about how to use the device, and he gave me some basic information of using the device without any further details. I mean, if he gives more information about the device, visitors may get better immersive experience.

Interviewee Sophie

Date: 02/Sep/2018

1. Where have heard of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

Just here, and we just have happened to see it here. We are tourists.

2. And what makes you to visit the Dali museum?

I love art and Dali, and I always want to come since I move to Florida a few years ago.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality?

I really like it. The thing is that I wanted to find everything about the elephants, so the time was not enough and I did not go fast...

4. So is this your first time experience the virtual reality? And how do you feel about the device?

Yes, it was my first time of using it. The device was easy to use, the only thing was the problem of focus. Because I wear glasses, which makes the device was difficult to focus.

5. In the Dreams of Dali Virtual Reality, what impresses you the most?

I didn't expect that someone was sitting on the sand, which surprises me. If I haven't seen the screens and TV, it will be a lot more surprised.

6. What do you think of the background music?

That's was good, but I couldn't understand some words that they were saying. I couldn't figure out what exactly they were saying.

7. Did you get the feeling of 'travelling inside of the painting' while you were experiencing that? In comparison with the original painting, which do you prefer?

Yeah, but I prefer the traditional art galleries. Because I like to see the brush strokes and techniques, and the small define I guess. This VR exhibition is like a movie or something...I don't like the way the technology get into the art, but I like the way of getting inside of the painting. If there are more time to look into the details, I think that will be better.

8. Have you ever experienced other exhibitions like this before?

No, this is my first experience and I think it's interesting, and it has met my expectations.

The Tang Paradise Theme Park

Organization Perspective

Tang Paradise Theme Park Project Developer Transcript

Date: 8/6/18

Time: 14.30-13.40 **Location:** The designer's studio

1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself please?

I'm Yuzhong Liu, and I was in charge of the project of the Lady's Hall back in 2007, they were quite happy with my design of the Lady's Hall, so they gave me the biggest task to in charge of the interiors of the Ziyun Building, which is the biggest architecture complex in the centre of the park. After read loads of related books about architectures and culture about Tang Dynasty, especially the historical records of about the Royal Lotus Garden at Tang, I gave my initial thoughts and plan on this project. At that time, you know the park and all the architectures inside of the park was designed by the famous designer Jinqiu Zhang, but the organization had no clue about how to deal with the interiors inside of the buildings, contents or activities to feature the Tang Dynasty culture. So after discussed with the team, I was take part in the projects of the Apricot Garden and the Luyu Teahouse as well.

2. Could you tell me more about how you project on the Ziyun Building please?

I think one important thing is to highlight the theme of the park, and to give visitors a general image of what the city Changan used to like back at Tang Dynasty, which was the reason why I developed the small replica version of the city Changan on the first floor in Ziyun Building. During the project, I also invited one of my friend at the Shaanxi History Museum to be the consultant, because we wanted to make it as real as possible based on the records in history. You probably have already known that most of the architectures from Tang Dynasty have been ruined and don't exist anymore. At that time, we were seeking for that emperor, royal and aristocratic kind feelings, but we couldn't find any in Xi'an. So our team conducted our fieldwork at the Forbidden City for a month, to sense and capture that solemn atmosphere.

3. So what kind of message were you trying to deliver to the visitors while you were in the project?

The organization wanted to develop the theme park as a place that represents the golden age of Tang Dynasty, which allows the visitors to feel the glory of Changan. For me, it's more like telling a story to the audience rather than recreating the history, but we didn't want to present in a fictional way, we still wanted to construct it in a more realistic way with the historical accuracy and authenticity. I wanted to combine the concept of Chinese philosophy '*Yin and Yang*' with the architectures and the themes of the park. That's why you'll find the Lady's Hall has a more feminine look with those peach blossom outside of the building, whereas the Ziyun

Building was designed in a more masculine style to stress the majesty and the power of the emperor. We decided to use colours to distinguish the concept ‘*Yi and Yang*’, so you’ll find loads of colours like red, pink, powder blue or pinkish purple in the Lady’s Hall area, and a lot of dark red, black and gold colour inside of the Ziyun Building. We also followed this concept to develop the stories and contents inside of the park, so you’ll see the traditional Chinese costume exhibition inside of the Lady’s Hall, and the giant oil painting about wars and histories of Tang Dynasty in the ground floor of the Ziyun Building.

4. I’m quite interested in the authenticity and the historical accuracy you’ve just mentioned, do you mind to tell me more about it please?

Have you seen the map of the ancient Changan and the original royal lotus garden yet? The designer was called Yuwen Kai, who was one of the greatest architect back in Tang Dynasty. We didn’t change much based on the original site, but like I said earlier, we were not trying to replace the original royal lotus garden and recreating the history. Our purpose was to let the visitors get a sense of the golden age in Changan at Tang Dynasty. The concept of ‘travelling back to Changan at Tang Dynasty’ is abstract and impressionist, which is not about the representation or the form of art but about the meaning and the stories that you want to deliver to your audience. If you take a look at the map of the ancient Changan, you’ll find the Apricot Garden was not in the Lotus Garden, and it was used to be the place for the imperial examination back at Tang Dynasty. The developer decided to put it inside of the Tang Paradise Theme park, to let the visitors to get familiar with the history and culture of Tang Dynasty comprehensively. I even suggested them to write down and inscribe an epigraph of the reconstruction of the Tang Paradise Theme Park as the ancient people did. I was immersed myself into the stories and history of Tang Dynasty while I was developing the project. And I went through tons of books and records that were related to the Tang culture or history. Another thing I’ve been thinking during the whole time is, the concept of authenticity is subjective, sometimes viewers may think something presented in a fake way even it’s the real deal, because it doesn’t suit their tastes or beyond their understanding...So for me, the authenticity is constructed by both objective facts and subjectivity I guess...

But I think you have to know that after we finished this project, the park was operated by different team and people, people who didn’t care about the Tang Dynasty Culture, so everything had been changed. That’s probably why you’ll feel it’s too commercial, we can do nothing about it right now...

5. And what do you think of the emerging technology applications in heritage attractions?

I still prefer the traditional technique of expression either in architecture or art, things like VR or AR are just a way of expression. You may find that there are too many organizations using the emerging technologies without purposes, which is more like a show of the technologies...I despite that, and I think designers or developers in historical sites should make more efforts on

understanding the history in depth rather than developing something looks cool...

Visitor Perspective

Interviewee Hao Wu

Date: 1/12/17

1. What makes you travel to Xi'an?

I come here because I have to attend the work training, which will start on the 3rd of the December. I came earlier because I wanted to explore the hot spots in Xi'an that my friends had told me about. I'm very exciting about this journey, because this is my first time visiting here.

2. What kind of platform did you use to check the travel information before you came?

I've heard about this place from my friends. He told me that I should visit the Tang Paradise Theme Park because it is one of the most famous landmarks in Xi'an. I didn't check any guidebook or information about this place before I came. But I learnt it's the replica of Tang Paradise Royal Lotus Garden from my local friend. He told me that the park were built based on the original one that had been ruined in the past.

3. Could you tell me your first impression of this place please? Things like what do you feel when you first enter the gate of the park?

I entered from the gate that was near by the Royal Deer Garden. I fed the deer with the leaves on the ground and then I took pictures with them, they were just adorable! Besides that, I think it didn't look like the antique ancient city 'Chang an' in Tang Dynasty at all! This place is huge, but overall, to me it's just a park. The poster outside of the park says: *'Let the Tang Paradise Theme Park bring you back to the golden age of Tang Dynasty'.....*I didn't thing they had provided me such experience as they promised.

4. Do you mind to tell me more about that inauthentic feeling please?

For me, the reconstructed and artificial replicas just cannot compete with the original historical attractions! You couldn't feel the atmosphere here. Attractions like the Forbidden City or the Old Summer Palace in Beijing are magnificent, you can actually get the feeling like that's the place where the ancient emperors in Qing Dynasty used to live. Everything there is legit and original. In comparison with those, everything here looks so new in bright colours, and the buildings they remade aren't well defined, which have ruined the whole experience....I couldn't get any insight of the history here.

5. Let's put the negative feelings aside, what impressed you the most here?

I was impressed by the Ziyun building when I first saw it, and the background music was a plus to the whole atmosphere. At that moment, the glories age of Tang Dynasty came alive to me. I appreciated the smoggy steam in the centre of the lake, which brought everything together. There were certain times, I thought the ancestors were about to show

up from the bottom of the lake. That moment was so beautiful and unforgettable until I found all those modern tall buildings outside of the park when I looked up. Those surrounding buildings brought me back to the ordinary modern life, what a shame!

6. Anything else impressed you while you were visiting?

Some of the live performance were quite interesting, but it would be much more attractive if the staff wear the traditional Chinese Hanfu in the park.

7. There were booths that you can rent the costumes, what do you think of it?

It was so embarrassing for me to put on a rope or a Hu Fu...if my friends come with me, which would be less embarrassing and I would like to give it a shot!

8. As you mentioned earlier while we were walking inside of the park, you said you are quite interested in technologies especially VR, have you ever experienced one at heritage attractions or art exhibitions?

Not really, but I've tried the VR devices on games, which's really cool. But I still prefer things in the reality, because they truly exist that you can touch and feel. In the virtual world, even with the joystick and the controller, you still can't feel the texture of the objects.

9. In terms of the architectures in the park, the surrounding music, the live performance, and the food they sell at the Market of Hu, what is your favourite?

The Ziyun Building is definitely my favourite! I like to see it from outside, and immerse myself in the atmosphere, with the smoggy lake in the centre of the park. Afterwards, you can enjoy the background music while you are appreciating the beautiful scene there. The experience in the Royal Deer Garden is quite impressive as well, because you can actually interact with the deer. A dog ran inside of the park and started to bark at the visitors near the entrance while I was feeding the deer, which was quite a dramatic scene! They've kept the deer inside of the iron fence, which's the only thing that I'm not happy about.

10. Do you have any recommendation for the park? And will you recommend it to your friends?

Maybe not... I wouldn't recommend them to come in winter time, and the ticket price is so overpriced, if they lower the price I may want to revisit the park again. And I think they should add more interactive activities on site to interact with. Another thing bothers me a lot is the staff inside of the park, they seemed to be quite unfriendly to the visitors...if they could be more professional and passionate with the traditional Chinese Hanfu at Tang Dynasty, and the whole experience will be improved!

Interviewee Hong Fan

Date: 2/12/17

1. Why are you visiting Xi'an and could you tell me about your first impression of this city please?

Basically, we are visiting here to relax, and we choose this city because we want to feel the atmosphere of this ancient capital in 13 dynasties. We also want to learn the culture and history of the Tang Dynasty in Xi'an.

2. Where have you heard about the Tang Paradise Theme Park? And have you checked any information about this place before you visit?

I saw some beautiful pictures of this attraction online which motivated me to come. I haven't checked much information about the place because I don't want any spoiler! I want to have that kind of feeling 'Wow' when I first enter the park. But from the pictures and basic information online I know it's a replica of the royal lotus garden in the Tang Dynasty.

3. As you just mentioned that you want to have the 'Wow' feeling when you first enter the Tang Paradise, and have you? Have it met your expectation?

I guess it was okay...I mean, it's just a park which didn't give me that feeling of travelling to a royal garden during the Tang Dynasty.....I had expected all the staff inside of the park were wearing the Tang style costume before I came here, but apparently they didn't. Maybe because of the cold weather...

4. Was that the reason why you rent one from the booth for yourself?

Kind of...I wanted to take some nice photos while I was here, and wearing it gave me the feeling of 'living in the Tang Dynasty as an aristocrat. It made me feel like I were living in here rather than visiting here. It costed me 20 yuan, and I was disappointed by the fact that I was only allowed to wear it from here to there (Pointing from the rent booth to the Apricot Garden). Also, the staff didn't tell me clearly about the price and the moving space before I paid. I was not happy about it, which was such bad experience! Another thing to rant was how unprofessional he was! The pictures he took were bad qualities... My boyfriend is even more professional than him! I guess we have picked the wrong day for photography, the weather was really bad today...

5. Do you want me to help you to take some pictures after the interview? It's great view here!
That would be really nice!

6. Could you tell me more about your experience here, like what impressed you the most?

I think the artificial buildings were magnificent, especially the Zi Yun Building, and also the background music inside of the park was awesome! But when you looked closely to the remade architectures, they looked quite new and didn't look like the buildings from the ancient time. To be honest, it looked a little bit fake and was lack of details.

7. Why do you think they are fake?

Mainly because the colour on the building was so vibrant, and it looked like fresh new buildings to me. Also, the constructions and decorations of the architectures needed more details and historic accuracy....like when you looked very closely to these buildings, they didn't look like some ancient professional craftsmen who built these for the emperor. They were more like some modern works that had been built roughly by some workers who just wanted to finish the project as soon as possible and get paid. The buildings inside of the park didn't have the antique look to me. The whole atmosphere in the park was just okay....but there were not much activities that we can involve with. They needed to work on their contents, and add more activities to let us know the stories and lifestyle of the emperors back in the Tang Dynasty.

8. Have you ever been to other attractions like this, and what do you think of it/them?

I had the most immersive and exquisite experience at the Song City Theme Park in Hang Zhou. The place was much more historic accurate and more detailed than here, which gave you the feelings as if you were the citizen who lived there in the Song Dynasty. All the staff, either the sellers or the tour guides were wearing costumes. Plus, you paid less for renting the costume from the booth there, and you could wear it during the whole time while you were visiting.

9. Comparing with the traditional type of historical sites or museums, which do you prefer?

It really depends on what they have offered on site. Like we just visited the Terra Cotta Warriors, and the tour guides there were really professional. We got the chance to learn things that we were not familiar with. The only drawback was that they didn't provide any activity on site for us to interact with.

10. Based on your experience here, do you have any advice for them to make in the future improvement, and will you recommend this site to your relatives or friends?

I would recommend them to visit Xi'an, because it's such a lovely city. But I wouldn't recommend the Tang Paradise Theme Park to my friends, because the ticket price is quite pricy, and the architectures are quite new and lack of details. Overall the experience is okay, but I don't have the feeling that I'm travelling to the past.... the atmosphere is fine to me, but there is nothing to look at or involve with inside of these buildings. They should add more entertainment activities for us to involve with.

Interviewee Huifang Wang

Date: 6/6/18

1. What made you decide to pay a visit here? And where have you heard of this place?

From the cultural documentary ‘*National Treasure*’.

2. And did you check any information about this attraction before you visited?

From the Baidu baike and the documentary that I’ve just mentioned. I also checked loads of information about Jinqiu Zhang, the person who designed for the Tang Paradise Theme Park.

3. I quite like the traditional Chinese Hanfu that you wear, did you rent it from the booth at the park?

No, I thought the costume would fit for the theme of the golden age of Changan back at Tang Dynasty, which made me decide to bring it here and maybe my mom can help me to take some nice pictures here.

4. Could you tell me you overall experience and feelings about the park please?

I thought it was okay...when I first entered the park. Until I saw the Ziyun Building, I was attracted by the layout of the architecture complex. I’ve seen some pictures of The Ziyun Building online, but it’s different from what I actually find in here. At first glance of the Ziyun Building, I felt thrilled and speechless by how magnificent and glorious it was! You may feel cool or avant-garde about the modern buildings that they’ve built nowadays, but in my opinion, modern architectures in conceptual or abstract styles cannot compete with these elegant and classic traditional buildings. Because I’m more into history, and the Ziyun building really gives me that different feeling and experience. There is no word to describe the Ziyun Building...I really want to live inside of the building.

5. Did you get the feeling of travelling into the Changan back at Tang Dynasty?

Definitely! I was wondering is that real the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang used to live inside of the Ziyun Building, if he did, what kind of clothes would he wear, was that the similar one as I wear? And what would he do inside of the Ziyun Building if he came here during the summer time? What did they think of the building? I’m really curious about the way they used to live in here. But I guess it would not be as hot as right now during the summer time in Tang Dynasty...

6. And what do you think of the music or the food they sell at the Market of Hu, in comparison with the architecture complex you’ve just mentioned, which impressed you the most?

I still think the visual impact of the landscape impressed me the most. I don’t think you could find any free market at the royal lotus garden back at Tang Dynasty, and the food they sell here are not the traditional Chinese food of Tang Dynasty, once you try them, all

the magic disappears, which brings you back to the ordinary modern world. In terms of the background music, I couldn't hear it clearly in some areas of the park...if they change the music to piping or humming around the lake area, which would be more suitable for the view and the theme.

7. And what do you think of the museums, in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

I like them both equally, I mean you can get different experience from different types of attractions. If I go to the Forbidden Palace museum, I wouldn't dress like this, I will grab my notebook and wear my thick glasses to observe very closely to learn about the treasures or the old ancient paintings that I'm interested in. Here, you could still get to know the history from their booklets or the signs in the attractions, but I wouldn't take notes and wear my thick glasses, instead, I would put on my Hanfu and take some nice pictures of the site...I think you can memorise it in your mind...it's all about feelings and experience here.

8. So are you more interested in seeing the authentic treasures in the museum, or the getting familiar with the lifestyle of the ancient people used to live in the past?

For me, seeing those objects in museums gives me a general image of the war, or the lifestyle of the people from the past.

9. Have you been to other touristic attractions like this before?

Yes, the park at Luo Yang, which is the replica of the painting '*Along the river during the Qingming Festival*'. Even though I went there three years ago, I could still recall everything there vividly, which left an indelible impression on me. I think that one was all about interactive activities to let the visitors to experience. In terms of the Tang Paradise Theme Park, I think it's good for the people who are into history and culture, because they can feel and touch the texture on the Ziyun Building physically, and seeing what the history has left for use. For those who seek for entertainment, I wouldn't bother to ask them to come! They may say: '*It's just a park, or I got nothing to do in here!*'...for me, I think the experience at the park in Luo Yang was really fun and immersive, but that doesn't mean I don't enjoy the quietness and peaceful environment in here!

10. How about the authenticity of the park, do you think it's as real as the original one?

I think the park is so huge, and the distance between each attraction inside of the park is too far away, and sometimes the theme of each site doesn't connect well to another. Actually, I guess it might look like this back at Tang Dynasty, not like us the visitors, the emperor used to live inside of the garden, he didn't have to see everything inside of the garden for one day! If they build the park for nostalgia or in honour of the original one, I think that's fine to leave it like this. But it's a touristic attraction, if they want to give us a better experience, I think they should reduce the distance between each site, or add more activities to let us get involve with on the road.

11. Would you recommend this place to your friends?

Definitely, I'm sending the pictures of here to my friend on WeChat right now.

12. What do you think of the staff here?

They were okay, the issue I had was that I couldn't understand what they were saying. The dialect in Shaanxi is really difficult to understand!

13. Do you think they should wear costume as the one in Luo Yang?

Not really, because the painting itself is about to reflect the lifestyle of the citizens at Song Dynasty, while here is a royal palace, if they add more ancient citizens or shoppers inside of the park, it would ruin the whole atmosphere. In ideal world, if I could see some ladies from Tang Dynasty were playing music, or the ladies passing by with the Chinese traditional lanterns, which would be amazing!

Interviewee Jing

Date: 1/6/18

1. Where have you heard of the place? And what made you want to travel here?

My friend told me this attraction, and she knew it from her Wechat Moment, where she saw her friend posting videos and pictures of the Tang paradise Theme Park. She showed the pictures to me, which made me want to pay a visit here. So we came together, relax and enjoy the good view here.

2. Did you check any information about this attraction before you visited here?

No, but my friend sent me loads of beautiful pictures of this place, which looked incredible!

3. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the travel information?

Travel bloggers on Weibo, or the travel information checking website Qunar.com.

4. Could you tell me your overall experience of this attraction please?

It was okay...The atmosphere of the park looked great here, the main issue I had was the attitudes of the staff here! They were very rude, and indifferent. Seems like they couldn't care less about our feelings and experience here! We had booked the tickets of the park online in advance, but we were not informed that we can only get our booked tickets at the entrance of the east gate of the park. We arrived at the west gate, and the staff refused to answer our questions and asked us to leave! We were furious at that point until we got help from a nice local citizen who was passing by. And once we were inside the park, we didn't know we need to pay extra fee for the sightseeing bus...

5. What do you think of the environment here? Anything impressed while you were visiting?

The landscape here, especially the lake in the centre of the park was as beautiful as a painting, with the lotus and the shadows on the lake, which reminded me the water lilies that had been painted by Monet. And the willow trees on both sides of the road gave me the cool and refreshing feeling that helped me to cope in such hot weather! The Ziyun Building was spectacular, definitely mimicked the image of what it used to be back in the glories time of Tang Dynasty!

6. How about the music in the park?

It gave me the feeling of Tang Dynasty in some level, and I had noticed that they changed the music to highlight different theme in each section of the park. My favourite was the one they played in the centre of the lake area, where you could see the Ziyun building from a far distance, you could see all the willow trees around you, and the music made me imagine the ladies and musicians from Tang Dynasty were playing traditional Chinese music across the lake. The music outside of the Apricot Garden reminded me a scenario of a movie about Tang Dynasty that I had seen.

7. And do you like the live performance inside of the park?

Not really...first of all, I thought all the staff inside of the park were wearing Tang Dynasty Hanfu, but apparently they didn't even bother to do that. You kept seeing the cleaners sweeping the dirt on the ground during your visit, and the tour guides were arrogant and aloof. In terms of those live actors, they were lack of skills and passionate.

8. What do you think of their costumes?

Don't even get me started on this, the costume they wear were just hilarious! From what I've seen in the museum and history documentaries, the Hanfu at Tang era should be elegant, delicate and well-made in silk and satin. But in here, the costume are made in really poor quality with neon pink and green, which is ridiculous!

9. Have you seen the Lady's Hall yet? What do you think of the costume that they've displayed in there?

Yeah, it's next to the live performance that I've seen. It's okay...They were not appealing to me, I guess because they looked so chintzy and lack of details!

10. In comparison with the traditional kind of museum or historical site, which do you prefer?

I prefer the museum, because that's the place you can find the real treasures that existed in the history. And the tour guides in museum are much more professional than here, I was quite impressed by the tour guide at the Terry Quarter Warriors, who enriched our knowledge in history and interacted with us during the whole time! I do like the aura in here, which helps me to relax and calm down. But the most disappoint thing here is the people and staff's attitude...

11. Have you been to other attractions like this before, and what do you think of it?

Visiting here reminded me the Du Fu Thatched Cottage in Cheng Du, instead of a rebuilt park, it's a museum. But the view in there was very similar to this one, the bamboo forest and the cottage, the gazebo and the belvedere, particularly the lake inside of the courtyard. But it looked more classy and authentic than here, because it was the original cottage where Du Fu used to live, and they had much more activities and exhibitions, such as the art exhibition of lotus, and the objects in the museum reflected the lifestyle of Du Fu back in the history. Here everything seemed too commercial, while in the Du Fu Thatched Cottage, everything appeared to be more natural and Zen!

12. Do you have any recommendation for the park? And will you recommend it to your friends?

I wouldn't recommend this place to my friends, only if they make improvements on the staff's behaviours and attitudes. The quality of service here bums me out! And definitely need to add more contents and stories here, right now, it's just a park, at this point, I don't think there's much we can do here.

Interviewee Kun Zhang

Date: 6/6/18

1. What made you decide to pay a visit here? And where have you heard of this place?

My mom saw great reviews about this place online, and she was quite impressed by the pictures that other visitors posted online. That's why she brought me here.

2. What kind of platform did you use to check the online reviews or the pictures of here?

We book the tickets on Ctrip.com, and we check other visitors' reviews about this place on Ctrip.com as well.

3. Could you tell me your first impression and overall experience of this attraction please?

As my mom told me, I was impressed by the environment here! Anything in retro styles catches my attention, and I was thrilled when I saw the architecture complex in here. The style of the buildings really gave me that nostalgia feeling! I feel peaceful in here because it's such a quiet place.

4. What impressed you the most in the park?

The waterfall at the entrance of the East Gate, which looks amazing and helps me to survive in such hot day! The landscape here made me speechless, and I quite enjoy sitting here and seeing it.

5. What do you think of the music or the food in the market of Hu? In comparison with the landscape, which one is your favourite?

The landscape I guess, mainly because you can sense it in a more intuitive way. And I also quite like listen to the bird singing while I'm appreciating the view here.

6. I've noticed that you are wearing the traditional Chinese Hanfu at Tang Dynasty, did you rent it from the booth inside of the park?

No, I bought it online and brought it here by myself.

7. While you are wearing the beautiful Hanfu, do you get the feeling like traveling to the Changan in Tang Dynasty?

The traditional Chinese Hanfu definitely helps me to merge into the whole atmosphere and theme in here. Feels more like I were an ancient citizen who live inside of the park.

8. And what do you think of the museums, in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

I like visiting museums, but I also enjoy visiting in here, you can get different experience from them. In terms of the museum, you can gain in-depth knowledge about history from the historical relics and the tour guides. Here, I do prefer the whole atmosphere that they've

created.

9. Have you ever been to other touristic attractions like this before? And in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

I've been to the theme park based on the painting '*Along the river during the Qingming Festival*' at Kaifeng, and in comparison with this one, I think the one in Kaifeng gave me more immersive experience than here. Because the staff and all the settings present a comprehensive view of how people used to live back at the Song Dynasty. All the staff were wearing the traditional Chinese costume and acting like the shop mongers and citizens who used to live in there, just like the original painting. I guess except the landscape, there's nothing to do in the Tang Paradise Theme Park...the staff in here are not wearing costumes...and there aren't much activity that we can be involve with.

10. Is there anything upset you during your visit? And will you recommend it to your friends?

Not much, and I'll recommend it to my friends.

Interviewee Qi Zhao

Date: 7/6/18

1. What made you decide to come and see?

I got the travel information from the website Ctrip.com, and I read some reviews and comments about this place from other visitors as well.

2. Do you mind to tell me your overall experience about this place?

The environment of the landscape is very appealing here, the only thing upset me is the hot weather.

3. So far, what impressed you the most in the park?

The landscape and the sightseeing, but my son was quite interested in the live performances here, and he wanted to catch all the live performances that they have here. The thing is, the time was so intense, after finished seeing one show, I had to run to keep up with the next show, which made me had no time to enjoy the great view here.

4. As you just mentioned that you are quite like the landscape here, so which spot is your favourite in here?

The view you can see from the top of the Ziyun Building, and I was astonished by the traditional Chinese architecture complex here! In terms of the music they played at the Market of Hu, I don't think it features the cultures of Hu in Tang Dynasty. Another thing is that the weather is so hot...which bothers me a lot during my visit here.

5. Did you get the feeling of travelling to the ancient royal lotus garden back at Tang Dynasty?

Not really...I think it's just a park with great views...Because they are all replicas... like the Market of Hu we are at right now, for me, it makes no difference with the free market on the street, first of all, I don't there should have any type of market in a royal garden back in Tang Dynasty, I mean, this theme just doesn't fit for the royal lotus garden...another thing is, I don't see any Hu with their traditional clothes! The food they sell at the Market of Hu, you can find them everywhere in Xi'an, even at the supermarket!

6. Did you see the Camels over there?

Yeah...but still, it didn't make me feel like being in a Market of Hu at all!

7. In comparison with this, what do you think of the traditional kind of museums?

I just went to the Shaanxi History Museum this morning, which was pretty good! Because of all those treasures that they've been displayed at the museum, which showed me the history and culture of Tang Dynasty. Here, everything is fictional and fabricated, what they had mimic here is just a form of expression, which stays on the surface. I don't think they deliver the essence of Tang Dynasty culture to us properly. To me, it's still a modern park

with the traditional Chinese style postiche...

8. Have you been to other attractions like this before?

The street at Lijiang, or the attractions at Zhouzhuang, you get quite similar experience from this type of attractions. Because they are all built in a traditional Chinese style, but operated in a very modern style...which is too commercial for me, I guess that's the reason why I didn't get that immersive feeling as you just mentioned.

9. Would you recommend this place to your friends and families?

I'm not sure yet, because I'm still waiting for the waterfall movies they have in front of the Ziyun Building tonight. I hope they can re-arrange the timetable for the liver performances, and make it less intense. Maybe the staff could wear the Hanfu like the one in Songcheng, there were people who dressed up like the citizens and the mongers, which was interesting, but the shops they had there were quite similar to the Market of Hu here, I didn't expect to buy a cup of coffee or a box of popcorns in a traditional Chinese lotus garden, or in a street at Song Dynasty.

Interviewee Qikai Dong

Date: 1/12/17

1. Could you tell me what made you decide to visit here please?

Mainly because I've changed my job and got a new one last year, which is well paid. The thing is, the work is quite intense, and I got very depressed and stressed at work. That's why I come to Xi'an and want to have a rest, and to get rid of the troubles of the work. My friend and I are photography lovers, and he's kind of an expert in history, he told me this is a good spot for photography. I was really intrigued to feel the golden age of Tang Dynasty after I saw those pictures and reviews online.

2. What kind of platform did you use to check those pictures and reviews online?

Weibo, sometimes I use Baidu.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the park please?

My friend and I walked around in the park in order to find a good place to take pictures. At the first glance, the Ziyun Building was so stunning and outstanding, the tea house appeared to be very quaint and classic as well!

4. Did you get the feeling of travelling back to the glorious age of Tang Dynasty while you were in the park?

Definitely! My friend was complaining about the artificial buildings and sculptures during the whole time, he said it was too fake. Not like my friend, I used my imagination to fix the flaws and things I'm not satisfied with in the park. The most exquisite experience is come from the combination between the reality and the imagination, which you could feel from the bottom of your heart. I imagined I were someone who actually live in here while I was passing by the bridge on the lake. I could sit in here for the whole day to enjoy the great view here!

5. Besides of the Ziyun building, what do you think of the background music and the food they sell at the Market of Hu, and which one is your favourite one?

Visual effects definitely would be the most appealing thing here. But I guess all these work together to provide an image of what the royal lotus garden used to like back in Tang Dynasty. I haven't tried any food here in the park, but I desperately want to try the snacks in Xi'an, from what I've heard, which is really good. That's our plan for tonight.

6. What do you think about the authenticity of the park?

I guess the whole atmosphere was quite nice, actually artificial replicas don't bother me at all! I just want to enjoy the good time and have fun here. If you want to see the real deal, why don't go to the museum instead of here?

7. In comparison with the traditional kind of museum or historical site, which do you prefer?

You get different experience from different sites. Here is more about entertainment and having fun, but in the museum you can learn so many stuff that you've never heard of before. I'm happy to learn the history of China, and I'm also enjoy the time staying at this recreated park. Actually we are going to see the Shaanxi history museum tomorrow, where I can actually learn about things in Tang Dynasty.

8. Have you experienced other attractions like this before? Or AR/VR exhibitions at cultural attractions?

Not yet, but there's one video game *Uncharted 4*, which is amazing! With those great views in the game, and all those historical sites, which appears to be so real! It's like you were transferred into the world in the game, and you become Drake, not a player but Drake! I hope they could have this type of thing at heritage attractions or museums, sounds really unique and interesting!

9. Do you have any recommendation for the park? And will you recommend it to your friends?

I'll revisit here again with my friends in the summer time, I think the view would be much better! So far so good, nothing to complain about.

Interviewee Qing Liu

Date: 3/12/17

1. What makes you travel to Xi'an?

Liu: Mainly because she is trying to meet her friend here (Point at Dang).

Dang: Just come here to meet my friend, and the three of us haven't seen each other for a very long time that makes we decide to meet in Xi'an and have a nice trip together.

2. So you are from the same place, right?

Dang: Actually we are from the different provinces in China, but we used to study in the same university, which made us become friends there.

3. And what made you decide to visit the Tang Paradise Theme Park?

Liu: You know there is a TV show which is called 'Tang Paradise', and it's all about the story of the emperor and his lover Yuhuan Yang back in Tang Dynasty. The story itself was based on the historical written records. I wanted to experience the Tang Dynasty atmosphere here, just like what they had put on the TV show.

Dang: My local friend recommended this place to me. I've been told that the artificial architectures in this attraction are fancy and amazing. My friend also said: *'some are good, while some are not. But it's a significant landmark of Xi'an, which means if you are paying a visit in Xi'an, you should visit the Tang Paradise Theme Park!'*

4. Did you check any guidebook or information before you visited?

Li: Yes! The architectures and the live performances had drawn my attention after I checked some reviews online. I wanted to feel the glories age of the Tang Dynasty so badly!

5. So has this attraction met your expectations? And how did you feel about this place?

Li: You could tell these buildings were built in recent years, which was such a bummer! Because nothing made feel like traveling to an old heritage site. In comparison with the Forbidden City, the colors on the architecture were just so bright and vibrant! By the way, the surrounding buildings outside of the park were too tall and too modern, you could see them everyone, which have ruined the experience and atmosphere here.

Liu: My first impression of the place was that it's pretty huge, which made me so exhausted right now! Definite need more exercise for my routine!

Dang: I was fascinated by the lake in the center of the park, where I could imagine that it must be stunning in summer!

6. Do you know that the lake is an artificial lake as well?

Dang: Oh really! It's good to know that.....

Liu: One thing bothers me a lot here, which is the ticket price of the Tang Paradise Theme Park. It's way more expensive than other heritage attractions. I mean, it's just a park. The

Expo Park in Shen Yang is the legit heritage attraction with no artificial rebuilt buildings at all, yet the entrance fee was much cheaper than here. If I remembered it clearly, I paid 50 yuan to visit there last year.

Li: The ticket price of the Forbidden City is even cheaper than here, which is a real heritage site with better experience.

7. Have you been to the Forbidden City in the recent years? And how was it?

Li: Actually no, but from what I have seen on their official account in Weibo, I thought the experience would be much better than here!

Liu: I also got the feeling that the staff and the shops inside of the parks are too commercial.....

8. Could you tell me more about it please?

Liu: Things like you have to pay extra fees for a tour guide or a sightseeing bus. Since the ticket price is so expensive here, I'm wondering should it be included in the ticket price?

9. Besides those unpleasant visiting experience, what impressed you the most here?

Dang: Must be the animals inside of the park, like the deer and the black swans which I could interact with. Also the Sunset Pavilion, such a lovely and beautiful spot to take some nice pictures!

Liu: We were imagining ourselves as the ancient people who lived in here back in the Tang Dynasty while we were at the Sunset Pavilion. For example, we were talking and acting like the emperor and his lovers based on the TV show '*Tang Paradise*'.

Li: Which is so embarrassed to talk about.....

10. What did you think about the Zi Yun Building?

Liu: It was such a magnificent building at first glance, but once you walked inside of the building, it got boring and disappointing. In my imagination, the layouts inside of the building were supposed to look like an ancient palace in the Tang Dynasty. But instead of that, they made the first floor filled with creepy sculptures of characters who were unrelated to the theme 'royal lotus garden', besides that, they decided to leave other rooms to be empty, which made us have nothing to see here!

Dang: Like she said, we wanted to see how the emperor used to live in the palace. They should add some stories about the emperor in the Tang Dynasty, or some activities at least we can involve with.

11. In terms of the things you've seen here, or the background music, and the food they've sold here, which impressed you the most?

Dang: Definitely the visual impact!

Liu/Li: Me as well!

Dang: We were impressed by the gorgeous architectures and sculptures once we entered the park. But that feeling didn't last for a very long time, we got disappointed afterwards,

mainly because they didn't provide much activities or contents for us to involve with.

Liu: I was really looking forward to taste the Tang traditional food here, but all the restaurants and teahouses inside of the park were not relevant to the Tang culture at all! And the price of the food were not friendly!

12. Have you ever experienced the same type of attractions before, and what do you think of it/them?

Liu: Does the Forbidden City count? I like the way of their storytelling which provides me the opportunity to learn the lifestyle and history of the emperor in the Qing Dynasty.

13. So you comparison, which one do you prefer? The traditional type of museums or the artificial replicas/ heritage sites?

Dang: I would say the traditional type of museums, because the objects in the display are real deals that are worth to see. Plus, there are many museums are entrance free to the public right now.

Li: I prefer the rebuilt historical attractions, more interactive. If the Tang Paradise Theme Park puts more efforts on the way of their storytelling and interactive activities, I would immerse myself in it and be part of it.

14. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

Dang: Mainly from the social media, things like Weibo or from the Wechat moments.

15. Which leads to our next question, do you have any recommendation for the Tang Paradise Theme Park for further improvement?

Li: I would say the live actors and staff here definitely need more improvements, like wearing costumes, being more passionate and professional to interact with the visitors.

Liu: Like the Lu Yi Teahouse in the park, which is kind of boring right now based on its layout. They should add more activities or exhibitions to represent the Tang Dynasty culture. Although this place is not the original one, they should still need make efforts on adding more details based on the history. Everything here is just so fake right now!

Li: Yes, developing more interactive activities and exhibitions sound quite interesting!

Dang: If there are staff wearing the Tang themed costumes and walking around, or a Tang themed festival to show us how they used to do their makeups or wear the costume back in the Tang Dynasty, which would be really interesting and fun!

Li: Or a Tang traditional food festival!

Dang: I would also like to experience in a traditional instrument festival and to see how they used to play for the emperor in the ancient time.

16. Would you recommend this attraction to your relatives or friends?

Dang: No, because the ticket price is unacceptable... I would recommend them to visit the Da Cien Temple instead of this. Mainly because that one is a true heritage site that has been built in the ancient times and the whole experience is much better and more authentic

Interviewee Tian Xia

Date: 7/6/18

1. What made you come to here?

I came here to visit my friend, and I stayed at the hotel 'Xi'an Tang Dynasty Art Garden Hotel', which was very close to here. I've seen the brochure of the Tang Paradise Theme Park while I was in the hotel, which made me want to come over and see.

2. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the travel information?

Normally, on Ctrip.com, you can also book hotel and buy flight tickets there, which is really convenient! If I want to check on the particular information about attractions I want to visit, I'll just use Baidu.

3. Could you tell me your first impression and overall experience of this attraction please?

I quite like the environment in here, which is really cooling and refreshing, especially around the lake area.

4. What do you think of the architecture complex inside of the park?

You can tell they are not the original ones, the colours painted on the buildings are too strong and bright, which couldn't provide the historical sense of Chang'an in Tang Dynasty. And the layout inside of the park doesn't highlight the features of Changan, I thought it should be represented in a quaint and nostalgically way, like the old temples in Japan. Do you know the rebuilt city of Changan in Xiang Yang? It's invested and built by a famous director in China, Kaige Chen, he built this place for his latest movie, and now it opens as a tourist attraction to the public.

5. Have you been to there?

Not yet, but I saw my friends posting their travel pictures on Weibo, which was really pretty, before I came into the Tang Paradise Theme Park, I thought it may look like the one in Xiang Yang. But apparently it's not... Some of the building inside of the park are built in a really weird way, I think the designer try to combine the modern style with the traditional style together, and clearly it doesn't work!

6. Where have you seen those weird modern buildings?

Near the Lu Yu Teahouse, the one with the water drops on the top of the roof.

7. Do you have the feeling of travelling back to the Changan at Tang Dynasty while you were in here?

Not really, but I do like the feeling that you've just mentioned. I've been to one exhibition, which was about the Summer Palace in VR. I do like the visual effects and how real it appeared, but I'm more interested to see how people used to live back at that time in VR.

8. And what do you think of the museums, in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

It's different experience. The good thing about museum is that you can learn about our traditions and legacies. And you can get to know the history in depth! But in my opinion, replica couldn't compete with the original piece, no matter how real it mimic, it's still fake! I don't like the way they tear down the original old building, and remake a new one to replace it, which makes it lose that nostalgic feelings. Why don't they fix it rather than rebuild it? Attractions like the Tang Paradise Theme Park, I think it's more about entertainment and experience, like Disneyland, which let us to know what it used to like in a more direct way.

9. What impressed you the most so far?

The long corridor with the traditional Chinese lantern on both side near the river. I quite enjoy the music they've put in there, which makes it a really place to relax and have a rest. I like to see the shadows and the water lilies on the water, which makes me feel very peaceful!

10. Have you experienced the live performance inside of the Ziyun Building?

Actually yes, it's kind of boring...and you can find them everywhere in Xi'an, like the one at Tangyue Palace...what they wear on stage is nothing like the traditional Chinese Hanfu at Tang Dynasty...The thing is I think the designers try to add some modern elements or bright colours into the costumes to impress us or draw our attention, but what I really want to see and experience is the way it used to like.

11. From what I've heard, the performance Dongcang Drum is based on how the musicians used to play for the emperor at Tang Dynasty, and what do you think of it?

Didn't know that...I don't think it's unique or represent the musicians at Tang Dynasty...It's nothing like the pottery figurines of the Tang musicians that I've seen at the museum, or the painting 'Night Revels of Han Xizan' by Gu Hongzhong...mainly because they made the costume appeared too garish and loud! The performers were seemed not professional at all...the music itself sounds too sad...I was more interested in the scene of the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang, which showed the love story of his mistress and him.

12. Do you have any recommendation for the park? And will you recommend it to your friends?

I think the live performance or the buildings inside of the park need more historical accuracy, and the ticket price is a little bit overpriced! It's just a park with nothing to interact with, or at least show us the lifestyle and culture of people in Tang Dynasty. Another thing is the staff inside of the park, seems to be unfriendly. There was one staff who ignored me while I was about to ask him where's the Lady's Hall.

Interviewee Xi Yang

Date: 4/12/17

1. Where have you heard about this place?

I saw it on the social media and commercial ads. There used to have a music festival that held inside of the Tang Paradise Theme Park. Sometimes I drive pass by the spot, and I get the feeling of that I should pay a visit as a local resident. Luckily enough, I have got the ticket from my friend for free this month. That's why I come here. Besides, I want to learn more about Tang Dynasty culture and legacy.

2. Have you checked any information about this attraction before you visit?

No, but I know this is an artificial historic attraction from the commercial advertisements on social media. In the centre of the park, there has a giant artificial lake.

3. Overall, after you have visited this spot, what do you think of it?

The overall experience is just fine. To be honest with you, it doesn't meet my expectations.

4. How come? Could you give me more details about it please?

First of all, the ticket is quite pricy, and I wouldn't purchase the ticket to revisit the place again unless they add something funny or reduce the ticket price. Also, I think this place is over-hyped and I feel disappointed after I have visited this attraction. Like I said before, it's not good value for money (low PPR), and the tickets that they sell are not worth it. This place is so overpriced. If there is a music festival that held inside of the Tang Paradise Theme Park with my favourite bands or musicians, I will definitely buy the ticket. The point is, I would pay for the ticket just for the performance/festivals they have inside rather than visiting the attraction.

5. As you mentioned that you are not satisfied with the ticket price, how much would be acceptable for you?

Free, or 5 to 10 yuan. I mean, attractions like the Bell Tower in the city centre, which is an original heritage site with no artificial, no replica at all, and the ticket price is only 50 yuan. Plus, I can see the live performance and the structure of the heritage building inside, which is kind of unique experience because it isn't easy to see in my ordinary life. But in terms of the Tang Paradise Theme Park, with all the artificial buildings and commercial settings, the ticket price is 100 yuan which is insane! Plus once you get in, you have to pay extra 50 yuan for a tour guide. That's just unacceptable!

6. Is there anything else on the site made you unsatisfied and why?

I have to say something about the artificial buildings inside of the park. They are so fake, and the sculptures they designed which doesn't give me the feeling that I am visiting the Tang Dynasty Lotus Garden. It's just a park, like other gardens or parks in Xi'an. Some of the live performances inside of the park are quite interesting, but I wouldn't pay for the whole ticket price to see them.

Another thing is that the commercial ads on their official website and social media are just gimmicky. Well in reality, there's nothing like what they've put on their advertisements! Why bother to pay for 100 yuan to see something that you can find them everywhere in Xi'an for free! Another thing I have to complain about is the live performers inside of the park, who are not professional and are lack of passion. In this circumstances, the visitors can have better immersive experience on TV or social media. By the way, have you noticed there is a pavilion inside of the park which has water drop fall from the roof on each side? I mean, what is that? The silly design doesn't remind me anything of the imperial in the Tang Dynasty. I don't think it's a good time to visit the Tang Dynasty Theme Park in the winter, because it's too cold.

7. Do you mind to tell me more about that inauthentic feelings you've mentioned earlier please?

Things like the ZiYun Building in the centre of the park, which is a magnificent building and I adore it. But when you look around, you can see the modern buildings outside of the park from all sides, which ruins the whole atmosphere that they've created. Also, I know the live performance supposes to let the audience interact with the actors and immerse themselves with the scenes on site, but the guard and the warning line gives me the inauthentic feelings. Everything they produced are just so fake! There is one more thing, the replica buildings don't have that antique look and are lack of the historical accuracy.

8. In comparison with this, do you mind to talk about your most authentic and immersive experience at this type of attraction?

That have to be the experience I had in the Europe Park while I was in German. It is a theme park based on a simulated environment (replica and AR). No one cares if it is real or not because it turns the false into real, and the feeling was real in there. There is another place in Switzerland, which is not a heritage type of thing. It's a roller coaster in iced tunnel which is quite representative, because I can feel the Swiss culture and atmosphere from it. I mean, you don't have to doubt about the authenticity of it, because it is real!

9. What do you think about the traditional kind of museums, in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

The typical museums! Mainly because I can gain my knowledge of history from there. Particularly, the tour guides are quite professional which gives me the opportunities to learn something that I have never heard before. Recreating the royal lotus garden at Tang Dynasty based on its remains sounds like a genius idea to me, but it definitely needs more historic accuracy. I also got the feeling of that this place doesn't represent the glories of the Tang Dynasty, which is just like other attractions in Xi'an. I got very similar feelings and experience at different heritage attractions in

Xi'an, how weird is that! I guess that's because these places are too commercial and lack of contents for visitors to experience.

10. Besides the inauthentic buildings and live performances, was there anything impressed you the most on site and why?

Definite the deer garden, and the deer was just adorable. I have never seen such view at other heritage attractions in Xi'an, which is unique! I fed them the leaves from the trees for a very long time, which gave me peaceful feeling while I was with those lovely deer!

11. Is there any suggestion or recommendation for the Tang Paradise Theme Park to make improvement?

They got make improvements on their interpretation and the way of their storytelling. I mean there doesn't have much things to see inside of the artificial buildings. Besides that, the live performances aren't neither interesting nor historical accurate. If I were the manager or the producer of the Tang Paradise Theme Park, I would add more activities to show the visitors how the ancient people used to live in the place at the Tang Dynasty. I don't know other visitors, but I'm more interested in learning and seeing the lifestyle of the ancestors rather than the plain artificial buildings. Things like adding more stories that we aren't familiar with back at that time, or show us how the beauties of Tang Dynasty do their makeup, or give us the chance to taste the Tang Dynasty traditional food and snacks. Another thing is that they should provide more activities to let us interact with the live performers or staff.

The Brunel's SS Great Britain

Organization Perspective

SS Great Britain Manager Transcript

Date: 24/4/18

Time: Around 14.30 pm **Location:** Meeting Room

1. Before we get start, do you mind introducing yourself a little bit?

My name is Luke Holmes, and I'm the senior interpretation officer at the SS Great Britain Trust, which basically means I work as part of the team that develop the exhibitions on site.

2. Do you mind to tell me the purpose for the team to develop that magnificent recreation inside of the ship please?

Our charitable goals effectively define what we do here, and all these developments include the website as well. But I guess the primary one that affects us here is to restore and protect the ship, the Great Britain, but also to expand global knowledge of the SS Great Britain, and the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, which is the engineer behind the project. So those are kind of our core driving forces, so we won't do anything that harms the ship, and we won't do anything that doesn't in some way, improve kind of greater and wider knowledge, and

knowledge sharing around sort of specific about the ship, but that includes the British Marine time history, and kind of Victorian era. So that's really important for us, and that's really why we've developed the ship the way that we have. So for many years after she returned to Bristol in 1970, the core focus was on conserving the ship, and making sure that she didn't rust away. And then a kind of decision was made to keep her just as she was, and turning her into a kind of replica to restore her. And a lot of that was to do it, I guess what we call it as the 'stability of the project'. So we knew that the ship, if we treated her just as a normal ship, and clean her down every year, and remove the rust, which by now, there will be no ship, rusted away and being destroyed. So quite a radical plan was needed, in order to generate more revenues that we can protect the ship in a bad way. That really is why we develop the visitor attraction, but also it allows us sort of to below that waterline that we have to protect the ship using quite high tech equipment, the revenue generated by visitors coming here and enjoying the ship is what keeps our lives, which is kind of a symbiotic relationship there. In terms of why we restore the ship the way we've done, and why we build the exhibitions the way we have, that's a lot to do with our interpretation philosophy, which is really all about trying to reach into the past, and move beyond sort of conventional learning, knowledge transfer, and trying get people to experience what history can be like, and to live inside it. I guess it's just learning it in a different way, by having fun or enjoying yourself, and be surrounding by it rather than always kept away. That's really important for us, and that's defined most of the projects that we do on board about creating a little about past rather than an aesthetic one. I think now we've kind of got in a lot of interpretation that we talk about that change from conserving the ship to restoring the ship, and I think we found out that our visitors are less interested in that story, at that time we needed to adjust for ourselves. But now we feel like people get it, they understand why we've done this. One of the challenge that we can have is people feel like the ship is done and finished, and that can be difficult, because it means the people misunderstand the threats of the ship, she's rusting every day, we are doing everything we can to keep it going. But there's a sense of urgency that people don't see us in that way, they see us as a visitor attraction more than a crisis that need to be resolved.

In terms of sort of technology on board, and the reservation, we use different technology in different ways on the ship, so of course the ship itself is protected by a dehumidification machine, which is a conservation technology. In terms of the exhibit as what you've seen at the visitor attraction, we kind of take the view that we don't really want people to be looking at screens, their phone screens while they are walking around the ship, because we want them to be looking at the displays and to be experiencing in such displays. A lot of our market research show us that people don't want to be looking at their phones on site, which would be really easy for us to develop an audio guide or an APP, we obviously explore those, we found that's not really what people want. What we do is that we use technology to further the immersive

experience, so we try to use the technology where we can't achieve the same effects anywhere else. So if we think something it's going to be amazing, which really make people feel immersed, we'll do it. I'll give you examples like in our galley, we've got a screen of little rats to run across, we've got the bubbling pots, things like that where you don't look at that immediately think of technology, because it's more like magic I guess, like performance magic. So that's where we see the opportunities and the technology as well, which we can use to further blur the line between modern and the past.

3. Could you tell me more about the scents that you've simulated in the ship?

I think the smells were something that, we've just see it as a missed opportunity. You could stand on the ship, and you could see all these different things around you, and constantly pop into sight. But smell is such a trigger for memory, and I think it's all about furthering that element of immersion. And immersion is about removing a lot of modern intrusions, so if everything smells like the lady's perfume that just walked past you, or the food down the hall someone's eating, which breaks you out a bit, you are not thinking historically. But walking into a fish store and smelling fish, or walking into an engine room and smelling oil, which really helps to trigger the memories, we're trying to do that as much as possible. And we tend to choose smells that are sort of unmistakable, but also usually quite funny. So we got the poor steerage vomiting smell, which was really strong and horrible. But obviously kids love that, they are able to dare themselves to go in. So it's not trying to make everything seemed to pretty, we're trying to be as realistic as possible. The same with being Brunel, with the carriage, the rocks and drawing circles, a lot of that was driven by, we knew that Brunel used to be able to draw perfect circle by hand, we had this notebook with these shaky circles in, labelled with the names of railways he used to travel a lot to see how bumpy they were, and we thought what's the best way of telling the story, we can show the object, we can have panel with description in it, but surely get people to do it, so again, it's using technology where you can't really solve problems in any other way, so that's a big driver for doing that interactive one to let people to experience, which has been really popular. The same with the map, with Brunel's hand, sketching the railway out, we could had an aesthetic map, but with a little bit movement will attract the attentions of people. I think it's trying to lift, get away from the idea that museum are boring, stuffy place, like the glass cases you can't touch anything. That's quite important for us I think.

4. What do you think of the authenticity?

A lot of our research we did show us that people are really valuable for authenticity, so they want the real, they want everything to be as it was. The ship itself is the real object, but if you walk into the steerage and you pick up a dress, usually is not a two hundred years old dress. But when we dress areas at the ship, we do a lot of research, to ensure what we are putting on the ship is correct and right for the period. And people seemed really respond well to that,

because they can go into museums and they can see the original objects that they know are important that can't be touched and need to be protected, but then when they are going on to the ship, they can see those same objects that they can touch, but they know what they are, they know they are the real things that people had. So I think most of our visitors understand that by creating a place that they can play in, we are not giving them real artefacts. But because we separate those off, and we do show them the real. Normally before they go into the ship, they understand what they are looking at is a piece of theatre, but I think being able to step into that theatre makes a huge difference for people. So I think we balance that okay right now, but I think we can always do more, and that's something what we are talking about recently, wanting to try tying the ship museum tighter into the display that we have on board, so people can understand what's going on.

5. So how do you manage to do that?

Things like the manikins, we do quite a lot of research to our manikins to look like, but often our visitors don't know who the manikins are, or they don't relate them to the sources. So things like just flagging them up in the museum I think, saying: *'Here's this passenger and character, they did these five things, and can you find them on board.'* Then they'll understand when they are going. We also got the little boarding cards, which we developed quite recently, to try to get people understand that the ship was experienced by real people, they did have their own lives and their own stories, and they can relate those stories to their own lives, but also to the exhibitions on the ship, that's quite important and working really well! We are trying to get people to experience the ship as she was by using all the sensory experiences, like smell, sight, especially sound. And we are trying to use all those wholly immersive experience to let people get the feeling of authentic, and they can suspend their belief of reality, as when they are walking through, and I think that's quite powerful, because when someone has to suspend their belief, they are very open to learning things, and they are going to notice more.

6. I've noticed that visitors are always trying to open those locked doors while they are on board.

Yeah, they are very curious, and humour is quite important for us, again, we don't want people to think we are just a stuffy museum, and humour is a part of life, and museums are about understanding human life, so you can't live in a life without humour, so we are trying to get that as much as possible.

7. What have you known about the visitor experience on board so far?

We constantly receive amazing feedback, so we are number 1 in TripAdvisor of Bristol, we get 98% of four or five stars of this, so we know that visitors get a lot out of coming to the ship, and they aren't expecting how the ship as interesting as it is. What they have expected is that they just walk around it and kind of leave. And a lot of our visitor research evaluation has been done shows that people enter the site with relatively low expectations, but they leave with their

expectations much exceeded, which is opposite to most visitor attractions. We do our own kind of observations, interviews, and we do our own evaluation project, we have different consultants so we can profile and understand our visitors, and their motivation of visiting and staying, and things they are interested in. A lot of what we do on board, we try to offer as many different ways to accessing history, so if you are blind, then you can still hear the soundscapes or if you are deaf, you can obviously see everything going on around you. On a deeper level, if you are really interested in ships and shipping, then there is a lot more in the museum about how the ship has been built, constructed and designed. If you are really interested in people and how people used to live, we have a lot of social history for people to get in to. We try to produce our exhibit as broadly as possible, so the people with learning, kind of preferences, whether you learn by playing or whether you learn by reading can really access that. We know that the speakers become a bigger and bigger market in the UK, so we are working on a few ways which we can get more and more translated work out, again, to stop the barriers for people coming and visiting the ship. I guess a lot of research shows that we are doing it well, and they understand it's an authentic experience even though the elements are kind of crafted, and they know the objects in the museum are real. That isn't every case, and things do not work out that way, people do get confused, we are trying to do more and more to make it as clear as that.

8. I've noticed how detailed the crafted replicas on board were, which was just amazing!

Yeah, it's exhausting, and having to go through the much detail on everything! But it really works when it comes together, I think it's as a picture, as all the different parts come together, you start to really build that atmosphere, once you got that, I think it's worth showing to people.

9. How about the manikins? Any plan to replace that to the real live actors?

We have already done a little bit of that, we have volunteering groups who dress up as different characters on the ship, they walk around and very knowledgeable, and a few places, the Beamish Museum, all the staff and their volunteers as well, they all dress up all the time, and talk to people on site. I think we want to move towards a model that has more people dressed up moving around and talking to people. But it has to be quite careful by doing that, particular in Britain, because people are very hostile to being approached, I don't like it personally, I find people in costumes is a little bit too much, but we are planning on doing that, and we use a form of interpretation, so rather than having our volunteers with costumes as interpreters, rather than having them being in first person, we have the third person, who'll say: '*I will represent as this person who's on the ship two hundred years ago.*' And the reason we do that, honestly, is that if you are in first person, and someone walks up to you and says: '*Excuse me, where's the toilets?*' and you have to say: '*Toilets? What are toilets?*' and '*What do you mean by this word?*' It just doesn't work for visitors on site. So being in a third person, we allow people to have a real conversation, which we think works for the best. We tried that a lot, and it worked really well. Obviously we have a chat in holiday who dresses up as Brunel as well, who walks around

the site and talks to kids, that's been really popular! So the living elements complement the aesthetic elements, the way always try to make the ship feels more living, so I think if we had the resources, we probably get rid of all the manikins, and every manikin has somebody permanent working there, one day probably...

10. How's about the next step for the ship? Any plan? Could you tell me more about it please?

I can tell you a bit, I think we are very proud of what we do, and we found that it's been successful, and we are broadly happy with that, but we can always do more, and we are quite hard on ourselves, so especially on the ship itself, we never feel the work is done, it's never finished, even when you just finished a project, there will be another layer you can add on top. There are more and more things that you can add, which is just an ongoing process. By the time you finished, you walk you way to the back of the ship, the first section you work on needs to be updated and need new projects, and we've been doing that systematically for years. And we are continuing to do that, because you get new technologies arrive, which gives you new opportunities, we've been looking at AR, VR, and casting shadows onto the wall with characters, acting in a scene when you open the door. So every time when you see a new technology idea, you'll get inspired and you want to do it immediately. But we kind of build that into our organization's E-source I guess, so I think excellent is the word to use, and that's part of our organization principles. So we are always driving to do better and better. Every company does that of course, but I think we take it quite seriously.

Digital elements particularly are quite interesting in the minute, because I think the whole sector is not on sure fitting, people don't really know what is doing. There are lots of hostility towards digital and this idea of what about museum, or objects, and tangible things, screens and website. The challenge I think would be about how you get the virtual and the real to work together, and there's a lot of ideas about that, lots of discussions and workshops, so I think that will be the real challenge for the organization here. In terms of the exhibits, we will be continuing to develop our work, we are launching a multi-media guide with different language for visitors, because in the minute everything is in English, so we're getting a guide that will be in Chinese, Mandarin, Spanish, French and German as a trail, you can take that into museum, it also works on the ship, and the New Museum as well. So the accessibility is really high up on our list, because we also know we have particular demographic people that visit, and it doesn't reflect the demographic of Bristol, we want more and more people from diverse backgrounds to come and visit us, and tell us what they want to know about, and what they are interesting to them. I think if you start ignoring every group as your main audience, then you're going to be in trouble in a few years' time.

Interviewee James

Date: 26/5/18

1. What makes you decide to visit here? And where have you heard of this place?

Found it on the Internet, and we've staying locally for the weekends.

2. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the travel information?

TripAdvisor, or just check 'Things to do at Bristol' online, and once we found here, we checked the information on their official website.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

It was very good, very interesting! It's interesting to see, not quite as what I've expected. Things like seeing down the dry dock was good, and I thought interactive things were really good, and the electronic things, with things moving around.

4. So did you have the feeling of travelling to the past while you were on the ship?

Yes, definitely. Some places were quite spooky because with around all these manikins, they looked very realistic in alive, and with they got the sound activated area, sounds like the baby crying and somebody 'Shush' you, I thought someone was in there while I was walking in there. That was quite spooky. I think the wax figure was excellent, and that spooky was good!

5. What impressed you the most while you were on of the ship?

I just love walking around on the ship, and having that feeling of being on the ship, taking the sides, anything like that, for me that's interesting, and also the engine room area, and imagined what it used to like, with the sounds, which was really good!

6. How about the layouts and the displays inside of the ship, things like the sounds or the smell?

The smell of the bakery room, I thought it was really well done! I was expecting it would be quite a... once we enter to the ship, it's quite museum liking...the fact you can go into separate rooms, and you got things to smell, the toilet doors and it doesn't open, things like that, which was good! They said different things, and I went back and force three times for checking. They said 'what are you thinking!' I thought that was a good way of saying.

7. What do you think of the traditional kind of museum, and in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

This is much better, it kept your interests growing, and I do like traditional museums where you can walk around very slowly, look at things and read things, but this is good for getting everything quickly, and getting the idea quickly.

8. Have you ever been to other attractions like this one before?

Yeah, I've remembered the Black Country Museum, we go there fair regularly. That one was good, they've done differently with real people, acting as people from the past rather than manikins, so there are people exhibiting skills from the past, there are live performance, and they have people who sitting in the house and tell you what the house was about, in interpretive ways.

9. So in comparison with the Black Country Museum you just brought up, which do you prefer?

I would always say the Black Country Museum, because it's my favourite museum. This is good, and this is much better than aesthetic museums, which is really good.

10. Have you seem the lady who was playing piano inside of the ship?

She was not very good...she was real...

11. And what do you think of the replicas inside of the ship?

It was good, which seemed realistic to me. I guess it looked like how it would be done back at that time rather than being things just lay there and saying: '*this is from the past*'. With the life-size people in there, you can see how the condition it used to be.

12. So have the ship met your expectations? And any recommendation for the ship for further improvement?

Yes! Having a few people dressing like the people from the past would be quite nice! Replace one or two the manikins to real people...

Interviewee Judy

Date: 8/5/18

1. Where have you heard about this place? And what makes you decide to visit this place?

My husband is interested in history and ship, he told me about this place. There's one exhibition we want to see for quite a long time at Bristol Art Gallery, after visited the exhibition, we decided to visit here.

2. Normally, what type of platform do you use to check the travel information?

Before we came here, I checked the travel information on VisitBristol.com, sometimes I use TripAdvisor to see other visitors' reviews and comments on places to travel.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

It was fantastic, I was impressed by how real the atmosphere they recreated inside of the ship. The image just stands for the moment, you just can feel it all around you. My husband and I were sitting on the deck for a long time, to feel and enjoy the animal sounds and voice, the great view out there. It's good recreation!

4. What impressed you the most during your visit?

The underneath of the ship, I was surprised by the scale of the ship. And they made you feel like you were diving in the water, the experience was so real.

5. And what do you think of the settings inside of the ship?

It's real and accurate, which makes you think it is the way it used to be. The scents they created in the ship was a plus to the whole experience. I quite like the bakery room, which made you feel warm and pleasant.

6. Have you experienced other attractions like this before, and in comparison with the traditional museum, which do you prefer?

There are numbers of live museums around in the UK, and this one is definitely one of the best! I do appreciate that they put the exhibitions and museum in front of the ship, which you can learn about the historical context before you experience in it. The atmosphere inside of the ship feels so real, and I would like to try it again!

7. Do you have any recommendation for the ship for further improvement?

If there are more wax figures or live actors that I can involve with, which would be more realistic and fun!

Interviewee Kathy

Date: 21/5/18

1. What motivates you come to here?

We belong to a history society, and we had to talk one of the volunteers from the SS Great Britain, and it was wonderful talk, so we decided to get a bus tour from our history society to come here. And we've come with 33 of us to visit here. That's why we were here.

2. So did you check any information about SS Great Britain before you came?

We had the talk from the volunteer, and he brought leaflets. And we looked it up on internet to see how to make group visits from the official website.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

It was marvellous! Absolute marvellous! We came at 11.00am, and we are leaving at 4.00pm. And we really need to come again, there's too much to see! We need to three or four visits! It's so much better than we had anticipated, isn't it?

4. So did you have the feeling of travelling to the past while you were on the ship?

Yes! We saw the little cabins, tiny bits! And they do bring you right back. And the difference between the first class and the steerage. And the pudding in the kitchen, what about the eaten things on the plate, and how they kept the food in the kitchens. And they took the cow and pig and chickens...it was so much fun!

5. So what impressed you the most in the ship?

Because we know the ship was scuttled at Falkland Islands, and they brought it back here 8000 miles, and then redid it as it was. Just amazing! My friends and I went to open one of the toilets, somebody shouted! And the kitchens! I like it very much! The old-fashioned kitchen, with pots and pans, things like that. And the engine room was amazing, with the great big engine wheels going round and round.

6. In comparison with the traditional kind of museum, which do you prefer?

In the ship of course, which makes it real, doesn't it? You got lots of things lay in that room, that's just a museum, isn't it? The room like you said with little tiny bed and tiny little cabins, when I was a little girl, we used to come cross to England in a boat, and we had cabins and things, even then the cabins were bigger. But it was still quite compact, and the thing they had to travel further in Australia! It must be amazing! And the little skylights in the steerage classes, they didn't have the light coming in and they had been covered over. And then in the very nice first class, they had the light coming in to let them enjoy. Probably kept them warm as well!

7. Have you visited the new museum yet? And what do you think of it?

I think that's the last one we've just done. It's about Brunel, and he was an amazing man! I said to Pam why do you calling a baby Isambard? What sort of name is that Kingdom? He had to be something special, didn't he? He couldn't just be ordinary people... They did a lot of new technologies there, interactive screens sort of stuff. We did enjoy it. I didn't get the dinner party right, nobody was chosen to the dinner party as the right people. And we played the card game, which was nice.

8. Have you been to other attractions like this before?

I've been to the Mary Rose in Portsmouth, which was similar to this. The Mary Rose was Tudor, so it was the archaeology there. This one was just amazing! And the things inside of the ship looked very realistic! I think the trouble is the health and safety, I mean things have to be changed, cause the flat floors and the steps, and the barriers... The experience itself was very real, except we can go home with a comfy bed, and not to be seasick for a very long time!

9. So would you recommend this attraction to your friends?

Absolutely, in fact, we'll be back! I know we done superficially, it would be really nice to spend more times with the New Museum and do everything properly. I just want to go and see everything.

10. You can reuse the ticket for a whole year, right?

Not for group tickets, unfortunately. We'll go and ask if we can upgrade it to annual ticket, maybe few more times and see what they say. Many times we buy a ticket for a whole year, we don't get back again! But we'll visit here again, I'll bring my dearly beloved husband, he would like to see this!

11. Anything upset you during your visit?

No, because I early done it superficially, I don't think so, I think it's very pleasing. We love to open with drawers, which says open me. And you saw letters and plants, and different books, then the picture said talking to me. I think they've done it really well!

Interviewee Liam

Date: 23/5/18

1. What makes you decide to visit here? And where have you heard of this place?

I've been to Bristol before, I've driven past to it, but we never had time to do it. We are filling the time this afternoon, and we decide to come.

2. Did you check any information about this place before you came?

No, just my daughter told me here.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

That was really good! That was really well done! I've enjoyed it, and that was plenty to see rather than just walking in and walking out, there were plenty rooms to look at, which was very well done!

4. So did you have the feeling of travelling to the past while you were on the ship?

Yeah, a little bit, which was good, there was nice to walk inside of these rooms, and there were manikins and the scents they made inside of the room, which was really good! You kind of have that feeling of being on that boat hundreds years ago, it's not modern experience. Seeing and experiencing a bit of history, and another thing was really good, which's all the stuff around the outside, the displays just made the feeling of the old boat, plus, the first museum was really good, when you walked in, which was very well done, they showed you all the histories, you'll go through all about, and coming after the ship, you go to the Brunel museum, which was also very well done. It's an experience, which was really nice to the picture of history, when you walk in, it's very aesthetic, which was really good!

5. What do you think of the new technologies they've been using at the Brunel museum?

Good to see all the technologies, and technologies can make the experience nice sort of things.

6. How about the layouts and the displays inside of the ship, things like the sounds or the smell?

Yeah, there were some good smells in there, which probably as good as reality probably, nothing like it was, things like animals on the boat, and from the first class to the steerage, it would be different, which was really well produced.

7. What do you think of the traditional kind of museum, and in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

This one, because it's more real, it's a real-life experience, you could almost touch things in there and you can be part of it.

8. How do you define the ‘real’?

In a real museum, sometimes in a traditional museum, you only can see things behind the glass, which is still good, probably displays in 3D that I can enjoy better. But I prefer the way that you can interact with all those things, like the one in here. But it would be really good to have volunteers taking this place and walking around instead of the manikins in the room. If there’s a real person inside the room, that would be fantastic. If you want to bring the history alive, you have to 20 or 30 people to do it, volunteer works, which would be more realistic and interesting.

9. Did you have the same kind of museum at other heritage attractions before?

Many years ago, I experienced a museum at Cardiff, which’s a castle and also a living museum. You can walk around but I can’t remember it clearly...The thing I like about this type of museum is that you can interact with rather than just looking at stuff...which is a better experience than galleries where you can just look at.

10. So compare with other living museums you’ve been to, what do you think of this one?

It’s one of the best, I like the atmosphere, and it was very good!

11. As you just mentioned about the 3D or new technologies, what do you think of those, could you tell me more it please?

Things like VR, which would be good, but also costly. So just get people to get through the door and watch it, it’s just cost too much...

12. Does anything upset you during you visit? Any recommendation for the ship for further improvement?

Actually it would be good if there were more crew on the back of the ship to give you a little bit of information...But overall that was good!

Interviewee Lu Zhang

Date: 8/5/18

1. Where have you heard about this place? And what makes you decide to visit this place?

We are students who study in London, we like to visit historical attractions, and we have this huge interest in Bath and Stonehenge. The thing is, the hotels at Bath are too expensive, and we found the accommodations at Bristol are way much cheaper than Bath. That's why we are here, and we found this 'things to do at Bristol' booklet while we were in the hotel. Here was on their top ten lists, which made us decide to spend our time here in this afternoon.

2. Normally, what type of platform do you use to check the travel information?

Sometimes we use the qyer.com to check the destination information, and you can make your travel plan on the website, they have various options and recommendations on your travel budget, which is really convenient! If we want to check on reviews or comments of attractions, we'll use the TripAdvisor.

3. Do you mind to tell me your overall experience in here?

Impressive, especially the place where the rich people used to live, which was really stunning and spectacular! The scenes they recreated there looked so real, where you could find food, the chef in the kitchen, and also that banquet hall, which reminded me the movie *Titanic*. Before we came, we thought it was just a museum about ship, we didn't expect this! And the staff here are really kind and passionate, who told us the stories and histories about this ship while we were in the banquet hall, seemed really professional as well!

4. So did you have the feeling of being a passenger on the ship in Victorian age while you were in the boat?

Not really...I mean what they had here were really nice and delegate, you could feel the atmosphere in the Victorian age, but for me, it's more like watching a movie rather than being in the scene. But don't get me wrong, everything here was perfect...it's just I was not able to feel it. I guess it's because of the cultural difference, which didn't give me that cultural identity... things like the language, the costumes they wear, the decorations on the ship and the food they put on the display...

5. So far, what impressed you the most on the ship?

The toilet, with the man in it. It was so real! At first I thought there was really someone else in it. He shouted at me, and you can actually smell the scent of the toilet. That was hilarious and fun!

6. Anything else made you feel excited about during your visit?

The appearance and the layout of the ship, which was splendid! It was like being in an oil painting, and the colours they've used on the decoration definitely reflect the theme on the ship,

I've noticed that they've been using the shaded grey colours in the poor people section, whilst in the banquet hall area the colours are more bright and rich. I was also obsessed with the scenes that they have created on the ship, where you could actually lay on the bed, pull the rope deck, and sit in the room for upper class and pretend being rich, which was really interesting!

7. Have you experienced in other attractions like this before?

Not really, we've been to a train museum, and the 4D cinema with fully-immersive experience in the UK. We do prefer this one much better than the others that we've experienced, mainly because there are so many things you could do on the ship, and you can touch everything on the ship instead of just seeing, which feels amazing!

8. And in comparison with the traditional kind of museum, which do you prefer?

This one for sure, I mean, you couldn't smell the aroma of the bread, or the scent of the medicine at the Bristol Museum, isn't it? I quite like the way they designed in here, which makes everything merge into scenarios that allows you to experience and explore. Also, there was a close resemblance between the replicas on the ship and the original pieces in the museum! We were impressed by how delicate the replica appeared on the ship!

9. Anything upset you during your visit in here? And would you recommend this place to your friends?

I'll bring my parents here for the next time! One thing bums me out a little bit was the entrance fee, which I think they should lower it to 10-13 pounds. I know it's a one year thing, but we don't live here in Bristol, and we probably only come here once...

Interviewee Richard

Date: 21/5/18

1. Where have you heard about this place? And what makes you decide to visit this place?

From my friend, she insisted on asking me to visit here.

2. Normally, what type of platform do you use to check the travel information?

I use Google to get a general idea about the attractions that I want to visit.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

It was fantastic and surreal. What touched me the most was that it had re-created the stories and history on the ship. You can learn the history behind the ship from the timeline in the museum, things like how this ship was built, the golden age about the ship, how it had been destroyed, and how they restored it and re-opened to the public as a museum.

4. How about the experience inside of the ship?

It was magnificent! The experience was very unique, which was different from the normal experience that you can get in the traditional kind of museums. Like the warship at Cardiff, which was an ordinary ship, where you entered the ship, looked around in the captain's room, and that's it. But this one was really different, you can visit and observe the ship from different angles, like the under the water section, where you could actually see the shape and figure of the ship from beneath, you can see how the propeller worked in front of the ship, Especially the cabins inside of the ship, where they recreated the scenes of the first class cabins, and the third class for the poor people on the lower decks. One thing surprised me was the scenes they put on the ship, which was a plus to the whole immersive experience. Another thing impressed me was that you could find the cards of different passengers who used to live on the ship, where you could find the identities, backgrounds and stories of these passengers. And they had reflected these stories on the ship, where you could find the woman who was giving labour on the lower deck, or the passenger who got sick sitting in the pharmacy room. I was quite amazed by the fact that all these combined together, which created the atmosphere and stories that I could immerse myself in.

5. In terms of the immersive experience you were just talking about, do you mind to tell me more about it please? And which section gave you the strongest feeling of immersion while you were in the ship?

The toilets scene they've simulated, at first you couldn't open the door, and then following by the passenger who was shouting at you to let you go away. It felt like someone came from hundreds years ago was actually using that toilet, which was really interesting!

6. So did you get the feeling like being a passenger who lived on the ship hundreds years ago while you were in the ship?

Not really...I didn't feel like I were a crew or a passenger in the Victorian age, but it definitely brought up my curiosity and interests to explore inside of the ship. It's more like being an explorer or an archaeologist rather than a passenger. Because you couldn't immerse yourself into the scenario while you were surrounded by the tourists who were wearing modern clothes with cell phones or cameras in their hands. It might be more immersive if people around you dressed in Victorian styles, and talking in the old-fashioned way.

7. What do you think of the scents they simulated inside of the ship?

It was really stinky in the poor people area! The scents fitted perfectly for the scenarios I've on the ship, which definitely helped me to feel what the ship used to like. But, like I said earlier, I didn't get the feelings like being a passenger in the Victorian age.

8. You've been to their museum, and you have experienced inside of the ship. In comparison with those two, which do you prefer?

It must be the experience inside of the ship! I appreciate how detailed and accurate of the replicas they had made! I also enjoyed to learn the history of the ship in the museum, and I quite like the way that you learn about the history first, and then you immerse yourself into that recreated environment, which definitely helps me to understand it and memorise it in depth.

9. What do you think about the authenticity of the ship?

I mean, the ship itself is the real one, it's just they've recreated all the scenes inside of the ship. In terms of the replicas inside of the ship, I don't think they are fake, instead, I think the designing team tried their best to recreate the image of the ship at the glorious Victorian age.

10. Have you visited the new museum? And what do you think of it?

Not a big fan of it. I know they put loads of new technologies inside of it, but it's more about Brunel, to be fair, it was not as impressive as the ship did, more like a traditional type of museum to me.

11. Have you been to other attractions like this before?

No, but I think this one must be the best. But I think if they developed a room with VR, where you could feel the wave on the sea, or being a captain or a sailor in one particular scene, the experience might be more immersive.

12. Probably add more wax figures or live actors will help?

No, I don't think so, because the amounts of the tourists will always be more than the amounts of the wax figures or live actors. I think developing a place to separate the tourists with the scenes, a simulated environment, like the Harry Potter Roller Coaster at the Universal Studio, which might help the visitors to become part of the story.

13. Have the experience met your expectations?

It's beyond my expectations! The ticket price is fair, and you can experience so many things for one visit, definitely will recommend this place to my friends!

Interviewee Roy

Date: 23/5/18

1. What makes you decide to visit here?

I always want to see it, and I've heard of this through Western History.

2. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the travel information?

My wife, she does all the organizing. She had never been here before, and we both come together, and both on our first visit.

3. Do you enjoy it? And could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

We are enjoy it. We certainly are! That's absolutely amazing! Really good, really interesting! I like the way you can go and see the underneath of it, with the water on top, I think that's really good! Also, we feel very comfortable with the yard.

4. So did you have the feeling of travelling to the past while you were on the ship?

Yeah! It was just like how you could live like that for 18 months getting to Australia, in such a small component, with a family as well! It's just very time sort out thing... It's just amazing! I can't really describe it. It's just so full of amazing things, and the technologies while you are looking at the engine. The technology was amazing as well!

5. What type of technology impressed you the most?

While the actual engineering of it, at that time, and being the first of its kind.

6. How about the layouts and the displays inside of the ship, things like the sounds or the smell?

It was really good, they made it very realistic. The wax figures actually be quite frightening there. Because you don't know they were there, and you walked around, you were like: '*wow, there's a person there!*' It felt like they were just sitting there and waiting for somebody to come and pass, they'll like: 'boom!' they made the wax figures very realistic!

7. Have you visited the new museum yet? And what do you think of it?

We went to the Brunel museum as well, which's more technological. More of a fact-based thing, not as interesting, but some of the displays are good.

8. So which do you prefer? The new museum or the ship?

The ship, but I love seeing technology as well.

9. And in comparison with the traditional kind of museum, which do you prefer?

This, because it's more realistic. But I do like the old-fashioned ones, because they still give you an insight into the past, because they got displays and artefacts you can see, so they still have a place. But I love this one!

10. And would you recommend this place to your friends? Any recommendation for the ship

for further improvement?

Definitely! In fact, I talked somebody on the phone this morning. In terms of the recommendations, I can't think of anything, nothing need to be improved really, it was very good, very well thought and very well done!

Interviewee Ruth

Date: 23/5/18

1. What makes you decide to visit here? And where have you heard of this place?

We've heard of it for a very long time, and my husband and I were in the Scilly Isles in 1970, when we saw it be brought back, and ever since then, my husband said: *'I want to go and visit it!'*, so it's taken until now, it's being a long time.

2. Did you check any information about this place before you came?

No, not really, my husband always be interested in it, and he was an engineer as well, so he's interested in all that.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience on the ship please?

The presenting of the ship and the experience were excellent!

4. So did you have the feeling of travelling to the past while you were on the ship?

Yes, definitely. I felt it when we were in the third class and the second class, where with all these books, and the kitchen area, I thought it was the tremendous feeling when you got from that, it also, I get seasick, and I know it wasn't moving, but I got the feeling it was moving...I think we probably would be gone in the third class, I don't think we would be in the first class, would we? But even in the first class, their beds and the space are very small, and in fact, third class in some way seemed have a little bit more space, even the bed seems longer...Maybe the people at that time were much smaller.

5. What impressed you the most while you were on of the ship?

I think the kitchen area, they would have to provide all that food, and have a huge fire in there, and cooking for all these people all day long, day in and day out, it's just amazing. Some of the food are showed in there very well!

6. How about the layouts and the displays inside of the ship, things like the sounds or the smell?

Yes, I like the bread, and the pans bubbling on the stove, I think that was all very realistic!

7. What do you think of the traditional kind of museum, and in comparison with this, which do you prefer?

I prefer the living museum, rather than just walking randomly, I just think it shows everything as it was, and it seems more real and more realistic.

8. How do you define the ‘realistic’ you were just talking about? Do you mind all the pieces inside of the ship were remade artificially as replicas?

No, I think it was very good, I think the bubbles and the figures that they got there were very good, which gives you an idea of what it was used to be like, the experience is more important than what they got on the display. I mean the ship is the original isn't it? The inside of the ship was changed and remade, but I presume how it was, does it? Because it's constructed so realistic...so when they found it, they knew where it was, didn't they? It must be a real messing inside, isn't it?

9. Have you seen the live actors inside of the ship? And comparing with the wax figures inside of the ship, which do you prefer?

I saw one lady dressed with the long dress, sometimes I prefer the live actors, because you can talk to them, you can't talk to the wax figures. Actually there's another thing, there didn't seem to be enough crew around to ask questions, I just saw that lady with long dress, maybe because it's the lunch time...There should be more...

10. Have you been to other living museums like this one before?

The Black Country museum, the Warwick Castle, but they didn't have the things like they brought in here, I think this one is probably better.

11. So have the ship met your expectations? And any recommendation for the ship for further improvement?

Definitely, for the improvement...I don't think so, because it's better than what I was expecting, it really was. I thought it was a ship with nothing inside, I wasn't expecting any of that. I thought it was the museum like when you go in first of all, they tell you what about it, and I didn't expect what it's like inside of the ship.

The Dharma Legends in Famen Temple

Organization Perspective

Dharma Legends in Famen Temple Manager Transcript

Date: 2/6/18

1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself please?

My name is Bin Gao, and I am the chief artistic officer of the live performance ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple. The show is produced and developed by the live performance company ‘De Lang’.

2. Besides the Dharma Legends in Famen Temple, is there any other show produced by the ‘De Lang’?

There are several shows run by the De Lang, and the ‘Dharma Legends in Famen Temple’ belongs to one of them, the others are the ‘chorus of the yellow river’ at Hukou Waterfall, ‘1212’ at the east route of Shaanxi Province, and the ‘red lady army’ at Sanya, Hainan.

3. Could you tell me the purpose of producing this show at Famen Temple please?

The show and live performance are very popular and trendy in the tourism industry at Shaanxi recent years, especially in the attractions of the east part in Shaanxi. The attractions in the east part of Shaanxi have been well developed over the past few years, as you probably have already known ‘*the song of everlasting sorrow*’ at the Huaqing Palace. That’s quite a popular one. Yet, attractions in the west part of Shaanxi are less popular and are lack of visitors. From our research, we found out that most visitors come to Xi’an or Shaanxi are more interested in visiting attractions in the east part of Shaanxi rather than the west. But if you pay attention to the actual attractions, you will realize there are loads of heritage sites and legacies that are worth to see! That’s why we choose to produce this show at the Famen Temple as our first stop in the west part of Shaanxi. Because Famen Temple was one of the biggest Buddhist temple and was used to serve for the royal family for religious purposes back in Tang dynasty, and according to the historical records, it’s the only place you can find the real Sakyamuni’s Sharipu from all over the world. By giving a lot of thinking and observation on the real attractions in the west part of Shaanxi, we decided to choose the Famen Temple and create an interactive live performance as a starting point.

4. Which leads to our next question, what made you and the team decide to use the interactive way to represent the history and stories at Famen Temple in the show?

Most visitors come to the Famen Temple are either Buddhists or people with benevolence, who are interested in knowing the stories and histories of the Sakyamuni and this temple. Some people may say this is such a place to clear your mind and purify your soul. Walking and interacting with the live actors in the performance is the best way to let the visitors to

experience and gain knowledge about the history of the Famen Temple. You can memorise it and turn that experience into the valuable memory only if you have experienced the stories all by yourself. That's why we are using the interactive way as a technique of expression to deliver the message to our audience, which allows the visitors be part of it and take part in the performance. The initial thought is to present visitors an experience like 'something really happens to you, rather than something you see from a movie or a show'. You may have already seen the plot four, the one with the Red Guards and the mong Qing Liang, we tried our best and made efforts to make it appeared to be realistic according to the history, which provided the visitors the feeling as if they were there, surrounding by the Red Guards in the year of 1966. Most of the stories in the show have really happened in the history, our purposes are recreating those stories and making it as real as possible to let the audience experience.

5. In terms of the authenticity and realistic you have just mentioned, how do you define it?

The show itself is based on a prose, which is called the '*Buddha at Famen Temple*' and is written by the author Aiying Bai. The events in the prose have actually happened in the history, the author put all the pieces together and make it into a story. In the second plot, the story of the 'stupid' monk, who made the heavy iron chain through his shoulder to encourage local citizens to make a donation to the destroyed tower, the monk himself really existed in the history and it was really happened in Ming Dynasty. So our task is to bring the stories alive in the history, but not as '*The song of everlasting sorrow*' someone may call it a 'visual feast', we want our audience to feel it deeply from the bottom of their hearts. In terms of the traditional kind of performance, the audience might feel the scenic design or the visual effects are amazing, but as they are not part of it, they couldn't memorise it and turn it into their own stories. That's what we want our visitors to get after seeing the show: inspiration and purifying the souls.

6. Could you tell me more about the recreation of the underground palace of the show please?

It's the replica of underground palace made in 1:1.5 size. If you go inside of the tower, you'll find all the commercial shops and points for donation instead of the original underground palace, they have moved all the relics and treasures to the museum. So we decide to recreate it and let the audience to see what it used to like, and every piece is based on the original one in the museum.

7. And the show is using a lot of emerging technologies, what do you think about the role of technology in the live performance?

Actually in comparison with other similar time of live performance, such as '*the song of everlasting sorrow*' and the one in Songcheng, we didn't use much emerging technologies as they did. As I mentioned earlier, our purpose is to let the audience be in the story and feel it from the bottom of their heart, so we are not focusing on the newest technology applications.

But we were quite proud of the Sakyamuni's Sharipu on the hologram in the end, the concept was came from the chairman of the company. When the screen came down from the top, with the Sakyamuni's hand on the screen, we wanted to deliver the concept 'the goddess of mercy' to the audience. And from it, the audience can see which finger is Sakyamuni's Sharipu. Overall, the technologies are serving for the contents and stories, which means it's not the main star of the show but the audience, the live performers, and the story itself.

8. What have you known about the audiences' experience and feedbacks so far?

From our research on site, most of visitors were like: 'it was amazing!' or 'it made me cry!' after they experienced in the show. The show have also attracted some famous actors and actress to come, such as last month, Siqin Gaowa came and experienced the show, I found that she had been crying from the second scene until the end. We also get some feedbacks from different travel agencies in Xi'an, the most common thing I've heard about is that '*the visitors dig the show*' but '*they feel very exhausted after walking in 70 minutes*'. The thing is travelling with the travel agency is exhausted! I think it may not be suitable for the elderly, but we've provided facilities for the elderly or the disabilities to use on site, and there are staff on site who are willing to help them, such as pushing wheelchair for them during the whole time. So I guess waling in 70 minutes also gives the audience an experience of the priests and monks' worship. Either in the ritual or in the scene of the earthquake, the audience are part of the scene.

9. What do you think of the show? Pros and cons?

The thing I'm not so satisfied with is the space is too limited. The room only allows 400 audience to come each time, while our expectation is 1000 visitors...Some visitors only come for the show, but the theatre is inside of the attraction, which means they have pay for the attraction (museum/temples) and also the show, which is unfair for them to pay for something unnecessary. So that's the tricky thing that we are trying to overcome at the present stage. For the show itself, we make improvements and promote it in every year, the one you've seen is in 70 minutes, actually in previous version was about 90 minutes. Based on the visitors' feedbacks we improved it in last winter, and also the costumes, props and lighting effects etc. We've add the opening ceremony at the very beginning in this year, the purpose is to let the audience to clear their mind and get ready to what they are about to experience.

Interviewee Jian Zheng

Date: 9/6/18

His Friend: I really like the atmosphere of the show, and I think it's magnificent! But I think it brought out chaotic in certain scenes, such as the scene of the earthquake... there are multiple plays are playing at the same time

1. What motivates you to come and where have you heard of this place?

We came here for work, and one of my local friends recommended this place for me.

2. So, are you a Buddhist?

No, I am not.

3. Could you tell me your overall experience of the show please?

From the beginning to the end, I was quite drawn to the music and songs in the show. The show itself and all the scenes really brought out the history vividly!

4. Could you tell me why you got touched and cried in the last scene?

I couldn't tell the feeling in the end, I don't know, I guess that was the deep connection from the heart...the whole experience was superb! The last scene impressed me the most in the show.

5. Do you mind to tell me more about your experience in the last scene?

When I saw other visitors, especially one old lady who was standing next to me, they were bowing and praying to the God with those monks in the ritual, it really got to me and brought tears to my eyes...

6. Have this show met your expectations?

Definitely. I thought the temple was so boring, but my friend brought me here so I couldn't refuse...When I actually saw the show, it was just excellent!

7. Is there anything upset you during the show? Did you get the feeling of chaotic as your friend?

No, actual I quite enjoy it, and I think that's made the interactive show unique, I really like it!

Interviewee Jueying Wang

Date: 2/6/18

1. Are you visitors or local resident?

We are tourist.

2. Where have you heard of the live performance?

We were here to attend the biggest Buddhist religious ritual, after that we wanted to see the Buddhist relics—the Buddha’s finger bones at the Famen Temple. The Buddhist relics is very meaningful and important symbol for us Buddhist. That’s why we came to here. I didn’t check any information about the show before I came, but the show was amazing!

3. Do you mind to tell me your overall experience about the live performance please?

I was impressed and so touched by the contents of the live performance. The show helps me to understand what Dharma really is. There were so many people lost their lives to protect this legend in the history, which provides us the benefits and opportunities to learn and understand it today. Like it has been said in the show: ‘*Without Dharma, we were like walking in the darkness....The Dharma brings out the hope and brightness for our lives*’. And the show was so real, the stories, the emotional feelings, the characters and the scenes. There was one scenario, that monk, who spent 30 years to rebuild the tower in Ming Dynasty, I was so affected by it.

4. As you mentioned before, could you tell me more about that touched emotional feeling please?

I guess I was touched by the Dharma wish, we’ve learnt this concept before, seeing it in the performance, the character Xiang Ji didn’t only protect this temple, but also spread the concept of Dharma wish to everyone...I guess that’s the meaning of Dharma...

5. What do you think about the authenticity of the performance?

The show made me think it really happened in the history, I think it’s real, isn’t it?

6. From what I heard, the show was based on the history and also a novel that was about the stories in Famen Temple. Do you prefer the original object authenticity, for instance, the real underground palace, or the feelings of authenticity?

I guess the experience and feelings are more important to me. If you are seeking for the legit, real piece, you can just watch the documentary on TV.

(Her friend, male, middle-age): Actually, this interactive live performance was way much better than we had expected. We had the similar kind of experience before, such as the one in Jiuzhai Valley, or the one in Hangzhou. I think this one provides the most stirring experience and feeling, because it makes us merge into the scenarios of the performance, which gives us the deep resonance and sympathetic response from the hearts. Also I think the show makes the history come vividly to life, things like the stories of how the people used to protect the tower and the underground palace, some people even gave their lives for protecting it. We are so lucky to see this magnificent relics today because of them. In the last scene, I got the feeling like...I didn’t

want the underground palace to be re-opened, I think it should be protected and remained as it used to be... That can make the people in the future to appreciate it and learn the history from it.

7. Anything made you unsatisfied in the show?

The 70 minutes walking makes me exhausted...

Her friend: I guess, if they provide us some information about the history of the Famen Temple before the show, it would be much better!

But the overall experience was really good!

Interviewee Miao Jin

Date: 9/6/18

Saturday, the person was interviewed after the afternoon show around 15.30pm. Because it was crowded outside of the theater, and the interviewee was no rush to leave, we found a quiet room in a restaurant in the Famen Temple to undertake the interview (while we were drinking tea at the same time)

1. What motivates you to come and where have you heard of this place?

Because I'm local, I've learnt about the stories and history of Famen Temple since I was a kid. When I've heard there's a show about Famen Temple, I'm so interested in it. That's why I come to here and see the show.

2. So did you check any information about the show before you came?

I've checked some information from the website, when I checked some related information and knowledge about Famen Temple, I found out the Dharma Legends in Famen Temple.

3. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

Baidu Baike, and typing the Famen Temple or the museum in Famen Temple in the search engine.

4. Could you tell me your overall experience and feeling about the show please?

I've seen some similar types of the live performances around Xi'an, such as the one in the Tang Paradise Theme Park, and 'A song everlasting Sorrow' in Huaqing Palace, they were all based on the love stories that happened in Tang Dynasty. This one is kind of different, because the interpretations were set in the Buddhist religious genre, and in the end it told us to seek out the lightness from our heart. I felt satisfied and impressed by the show.

5. Do you mind to tell me more detailed information about the feeling of satisfaction please?

I was moved by the stories and contents they put in the show, such as the story of the monk Qing Liang who sacrificed and burnt himself in order to protect the temple.

6. As you just mentioned about the shows in Huaqing Palace and the theme park, which do you prefer?

I guess this one gave me more immersive feeling like travelling into the past. I saw the show after I visited the original temple and museum, and my first impression was like 'wow!' Following by that, I was attracted by the stories and contents in the show, which inspires me deeply from the heart. The show 'A song everlasting Sorrow' was amazing as well, but it's like the traditional live performance, and the contents are quite different. The Dharma Legends in Famen Temple was more thrilling, which inspired and touched me from the bottom of my heart.

7. Besides that, what impressed you the most in the show?

It was scene of the Cultural Revolution in the year 1966 with the Red Guard.

8. Could you tell me more about it please? Is it because they drove the truck inside of the theatre, or the whole atmosphere?

I think mainly because of the stories and contents in the show, even without the truck or the whole set, this story is definitely my favourite! Like I said earlier, the Buddhist monk Qing Liang gave his life to alert the Red Guard, which I thought what he did was extraordinary!

9. In terms of the elements that are related to five senses, such as the visual effects, background music, or the smell of the incense stick that they burnt at the opening ceremony, which impressed you the most?

The sounds of the bell at the beginning, the light was turned off, and at that moment, I was surrounding by the darkness, and the sounds of the bell brought purification to my souls.

10. What do you think of the hologram and the technology applications in the show?

I think these new technology applications helped to improve the immersive experience and brought the past alive.

11. As you mentioned that it brought the past alive, what do you think of the authenticity of this show, especially the recreated underground palace in the last scene?

To be honest, the rebuilt underground palace was made lack of accuracy in comparison with the original pieces. The remade silk and the objects were lack of details, which made them were not as delicate as the original treasures.

12. And based on the last question, in comparison with the traditional kind of museums, which do you prefer?

Actually, I prefer to see the real pieces in the museum. I think after seeing the original site and the museum, this type of interactive live performance is a plus to the attraction. The museum gives audiences a general and basic background of the history, otherwise, you couldn't get what they are trying to say in the show. Once you get familiar with what happened back at that time, you can totally immerse yourself in the scenario while you are experiencing it in the show.

13. Did you get the feeling of being part of the play rather than just a pure visitor?

For some parts, 50% of that feeling I guess...In the scene of the earthquake and the donation for the tower, by following those monks to make a donation for the tower, I felt like I were those civilians who lived in the village. While I think it was kind of confusing when there were certain scenes that played at the same time, which was quite distracting.

14. Will you recommend this show to your friends and relatives?

Definitely, I've just recommended it to my friends.

15. Anything disappointed you while you were in the show?

The sounds of the speaker were so loud! I couldn't hear clearly...Also, the scene with multiple plays, which brought out a little bit chaotic confusion, other than that, I think the show was great and definitely will recommend it to my friends!

Interviewee Naqi Zhang

Date: 2/6/18

1. What makes you come to visit?

Just want to take a rest after the exams and coursework. I've been told that there's a really good interactive live show.

2. From where? And normally what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

From friends and my mom. My mom usually gets travel information from her Wechat moment, things like the attractions that her friends have been to and posted.

3. Are you travelling from Xi'an?

Yeah, we are from Xi'an.

4. Could you tell me your overall experience of the live interactive show?

The performance by the live actors was so vivid, and the overall experience was good! The live actors were very professional. The plot three impressed me the most, and I was touched by the contents and the story.

5. In comparison with the traditional kind of performance, which do you prefer?

This one I guess, I like this one better, I thought I became part of it and I enjoyed that a lot. I could see what happening on the stage very closely...

6. In terms of the five senses, visual audio, touch etc. what impressed you the most in the performance?

Definitely visual, it was a visual feast. The lightning and the whole atmosphere they created, I think it's a plus to the whole performance. Like I said, I also could see and interact with the live actors very closely, that's a unique experience.

7. Have you experienced other live performance like this one before? Which do you prefer?

The original concept of the live interactive performance was from the famous director Yimou Zhang, from what I've heard, he and his team produce a series of this kind of performance in different cities. Unfortunately, I haven't experienced those, but I've tried the one in the Aquarium in Xi'an. It was on a really big round stage, and that one was amazing. I think that one is more interesting than this one, probably because I'm more drawn into the stories and contents of the ocean. I mean, if they add more contents into this one, and make it a little bit longer, it would be better!

Interviewee Yang Ping

Date: 9/6/18

The interview was undertaken in the hotel 'Fo Guang Court' at the Famen Temple, around 7.30 p.m. She stayed at the hotel in order to see the ceremony on Sunday, and the conversation was recorded in the meditation room in the hotel.

1. Where have you heard of this show? And what makes you want come to visit?

Fame Temple is one of the most famous landmarks in Xi'an, which represents the Tang dynasty culture, especially their museum. I was attracted by the relics and treasures in their museum collections, and my friends told me there was a show based on the stories and histories of the Famen Temple, I thought it was interesting. So here I am.

2. Did you check any information about the show before you came?

I heard from my friends that it was an interactive live performance, which made me really wanted to know what this type of interactive experience was about!

3. Normally, what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

Normally, I use the guidebook to check the information about the destination. But I guess the internet is more convenient in now days, sometimes I check the attraction information on Bai Du. There are also loads of blog articles about travelling on WeChat, which are quite useful!

4. Could you tell me your overall experience and feelings about the show please?

I got thrilled and excited! But 70 minutes was too long, and I got so exhausted after the show finished. The way they represented was new to me, and I was not able to adjust myself to this at first. In my opinion, it was like a show of representing the newest technologies...I thought it was all about entertainment. I still prefer the traditional way of live performance, where you could relax and educate yourself at the same time. Like the ballet show, or music conference, I could sit there quietly to enjoy the actors' performances and art, whereas the way of their representation and interpretation here are just too shallow for me.

5. Anything impressed you or made you enjoyable during the whole experience?

The 'interactive' part was interesting, which was the experience that you couldn't get from the traditional live performances in theatre. There were certain times, it felt like I were there, in the history. My favourite part was the appearance of the underground palace from the darkness, when the light was turned on from the ground, I was impressed and touched in the spiritual level. It didn't occur to me that there was a rebuilt underground was under my feet until they turned on the yellow lights! At that moment, I thought the technology using were brilliant! It really made me thought I were there when they first opened the underground palace, and I were one of the archaeologists! I think that's the essence of this type of interactive show!

6. In terms of the settings in the performance, such as the lighting effects, hologram applications, or the background music, etc., which part is your favourite?

The visual effects. I was not sold on their sound effects, mainly because the sounds from the speaker on site were just too loud, and there were visitors talking during the show, which made it even harder to hear what the actors said! It felt like being in a flea market, which was not elegant at all! Maybe the composer created great music for the show, but at that circumstances, it was really difficult for me to listen and focus on the actual music.

7. As you mentioned earlier, could you tell me more about that feelings like 'you were there, or being one of the archaeologist'?

That feeling only occurred in the underground palace scene... Besides that, I still felt like a visitor rather than being part of the story. The actors who played as the main characters were quite professional, and the actors who played as monks that made me thought they were the real ones! But the people who played as citizens or the Red Guards, they were lack skills, I mean, they didn't even convince themselves to be part of the story, how could they convince me to merge with the scene! I saw one actress wearing Nike in the scene Republic of China, which was not professional at all! They made you think they were acting in the scene rather than the people who used to live in the past, which's a bummer! These actors effected my whole experience, tour guides are much better than them.

8. And what makes you think the traditional performance are better than this? Could you tell me more about it please?

Don't get me wrong, I think the interactive live performance is interesting, but this is my first time to experience it and it really difficult for me to get used to it! I'm thinking about revisit the site tomorrow, to re-experience what is so-called interactive live performance. The thing I like about the performance in the traditional way is that I could immerse myself quickly to the story of the show, because I am a big fan of live performance, things like opera, symphony, ballet, where I can sit there quietly with no distractions, and I could enjoy the stories and soak in as much as possible. For this new type of performance, I was struggled to focus on the

main stories, like in the earthquake scene where actors playing from 360 degrees, and I was worried about if the scene was about to end...It couldn't make me calm down as the traditional way of performances does. The good thing was that you could find the main scene from the light or the sounds, and then everything merges together into the atmosphere. But still, it was too distractive and not enjoyable for me at all! Another thing was the scene change, the staff on site instructed you to go through each gate, but there just were too many visitors! We had to run or walk really fast, it was like we were farm animals! Again, walking in 70 minutes was too exhausted, I had to find a corner to sit at the end...

9. Based on your experience, would you recommend this show to your friends and relatives?

Yes, I will recommend it to my friends, because the experience is quite unique and different! I guess the main issue was that I could not get used to it, but if I travel with my friends and see the show again, I may get quite different feelings and experience of the show.

10. Any recommendation to the show?

They have to make improvement of their speaker, the sounds from the speaker are just too noisy. Also the plays and live actors from 360 degrees made the scene really confused and chaotic! For some of the live actors, they have to change their attitudes and be professional! Because they were standing next to me, and I was looking for that feeling of emotional empathy, which they didn't deliver the feeling properly. Another thing would be the scene change, if they make it slower and more organised, I think the experience will definitely be improved!

I know the show was all about immersive and interactive, but I didn't get any interaction on site. We were just standing there with the live actors who standing next to us, which felt like we were all props in the scene. Things like when the citizens tried to rebuild the tower with the heavy rocks and ropes they carried, we couldn't feel how heavy the rock was or maybe pulled the rope together. Or when they tried to make a donation, maybe we could donate some money or food as well, I guess that was interactive and being part of the story.

Interviewee Yebao Guo

Date: 9/6/18

1. Where have you heard of this show? And what makes you want come to visit?

From one blog article on WeChat, and the mysterious stories of the underground palace are very attempting me to pay a visit here.

2. What kind of blog on WeChat?

From their official account.

3. Normally what kind of platform do you use to check the destination information?

I always type the keywords in the search engine in Bai Du. Sometimes I use Google to check the information.

4. Did you check any information about the show before you came?

Not much, but I know the content of the show was based on the historical record and represented in a modern way, the technology using etc.

5. Could you tell me your overall experience and feeling about the show please?

First of all, I think the story of the show is interpreted in a very holistic and comprehensive way, which covers the stories and historical events of the Famen Temple and the underground palace in different periods of history in China. Secondly, the opening ceremony at the very beginning is like a travel machine, which brings us back into the history and also makes us merge into the story.

6. Did you have the feeling of travelling back to the past while you were experiencing the show?

Some.....actually not much...mainly because there were so many visitors on Saturday, which effected my whole experience of the show. Also, I think they were not connected well from scenario to scenario, you had to walk really fast to catch the next scene, and there were just too many people...the crowds decreased that immersive feeling and experience.

7. Besides those negative feelings, what impressed you the most in the show?

I suppose it was the last scene, when the Buddha opened his eyes with the lighting effects, I was deeply moved. Mainly because the music at the last scene was so touching, and with the underground palace appeared through the glass under my feet, at that moment, it really got me and gave me the feeling of being part of the story. The atmosphere they made at the last scene was amazing, it surprised me that the Buddha could open his eyes, you know, it was really difficult to describe...I think everything merged together at the last scene, the music, the settings, the actors and the audience, which was magnificent!

8. And what do you think of the scene with the earthquake?

I think it was a little bit confused and chaotic when the tower was collapsed. Because there were different stories playing at the same time from three directions—the front, the left and

the right sides in the room. The stories at the front was about the tower was destroyed due to the earthquake, and the citizens had to help each other to survive in the tragedy. But all of the sudden, another story was played on the right of the room at the same time. When I struggled to figure out what had happened on the right side, another scene appeared on the left! It was really difficult to catch up all the scenes at the same time! But I have to say they nailed the last scene, which didn't bring out chaos and confusion at all!

9. In comparison with the traditional kind of play in the theatre, which do you prefer?

I think they are all good! This was my second time of experiencing the interactive live performance, and the first one was the show that played in the water in the Tang Paradise Theme Park. The hologram movie was played on one artificial water screen, which was cool! While this one they invited all the live actors, and the representation and the way of interpretation were kind of different. More interactive I guess.

10. What do you think of the authenticity of the show?

I don't think that's a problem for this type of live performance...Actually I think the most important thing of this interactive show is audience feelings and experience, where I don't have to think about whether the stories or the settings are real or not. I mean, it doesn't need to be that serious, and I'm not a historian.

11. So have this show met your expectations?

To be honest, I haven't thought it represented in this interactive way...I was thrilled and excited. And definitely will recommend to my friends and relatives.

12. Anything upset you while you were in the show?

I think the first thing would be the scene change, which we had to run to catch up the next scene. That was kind of disappointing and effected the whole experience. The second thing was the potential safety issues...I mean it was so dark inside of the theatre...I knew there were securities around, but still, I was worried during the whole time. The last one would be the chaos and confusion in the earthquake scene as I mentioned earlier, and the sounds from the speaker were so loud that made me couldn't hear clearly!

Interviewee Yikai Guo

Date: 3/6/18

1. Where have you heard of the place, and what makes you come to visit?

While we are travelling to Xi'an to take a rest, and my local friend recommends this place to me. But I haven't know there is a live performance until I come. I was those big commercial advertising boards while we were driving here on the road.

2. Could you tell me your overall experience and impression of the show please?

It was really nice! And it was better than I had expected! It's my very first time to experience the interactive live performance, and I really like the way of interacting with the live actors! I thought it was a very unique experience! The director and the play writer are really good, I quite like the story...I think it's very accurate and authentic to the history.

3. What do you mean by accurate and authentic?

The feeling...I guess...especially in the earthquake scenario, I was so nervous only because it was so real! And when the monk burned himself, I thought it was the real fire when I first saw it. The lightning was so cool!

4. Besides that, what impress you the most in the show?

The visual effect and the interaction, you can literally see the actors standing next to you, my favourite parts were the plot two, three and four.

5. What do you think of the rebuilt underground palace in the last scene?

At first glance, I think it was magnificent! As we all know the original is not there anymore, but the thing is...the replicas need to be more accurate...I mean, they need add more details into it. When I watch them very closely through the glass, I can tell they are not the real piece...

6. Is there any other thing upset you during the show?

Overall I do enjoy it and like it a lot...but I think walking in 70 minutes are too long, I couldn't feel my legs when the show ended. And the background music are too loud, sometimes I couldn't hear what the actors clearly... And there was one scene, after the earthquake I guess, there were actors playing in different directions, I think that was a little bit confusing and hard to concentrate...But I still think the experience is very unique, and definite will recommend it to my friends and families!