

Application of Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Modelling to Measure Experience Economy of Tourists

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Abstract

Objective –The present study looked at the connections between dance festival travelers’ experiences, satisfaction, and behavioural intention on the basing of the model on experience economy by Pine and Gilmore and the existing literature. The research is on how escape tourist experience and tourist satisfaction mediated other aspects of experience on behavioral intention.

Methodology/Approach/Scope – The data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire administered to 221 respondents in Konark Temple, Odisha, the venue of Konark Dance Festival 2022 held between 19th February to 23rd February 2022. The study employed confirmatory factor analysis and structural modelling techniques to evaluate the dimensions and test the hypotheses.

Findings – The findings backed up the anticipated theoretical linkages between the dimensions, as well as the application of the scales of experience economy to dance festival. The findings further support the idea that the escapist experience plays a role in influencing the tourist’s evaluations of dance festival performance and behavioural desire to attend the same in the future.

Implications & Conclusion – This study attempts to provide an initial path to view the escape experience of tourists as a sense of tourism sector accomplishments and the destination’s performance as a dimension. The model proposed in the study seems to be beneficial to festival management. Hence, the organisers of the dance festival are invigorated to improve upon and authenticate the model proposed by the researchers transversely to other festival settings.

Keywords: *Experience Economy Model, Escapist Experience, Konark Dance Festival, Results & Discussion*



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1. Introduction

The phenomena of experience in tourism entail either visiting a festival or destination. Tourism research has a history of recognising the experience dimension of tourism activities (Quan & Wang, 2004; Uriely, 2005). The initial research on tourism included in-depth examinations of the visitor experience as well as normative concepts. The ultimate travel experience, according to Cohen (1979), is equivalent to a “religious experience”. It was described by MacCannell (1976) as a “longing for legitimacy”. It is also mentioned as a “search for meaning” (Meyersohn 1981) or a “search for values” (Przeclawski 1985). Although there are numerous definitions of experience with regard to tourists, there has been scant research on this subject.

In the tourism literature, empiric research generated from theory-embedded frameworks has recently arisen in the B & B settings (Oh, Fiore, Jeoung 2007) and conception and assessment of tourism experience in cruise industry (Hosany and Witham 2010). The experience economy of Pine and Gilmore (1999) was used in these researches. An experience can be described as four important dimensions that are entertainment, education, escape, and esthetics, according to Pine and Gilmore (1999).

Despite the fact that “escape” played a significant part in defining and summarising the experience of tourists (Iso-Ahola 1982), the escape experience was frequently linked with the gratification gained from tourism activities. As a result, it’s been overlooked when attempting to comprehend the behavioural choices of tourists. Tourist satisfaction acquired through tourist activities, on the other hand, is insufficient in identifying the actual experience of tourists, nor is it the ultimate aim of tourism (Iso-Ahola 1982). Although plenty of conceptual works have been done on the experience economy, empirical evidence on the captioned subject have been found to be limited. Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) work is found to be an exception to this rule, as it explicitly operationalizes the “experience economy” on education, entertainment, escape, and aesthetics. On the other hand, either there are few researches of generic nature or no significant work that studied the association between these dimensions of experience and other variables, with the exception of Minkyung Park et al., (2010)’s research on visitors to a Korean film festival.

As a result, this study tries to address this gap by investigating the above-mentioned assumptions in the tourism sector because it is an industry where consumers have traditionally valued experience. In a completely different tourism context, this research examines how different perspectives of experience impact tourists’ satisfaction and behavioural intention to return to the destination in the context of the World Heritage Site, Konark Temple, Odisha, where the Konark Dance Festival is held every year in February.



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In this regard, the researchers have come up with a hypothetical relationship model wherein “escape experience” is taken as the important construct that will predict tourist’s intention to revisit the dance festival. The findings of the study are likely to contribute to the domain of tourism literature with a specific focus on importance of “escape experience” as a critical determinant. From the practical implications, the results will enable the managers and key organisers of the destination to better understand how the tourist/visitor’s experience will decide their behavioral intention and design products that will encourage repeat visits and increase the event’s economic effect.

1.1 Konark Dance Festival Odisha

Even amid India’s many architectural masterpieces, the Sun Temple at Konark is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Konark Dance Celebration, an annual festival of classical dance and music, is held at the Sun Temple, a grandiose structure patterned after the Sun God’s chariot and drawn by seven magnificently carved horses. The festival takes place every year in February at the amphitheater in Konark, with the iconic Sun Temple as a backdrop. This year, it was observed from February 19th to February 23rd, 2022. As a troupe of renowned classical dancers performs, the sound of ghungroo bells, flute, and the pakhavaj fills the air. The splendour of this mediaeval temple attracts some of the country’s best dancers. It is staged with special lighting and set-up to change the Sun Temple, a religious monument, into an art temple and the surrounding milieu into a dream realm. The joyous mood of this week-long festival of Indian classical dance is enhanced by a great crafts Mela, which features a wide selection of handicrafts and delicious cuisine from different states.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Experience Economy & Dimensions of Experience

Pine II and Gilmore (1998) emphasized how the economies have evolved over a period of time since the era of agrarian economy to industrial to service economy. And, now the emergence of experience economy, which entails the personal experiences of individuals on their interpretation of events. Hence, there are challenges and opportunities for the tourism organisations to manage and control the customer’s emotions and experience.

The advent of the experience economy is not coincidental; it is a natural tendency (Zhang, 2010). Technology, more demanding consumers, and increased competition, according to Knutson and Beck (2004), in the experience economy, there are three converging factors. One of the main challenges for the service sector organisations

in rendering relevant and quality services to the customers (Hsieh, 2011), this is the important differentiating factor between customer experience and loyalty (Zomerdijk and Voss,2010). Several scholars have proposed the idea of ‘experience’, such as ‘tourist experience’, as a focal point of discussion in today’s tourism management studies (Tung and Ritchie, 2011).

Pine and Gilmore (1999) forecasted a paradigm shift in the economy. According to them, the shifting from delivery-based service economy to experience economy was imminent. They opined that offering quality products and services is not enough in today’s times. What matters the most to the customers is the unique experience of shopping which will make them revisit the place again and again. Dance festival attendees, for example, are more interested in immersing themselves in the event’s unique environment than in its physical aspects. In essence, what tourists and festival goers are looking for and consuming is an engaging experience that is complemented by products and services (Oh et al. 2007). According to (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), experience is about engaging people rather than delivering them a specific type of experience. Visitors might be engaged in an experience in a variety of ways, but they offer four categories of experiences: amusement, education, escape, and estheticism.

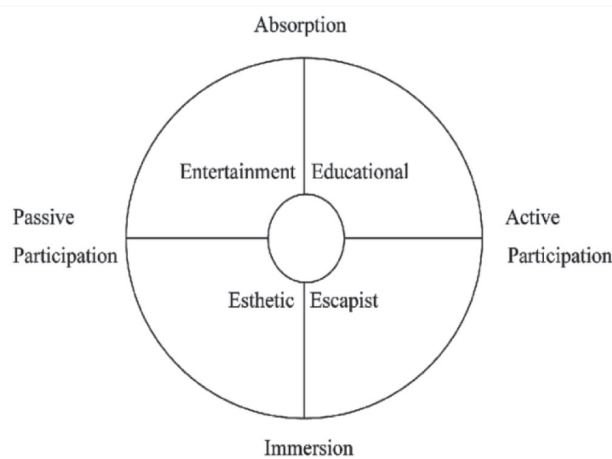
‘Entertainment’ dimension represents the participant’s inert absorption, for example, watching dance performances at a festival. The ‘esthetic’ is that dimension that also talks about the passive involvement of the visitors but with a deeper immersion, for example, a visit to the festival or the experience of watching beautiful scenery. ‘Education’ perspective is about the absorbed experience requiring active participation, such ski school, and diving. Finally, ‘escapism’ dimension is about the participant’s active involvement and the experiences thereof, such as rafting. To sum up, feeling is about the experience on entertainment, learning is about experience on education, presence is the experience about esthetic, and doing is all about escape experience (Mossberg, 2003).

Experiences gained by the visitors may cross the boundaries. But, if we talk about one particular event or destination, then it may involve on experience that is dominant out of the four experiences. However, it is the ‘sweet spot’ that encompasses the features of all the four experiences, which enriches all the experiences put together (Pine and Gilmore 1999). The fact of the matter is tourists or festival attendees travel for numerous reasons; hence, the destination is most likely to be impacted due to these factors, all at the same time (Crompton and McKay 1997). Therefore, tourists/visitors will feel multi-dimensional experiences at a destination at the the given point in time.



NMIMS
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Fig- 1, 4E Constructs of the Experience Economy



Source: The Four Dimensions of an Experience (Pine and Gilmore, 1999, p.30)

2.2 Escape Experience

Iso-Ahola (1982) defined tourism as “an escape-oriented activity where the escapist experience functions as an important feature in tourist’s overall experience”. It is indeed a dominant “push factor” that generates motivation amongst people for the need to travel, as per the studies on motivation in tourism (Dann, 1979; Crompton, 1979; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Ryan & Glendon, 1998). There is a mutually exclusive relationship between pull factors and escape motivation. This is in accordance with the researches on the pull & push factors and motivation researches on tourists (Uysal & Juroswski, 1994; Kim & Lee, 2002). According to these researches, individuals with a drive for escape i.e. the push factor, are drawn to destinations where the activities are limited, such as rural areas (Uysal & Juroswski, 1994). As a result, this research suggests that the escapist experience can be hard to come by at amusement parks and huge towns that hold to opposing characteristics.

As tourist experience is multidimensional, it fails to capture the quintessence of experience that individuals could gain at a given destination or festival (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), thus, leading to decreased level of interactions amongst offering by the destination and experiences of the tourists (Richards & Wilson, 2006), as well as its overall importance. Psychologically, individuals can submerge themselves in a different world altogether by their enjoyment of the ambiance and offerings at a dance festival (Pine and Gilmore 1999). In this regard, there is a psychological advantage as far as the escape experience is concerned in terms of significant engaging and absorbing atmosphere due to the fact that individuals’ experience on educative, entertaining, and esthetic factors at the festival (Oh et al., 2007). That means, dimensions such as education, entertainment

and esthetic are more likely to get influenced by product features and their offers at the festival, whereas, escape experience is the least likely to get satisfied by the attributes of destination. Moreover, it is more about the outcome of psychological influenced by experiences shared. As a matter of fact, tourists can have enjoyment on the basis of what is being offered by a destination. However, it is the destination's performance on the other facets of experience that will make the tourists satisfied.

2.3 Satisfaction of Tourist

Satisfaction is a vital part of tourism and can be one of the most widely discussed factors in the industry (Chiu et al., 2016; M Kozak, 2003; Salleh et al., 2014). According to (Prayag et al., 2017), tourism satisfaction is defined as “the difference between the understanding of the pre- and post-benefit of a product/service and is often measured by affective elements”. As a result, satisfaction of tourist is frequently defined as “a consumer's response to satisfaction or an assessment of how effectively a product meets a need” (Herle, 2019).

2.4 Intention to Revisit

According to several studies, individuals who revisit a particular destination are likely to spend more time involve in a host of activities due to a high level of satisfaction, necessitating fewer costs in terms of marketing than the first-timers (Hung et al., 2016; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010a). The want to revisit implies a proclivity or plan to return to the same location. Service providers are aware of the importance of revising tourist expectations as they very well understand the importance of retaining the customers (Rittichainuwat et al., 2002). According to Seetanah et al. (2020), a good reputation for a service provider boosts the ability of customers to return. In addition, the evaluation of earlier experience, modern attractions, and promotional resources explain the aim of revisiting (Atikahambar et al., 2019). The researchers projected that entertainment, education, and aesthetic encounter would significantly enhance the escape experience as well as satisfaction of tourists using their proposed hypothetical framework as it is believed that both the escape experience and satisfaction of tourists will have a beneficial impact on the likelihood of returning.

Based on this premise, the researchers have designed this relationship model for their study as it is quite often found that the push factors such as the needs and wants influence the escape experience and can be achieved on the basis of the performance of pull factors. Thus, on the basis of the relationships between the constructs, the following hypotheses have been formulated for the study:

H1: Education experience impacts satisfaction and escape experience at the dance festival.



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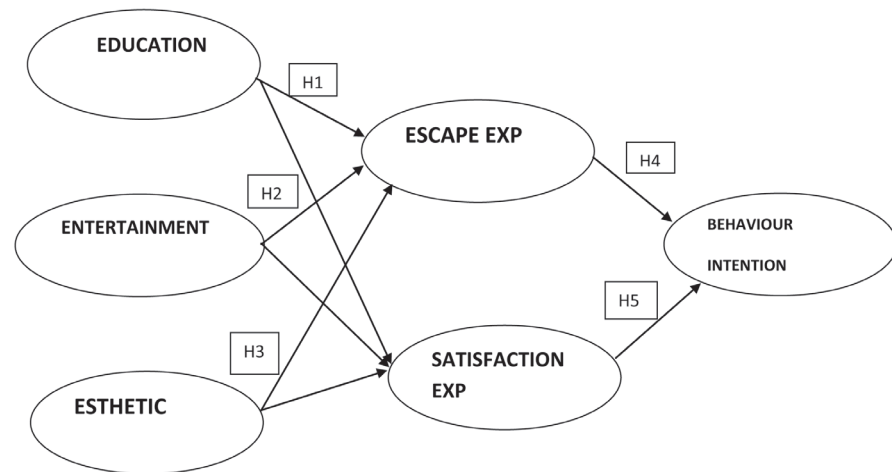
H2: Entertainment experience impacts satisfaction and escape experience at the dance festival.

H3: Esthetic experience impacts satisfaction and escape experience at the dance festival.

H4: Escape experience impacts the revisit intention.

H5: Satisfaction experience with the film festival impacts the revisit intention.

Figure- 2, Hypothetical Conceptual Framework



3 Research Methodology

3.1 Collection of Data

In order to collect the primary data, structured questionnaires were administered to respondents who visited the Konark Dance Festival 2022 at Sun Temple, Konark, Odisha. The period of data collection was from 19th February 2022 to 23rd February 2022. In order to collect secondary data, the information was taken by reviewing research articles, journals and publications, and other related websites on internet.

3.2 Sample Size, Sampling Technique & Procedure

This study incorporated ‘quantitative method’ for testing the hypotheses involving an ‘online -survey’. A total of 221 questionnaires were received out of which 300 responses that were considered to be valid were retained for data analysis. The respondents were domestic visitors only as there were a few foreign visitors at the dance festival. The collected data were analysed using IBM SPSS 23 & IBM SPSS

AMOS 23, and statistical tools such as Descriptive Analysis, Confirmatory Analysis, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were used to test the hypotheses.

3.3 Scale & Measurement

The Experience Dimensions viz education, entertainment, aesthetics, and escape were measured using Oh et al.'s (2007) experience economy scale that was founded on Pine and Gilmore's experience economy framework (1999). Similarly, the Tourist Satisfaction was measured on the basis of quality destination performance and adapted the instrument used by (Wang & Hsu, 2010). Besides Revisit Intention was measured on the basis of two aspects, namely willingness to recommend and intentions, and adapted the instrument used by (V. Kumar, Pozza, & Ganesh, 2013). A five-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was used to measure the items.

3.4 Data Analysis

This section deals with the Demographic Profiling of the Respondents, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Structural Modelling and Hypothesis Testing.

3.4.1 Demographic Profiling

Table- 1, Demographic Profiling of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Distribution	Percentage
Gender	Male	81	36.7
	Female	140	63.3
Age	Under 20 years	26	11.7
	20 to 30 years	133	60.1
	31- 40 years	42	19
	41 to 50 years	11	4.97
	Above 50 years	09	4.07
Education	Under Graduate	55	24.8
	Graduate	138	62.4
	Post Graduate	28	12.6
Previously Visited the Dance Festival	Yes	156	70.5
	No	65	29.4
Purpose of Visit	For Dance Festival	129	58.3
	For Dance Festival and Site Seeing	51	23
	For Sight Seeing	29	13.1



Table-1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were females (140) comprising 63.3 per cent of the sample. Similarly, 133 young females in the age group (22-30), accounted for 60.1 per cent. Further, the analysis revealed that 138 of them are Graduates making for 62.4 per cent of the total sample. 156 (70.5 %) had previously visited the dance festival, whereas 129 (58.3 %) accounted for the ones whose purpose was to attend the dance festival only.

3.4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Table- 2, Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Mean, SD, Factor Loadings, C.R, AVE & Cronbach's Alpha)

Items	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	C.R*	AVE**	Cronbach's α
Education						
This festival enhanced my knowledge about various dance forms	3.45	.80	.83	.89	.69	.89
I learned many new perspectives about dance	3.61	.79	.82			
The festival made me desirous to know about dance and art forms	3.81	.77	.90			
It was a good learning experience at the festival	3.78	.83	.81			
Entertainment						
I enjoyed observing other attendees enjoy the festival.	3.72	.88	.83	.86	.61	.83
I relished various performances and recreation at the festival	3.56	.79	.79			
I was happy to a part of the festival	3.66	.91	.76			
I was happy to participate in the festival along with the others	3.72	.75	.84			



Esthetics	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	C.R	AVE	Cronbach's α
The festival background was very harmoniously assembled	3.16	.93	.71	.88	.60	.88
My experiences related to the ambiance of the festival were good	3.44	.89	.74			
The festival setting was extravagant and scrupulous	3.39	.95	.73			
The destination of the festival was the highlight and a huge attraction in more ways than one.	3.45	.90	.76			
Escapism	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	C.R	AVE	Cronbach's α
I was totally engrossed with the environment of the festival	3.10	1.01	.72	.87	.71	.89
I felt my presence and experience were enriched by the uniqueness of the festival	3.11	1.04	.73			
I realized the difference in me as a person at the festival	3.01	1.11	.70			
I felt as if being in a different world altogether in this festival.	3.02	1.13	.71			



Overall Satisfaction	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	C.R	AVE	Cronbach's α
I am satisfied with the potentiality of the festival and its scope for further development	4.10	.78	.89	.81	.59	.81
I am satisfied with the organization and management of this festival	3.89	.74	.86			
I feel that this festival has a long way to go and should be continued into the future	4.20	.87	.92			
I am content with the overall hospitality extended and the experience gained at the festival	4.11	.88	.89			
Intention to Revisit	Mean	SD	Factor Loadings	C.R	AVE	Cronbach's α
I will revisit this festival next year	4.22	.85	.87	.88	.74	.89
This festival is worth visiting again	4.08	.81	.88			
I will revisit this festival because of its rich cultural heritage and importance	4.11	.95	.91			
I will strongly suggest others to visit this festival	4.13	.92	.90			



Note: **AVE-Average Variance Extracted, AVE is calculated as $\sum SMC / (\sum SMC + \sum \text{standard measurement error})$, C.R* - Construct Reliability

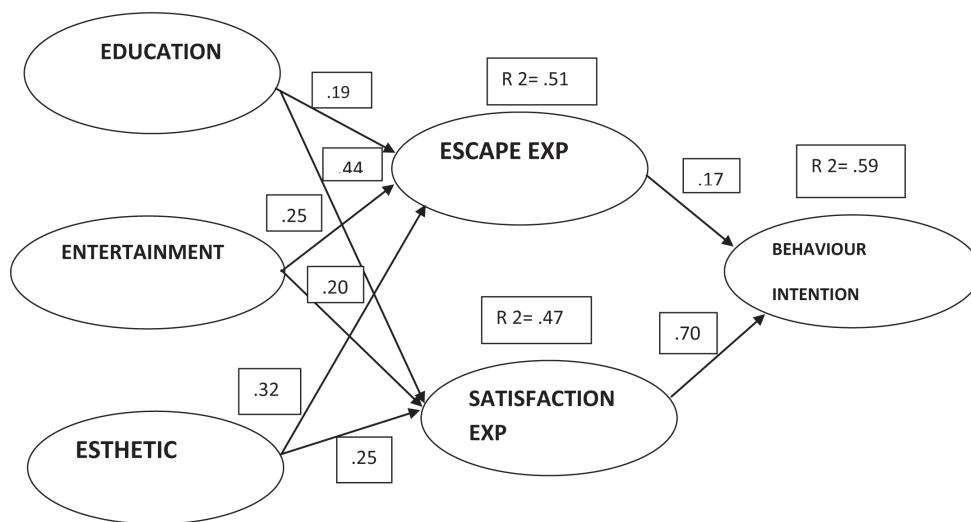
The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was carried out on the given data to reassure the veracity of the dimensions. Table-2 represents the items and their descriptive statistics. The calculated figures: [χ^2 (d.f. = 182) = 446.76, CFI = .98, NNFI = .98, and RMSEA = .059], shows that the model fit is good (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The

construct reliability of Satisfaction variable is .81; the average amount of variance extracted is .59 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The factor loadings were all significant, $p < .05$, and the values ranging between .70 to .92, supporting the convergent validity of the model (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Cronbach's alphas of all items were all satisfactory, i.e., a minimum of .70 (Nunnally, 1978). None of the inter-construct correlations at 95 percent confidence intervals included the value of unity, and none of the squared inter-construct correlations exceeded the amount of variance extracted for each construct. The discriminant validity of the constructs was demonstrated by these findings (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). All of these findings together showed good measurement integrity, allowing the hypothetical correlations to be examined using Structural Modeling.

3.4.3 Structural Modelling

The analysis revealed that the structural model for the data is well fit, resulting in χ^2 (d.f. = 184) = 456.33, CFI = .98; NNFI = .98, and RMSEA = .061. As per the results, all relationships in the structural model were positive and significant ($p < .05$). While the tourist's satisfaction experience influenced his or her behavioural intention (revisit) significantly more than the escape experience, the latter's effect was also favourable to future intention. The escape and satisfaction experiences together accounted for 59 per cent of behavioural intention. Both the escape experience and tourist satisfaction were positively influenced by the three experience components. They explained 51 percent of the variation in the escapist experience and 47 per cent of the variation in tourist satisfaction.

Fig-3, Structural Model Results



3.4.4 Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the hypotheses taken under the study, a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted. The estimates of standardized coefficients revealed that Education experience does impact Satisfaction and Escapist experience at the dance festival where ($\beta = .19$, $t = 2.634$, $P < .05$) & ($\beta = .44$, $t = -5.313$, $P < .05$) respectively, supporting Hypothesis- 1. Similarly, the estimates of standardized coefficients revealed that Entertainment experience impacted significantly the Satisfaction and Escapist experience at the dance festival where ($\beta = .25$, $t = 2.322$, $P < .05$) & ($\beta = .20$, $t = 2.528$, $P < .05$) respectively, supporting Hypothesis- 2. The findings showed that, Esthetic experience influenced Satisfaction and Escapist experience at the dance festival where ($\beta = .32$, $t = 3.411$, $P < .05$) & ($\beta = .25$, $t = 2.677$, $P < .05$) respectively, supporting Hypothesis- 3. Further, the analysis suggested that Escape experience significantly and positively impacted the revisit intention of the tourist at the dance festival where ($\beta = .17$, $t = 2.215$, $P < .05$), supporting Hypothesis- 4. Finally, result confirmed that Satisfaction experience with the dance festival high significant and positive impact on the revisit intention of the tourists where ($\beta = .70$, $t = 6.589$, $P < .05$), supporting Hypothesis- 4.

4. Discussion & Implication

It was found from the study that Pine and Gilmore's dimensions of experience, viz. education, entertainment, escape, and esthetic, were valid and reliable in examining the experience of the tourist in the case of Konark Dance Festival Odisha. This evidence from the present study suggests that economic experience dimensions can be applied in the management of dance festivals and other related forms of activities. All the dimensions of experience of the proposed hypothetical framework were positive and significant in relation to tourists' experience and each dimension impacted on escape and satisfaction experience. Both the escape and satisfaction experience influenced the behavioral intention of tourists' positively and significantly. This indicates that the Konark Dance Festival may act a destination for the tourists to achieve satisfaction as well as to experience an escape from their mundane activities.

This finding suggests that tourist experiences are dynamically intertwined with the location's offerings, rather than being pre-planned by certain destination characteristics. As a result, tourist locations or attractions, including festivals, should diversify their services in order to provide a multi-faceted tourist experience. Finally, the escapist experience was found to play a moderating effect in the tourist's participation in a dance festival in this study. While the presented model looks to be effective for festival management, festival organisers are invited to further enhance and validate the model proposed by the researchers in a variety of festival scenarios.



As in any other research, the present study also has a few limitations that should be addressed in future research.

In the present study, experience constructs were used to validate the proposed hypothetical model. Cross-cultural comparisons may be the focus of future research. The creation of improved marketing tactics for luring international tourists might benefit from the cross-cultural awareness of dance festival-goers.

The role of escape experience on the part of tourists in this study may be replicated in different contexts of tourism. An in-depth understanding of escape experience will not only broaden the horizon as far as its applications are concerned on the part of destination as well as destination managements but also expand the theoretical discourse on tourist experience.

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NMIMS
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ISSN: 0971-1023
Volume XXX
Issue-2 | April 2022

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