

## **The Visitor Experience in Muslim Fair: The case from Muslim Fashion Festival (Muffest+) 2022 in Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

Jakarta is one of the priority destinations as a business event developed by the government, especially in the exhibition sector, which has increased both in terms of the number and quality of exhibitions, being one of the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism industry. For a good-quality event, it is necessary to create an experience from the visitor's side. This study analyzed the visitor experience at the Muslim Fashion Festival in 2022. The qualitative descriptive method was used as a research method with a theoretical-descriptive analysis approach that emphasizes the analysis of numerical data, which was then processed with statistical methods through a questionnaire survey given to visitors and distributed during the event. The findings indicate that all aspects—program, service, self-experience, and accessibility—are packaged attractively to provide a good experience for visitors. It also highlighted visitor priority in selecting programs and services as an essential point in the event experience. This proves that event programs and services significantly impact visitors, giving them an exciting experience and making purchase decisions on these products for visitors. However, the overall statement regarding self-experience and accessibility is that visitors are allowed to engage and interact with the events, and there is good transportation coverage to the event location, providing a memorable experience.

Keywords: Exhibition, Fair, Muslim Fair, Muffest+, Visitor Experience

**Kata Kunci:** Muffest+, Visitor Experience, Exhibitions,

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### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Business tourism is all travel related to a traveler's work or business interests, where the main reason for the business trip is to attend business events like MICE in the destinations. MICE's activity displays a product and is often known as an exhibition. Exhibitions can be related to trade from specific industries where all visitors work in related industries that are being exhibited, or exhibitions can be open to the public so that everyone can attend these exhibitions (Mair, 2009). Interestingly, exhibition activities can be combined with entertainment programs to provide various activities. Pudjiastuti (2013) states that diverse entertainment or games can be presented simultaneously in a fair event. Even fairs and festivals are often held together to support each other.

The exhibition sector began to show positive growth charts in several countries, including Indonesia. Based on the survey results conducted by the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI), the reality of the growth of the exhibition sector in Indonesia is better than in other countries in the Southeast Asian region. Jakarta is one of the seven priority cities for organizing conferences and exhibitions ([venuemagz.com](http://venuemagz.com), 2019). Some of the exhibitions held in Jakarta are the International Auto Show, the Astindo Travel Fair, the Jakarta Fair, etc. This study focuses on the Muslim Fashion Festival 2022, which combines a fair and a festival because the event has several entertainment activities that visitors can enjoy, including a fashion show, competition, and talk show. Exhibitions and the halal business have examined unique events focused on halal food and beverages, halal tourism, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals (Zunan et al., 2022). Muslim Fashion Festival is hosting the first Muslim fashion event in Indonesia and will serve as a Muslim fashion center in the world in the future (Charisma, 2021). Based on

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the data obtained at the Muslim Fashion Festival in 2019-2021, the transaction value and the number of visitors are as follows:

Table 1  
Transaction Value and Number of Visitors Muslim Fashion Festival in 2019-2021

<b>Years</b>	<b>Transaction Value</b>	<b>Number of Visitors</b>
2019	Rp 40,3 billion	51.917
2020	Rp 43,7 billion	54.671
2021	Rp 6,5 billion	51.000

Source: Muslim Fashion Festival, 2021

The above table shows the last three (3) years; the number of visitors did not drop significantly in 2021 during the period of COVID. Furthermore, it concluded that the event had good visitor interest, though the transaction value dropped significantly.

In the previous MUFFEST event, most of the visitors attended because of exhibition activities, fashion shows, and seeing their favorite designer (Raenita, 2022), and they just gathered with the community. Every year the event has a different concept, and it has been seven years since the event was held to make visitors attend to find the diversity of exciting events. It makes visitors who attend feel an experience based on the concept of the event and the interaction between visitors who attend the event. The experience visitors receive will also vary and be different from that of other visitors. O'Neill, Getz, & Carlsen (1999) suggest that looking at the event experience from the perspective of visitors is of utmost importance and not seen by the event organizer; most importantly, the purpose of the visitor experience is to create a pleasant personal experience (Edvardsson, 2005). In producing a successful and quality event, looking at the aspects of the experience visitors feel is necessary. Combining the visitor experience is a service implementation to add to the personal experience, considering the satisfaction of the decision to revisit and recommend it (Ko, 2000). Three dimensions can determine the visitor experience at an event, including: (1) programs and services are activities that are formalized to achieve goals; and (2) several characteristics can support someone in identifying an activity to become a program in the form of the contents of the event, the facilities available at the location, and the committee participating in the activity. So is the case with services that play an essential role in an event, which can be interpreted as a customer's assessment of the whole of a service. (2) self-experience as a visitor experience that is felt for oneself, and (3) interactions between visitors and event performers. Accessibility is a form of convenience or ease of location for land use in interacting with each other, and the ease or difficulty of these locations can be reached through transportation to the venue for the event. Fu (2019) states exhibition authorities should also understand the importance of on-site experience and the formation of exhibition identity. Oh et al. (2007) mentioned that the event experience from the visitor's point of view is seen as enjoyable, exciting, and unforgettable.

Based on the previous study, Hixson (2013) analyzed young people's experiences of the Adelaide Fringe Festival, particularly from the spectator point of view. The research found that young spectators relied on the opinions and experiences of friends and family to make decisions on which elements of the event to attend. Cardoso et al. (2014) used visitor surveys to assess the experience of the Santarém Gastronomy Festival in Portugal, finding a high correlation between experience outcomes and behavioral intentions.

The conditions described in the above explanation become the background for focusing the research on the visitor experience, which is one of the main indicators of an event's success. The results of this study aim to improve service improvisation to visitors for event organizers to stretch the implementation of event activities better and Halal events become an important platform to educate visitors about various aspects of the halal lifestyle, from food and beverage products to cosmetics and tourism. Visitors can learn about the various halal options available, get information, and become a gathering place so that visitors can get experience in one place. With their various

positive impacts, halal events have an essential role in supporting the development of Muslims in Indonesia.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

Qualitative research was conducted using a descriptive, theoretical approach to test hypotheses in descriptive analysis through sum and mean with Microsoft Excel tools—descriptive statistics intended to find the proportion and frequency of the characteristics of the research subjects. Then, in this study, the researchers also used a survey approach to collect data from informants. Gumilar (2013) states that the survey method can make research more accessible because, through the technique, research data originating from survey questions can be revealed factually and in detail so that it can describe existing phenomena. In another opinion, Sugiyono (2009) explains that the survey method used to obtain natural data using questionnaires, structured interviews, etc. There are seven steps in a survey (Singarimbun, 2011), including: 1. formulating the research problem and determining the survey objectives; 2. determining concepts and hypotheses and exploring the literature; 3. Taking samples; 4. creating questionnaires; 5. reviewing the field; 6. data processing; 7. analysis and reports.

Data collection methods to support the data analysis process using the research stages carried out are: (1) research preparation stage, namely by conducting a desk study and preparing research instruments. (2) Survey using a case study approach with event visitors; (3) Tabulation of survey results data; (4) Data analysis using a descriptive analysis approach; (5) Make a report on the results of an analysis of the motivation and experience of visitors at the Muslim fashion festival event. Sampling was conducted using a nonprobability sampling technique, namely accidental sampling, where the subjects met the criteria for the research objectives and obtained 25 visitors. This research was also strengthened by bringing informants from the event organizer (Kinarya Organizer), namely the main director and the floor director of MUFFEST+, and other respondents from the Indonesia Halal Lifestyle Center (IHLC) through the Deputy Director.

## **C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

### **Overview of Muslim Fashion Festival (MUFFEST)**

Muslim Fashion Festival is an event initiated by the Indonesia Fashion Chamber (IFC) association that has been running since 2015. The events are being held again with a different concept from the previous few years, namely MUFFEST+ 2022, which comes with a broader theme: Muslim Fashion and Muslim Lifestyle. Kinarya Cipta Kreasi is an event organizer collaborating with IFC, the Indonesian fashion industry association. Mr. Windu, as Director of Kinarya, said that. "We created the theme to prioritize collaboration from three halal industry sectors: Muslim fashion, culinary and tourism. So it's not just fashion that's promoted, but other sectors are also developing it.

The event was organized to coincide with the Muslim moment during the fasting month on April 21–23, 2022, in an attractive way at the Grand Ballroom of the Ritz Carlton. This is an attraction for Muslims who want to attend the event. Every year's unique aspect is that MUFFEST offers exhibitions and a fashion program that is packaged into fashion shows, talk shows, and fashion parades. The difference this year is that the runway area is up to 30 meters, so the splendor of the fashion show area is a unique attraction for visitors.

Various tenants in the exhibition who attended came from the Muslim community, the Muslim industry, and even the government sector, who worked together as exhibitors and supported other supporting activities to make the event a success. This year's event has an entrance ticket fee of IDR 30,000. Participants can enjoy various activities offered at this event. Apart from holding the event as a center for Muslim business inspiration, this event has become one of Indonesia's Muslim fashion shopping tourist destinations (Lisa, 2022).

## Characteristic of Respondents

To find out visitor's experiences at the events, the researchers collected data by distributing questionnaires to 25 visitors who attended the events during 3 months with details:

Table 2. Characteristic of visitor

Characteristic	No. of Survey Respondents
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	28%
Female	72%
<b>Age</b>	
<20 years	20%
21-30 years	68%
31-40 years	12%
<b>Occupation</b>	
Students	72%
Employees	28%
<b>Region</b>	
Bandung	16%
Bogor	20%
Jadetabek (Jakarta, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi)	64%
<b>Frequency of visit</b>	
1 time	96%
2-3 times	4%

Source: Authors, 2022

Based on the research results in Table 2, gender characteristics concluded that visitors who visit the events are dominated by female visitors because, in general, women are more dominant in love fashion than men in attending exhibitions. Most visitors to Muffest+ are dominated by the productive age group, namely the age group of 21 to 30 years, because young people's interest in fashion is love. Students dominate the occupation of visitors who attend the events. Because students more often do activities outside their daily lives to relieve boredom, visiting exhibitions can also be used as a tourist activity, especially shopping tourism. The region's characteristic is that most MUFFEST+ visitors are from Jabodetabek (64%), because the event location is in Jakarta. The last of the characteristics of frequency of visit concluded that the majority of those visiting the events are first-time visitors, 96%; because the conditions for stages of the event have just been held offline after the pandemic, the visitor can feel the euphoria of attending in person this year.

### Visitor Experience at Muslim Fair (Muslim Fashion Festival)

#### Program and Service

The program is an essential element that must be present at an event. An event program is a method that is formalized to achieve a goal. Apart from that, service also plays a vital role in an event. Event service quality is the overall assessment and attitude towards the value or experience of an event attribute (Chen et al., 2021). Therefore, service quality can be interpreted as how far the difference is between clients' expectations for the service they receive. According to Jeong et al. (2019), event service quality leads to behavioral intentions and needs to be strengthened to encourage tourists to return to the same event.

**Program and Service**

<b>Mean</b>	39,4
<b>Standard Error</b>	1,161895004
<b>Median</b>	38
<b>Mode</b>	36
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	5,809475019
<b>Sample Variance</b>	33,75
<b>Kurtosis</b>	0,60490162
<b>Skewness</b>	-
<b>Range</b>	0,197633718
<b>Range</b>	24
<b>Minimum</b>	24
<b>Maximum</b>	48
<b>Sum</b>	985
<b>Count</b>	25

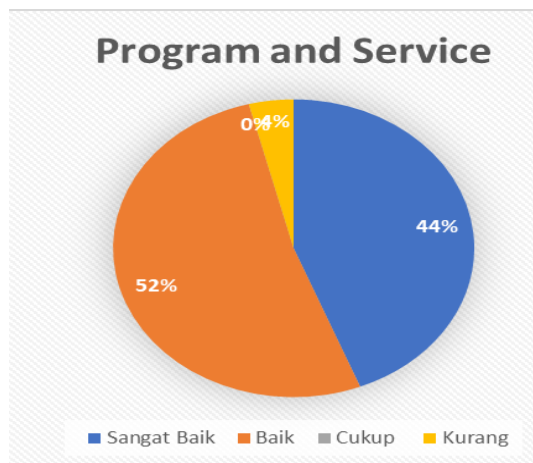


Figure 1. Statistical Data and Distribution of Visitors Program and Service in MUFFEST+

As seen from Figure 2, the statistical data on the findings in Program and Service shows that the mean result is 39.4 with a standard deviation of 5.8, meaning that the data varies because the standard deviation value is greater than the mean. The standard error results are also smaller than the standard deviation of 1.16. This proves that the sub-variables in the excitement variable are feasible after being tested. The results showed that 44% strongly agree, 52% agree, and 4% disagree.

Organizing events is always related to programs offered to visitors as an attraction for visits. MUFFEST+ has a series of events in 2022, including fashion shows, trade expos, conferences, international programs, and fashion competitions. MUFFEST+ 2022 was attended by 100 designers at fashion shows, 200 brands, and several public figures involved in the Muslim fashion industry. This is what makes MUFFEST different from previous years, one of which is carrying the theme "Muslim Fashion, Muslim Lifestyle" and inviting actors and consumers to take responsibility through a sustainable concept. Goldblatt (2008) explains that in producing the experiential elements of an event, it must be designed starting from the concept of the event, including the program, and all the aspects of the event until, finally, it can produce an experience that can be accepted by visitors when involved in the activities of the event. The survey showed that 52% strongly agreed regarding the program to organize the event. An exciting program will provide visitors with great enthusiasm to provide a visitor experience. Director Kinarya, as head of the MUFFEST+ organizers, said that:

"When organizing MUFFEST+, we researched the organization of the event in previous years and found ideas related to suitability, for example, presenting a sarong campaign at the event. The sarong is used as the identity of Muslims in Indonesia, creating the proposed theme. We even showed something different in building a runway in the form of paving blocks. This iconic runway immediately became the centre of attention of visitors."

Based on data from event organizers, there was an increase of 5000-10,000/day during the event. This proves that the MUFFEST programs and services offered to visitors provide an exciting experience and can help visitors make purchasing decisions on these products.

### Self-Experience

Self-experience is a form where there is interaction with the people around them. Attending or taking part in an event is one form of meeting with new people who share a common interest in something (Ko, 2000)

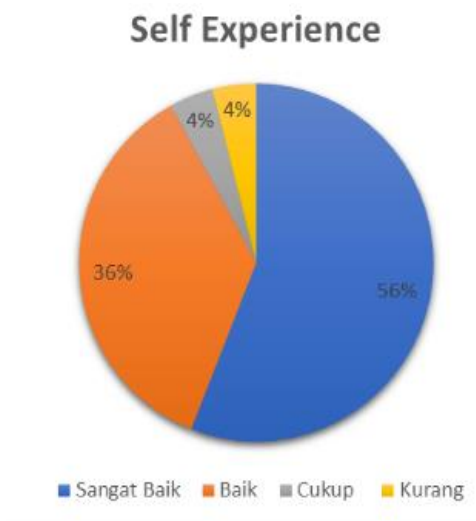


Figure 2. Statistical Data and Distribution of Visitors Self Experience in MUFFEST+

As seen from Figure 2, the statistical data on the findings of self-experience shows that the mean result is 13.4 with a standard deviation of 2.1, meaning that the data varies because the standard deviation value is greater than the mean. The standard error results are also smaller than the standard deviation of 0.4. This proves that the sub-variables in the excitement variable are feasible after being tested. The results showed that 56% strongly agree, 36% agree, 4% are fair, and 4% disagree.

The visitor experience provides an unforgettable moment; this is the finding in this study that the organizers of the MUFFEST Event give an opportunity for visitors to get an emotional, unique, positive, and memorable experience, as well as touch hearts and feelings, so they want to use the products and services offered. Visitors can engage, interact, and experience naturally with public figures present as Muslim fashion muses at the event to strengthen strong customer loyalty to products and services. The presence of public figures and well-known figures is sufficient to provide an experience for visitors; for example, Atalia Praratya (the West Java Governor's wife), Olla Ramlan, Natasha Rizki, Revalia S. Temat, and others are used as an agenda for visitors to attend the runway event.

It was confirmed by the Director of Kinarya as the organizer of the MUFFEST+ event, stating that:

"Every day, there is an increase in visitors; one of the reasons is that visitors want to attend runway events for public figures. The enthusiasm of these visitors is so

<i>Self Experience</i>	
Mean	13,4
Standard Error	0,42031734
Median	13
Mode	12
Standard Deviation	2,101586702
Sample Variance	4,416666667
Kurtosis	0,018320559
Skewness	0,316179713
Range	8
Minimum	8
Maximum	16
Sum	335
Count	25

impressive that we need to tighten the runway area so that the event remains conducive to the smooth running of the event."

The survey results showed that 56% strongly agreed that the happy feelings of visitors at the MUFFEST event also influenced their personal experience. Visitors experience this feeling of joy; for example, interactions with staff and other visitors have a significant impact. The same thing was said in previous research by Oh et al. (2007), who stated that the event experience from the visitor's point of view is seen as a fun, exciting, and unforgettable moment. Different opinions from visitors show that 36% to 4% agree and disagree with the self-experience indicator. This indicates that feelings of happiness only appear in a few series of events, and other visitors have not shown enthusiasm; they are not happy. One of the factors that has yet to be researched is a finding in this research. The survey results showed that 56% strongly agreed that the happy feelings of visitors at the MUFFEST event also influenced their personal experience. Visitors experience this feeling of joy; for example, interactions with staff and other visitors have a significant impact. The same thing was said in previous research by Oh et al. (2007), who stated that the event experience from the visitor's point of view is seen as a fun, exciting, and unforgettable moment. Different opinions from visitors show that 36% to 4% agree and disagree with the self-experience indicator. This indicates that feelings of happiness only appear in a few series of events, and other visitors have not shown enthusiasm; they are not happy. One of the factors that has yet to be researched is a finding in this research.

**Accessibility**

A form of comfort or ease of location in interacting with each other, and whether the location is easy or difficult to reach via transportation. Accessibility is a form of convenience that includes time, costs, and effort in carrying out movements between places or areas of a system. According to Yuniati (2022), accessibility is the factor that influences visitors' decisions to attend an event. Likewise, Nadkarni and Wai (2007) stated that the critical aspects considered by potential visitors when taking part in an event are the need for facilities and accommodation, affordable costs, entertainment and recreation, supporting infrastructure, and accessibility.

<b>Accesibility</b>	
Mean	13,48
Standard Error	0,404639757
Median	13
Mode	12
Standard Deviation	2,023198787
Sample Variance	4,093333333
Kurtosis	0,444233124
Skewness	-0,49344431
Range	8
Minimum	8
Maximum	16
Sum	337
Count	25

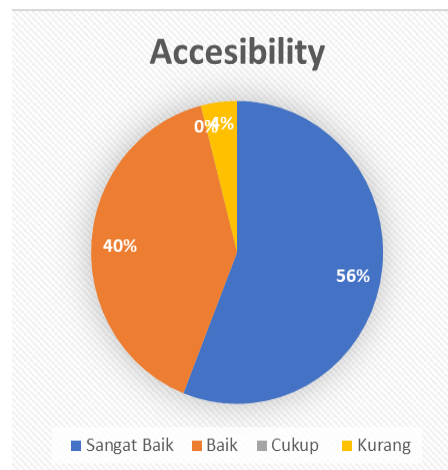


Figure 3. Statistical Data and Distribution of Visitor Accessibility in MUFFEST+

As seen from Figure 3, the statistical data on the findings on accessibility shows that the mean result is 13.48 with a standard deviation of 2.02, meaning that the data varies because the standard deviation value is greater than the mean. The standard error results are also smaller than the standard deviation of 0.4. This proves that the sub-variables in the accessibility variable are

feasible after being tested. The results showed that 56% strongly agree, 40% agree, and 4% disagree.

Access to the venue can be reached by public transportation such as Trans Jakarta, MRT, Commuter line, and Online Ojek Applications to private vehicles as well as the convenience of a location where the distance to/to the airport can be traversed via the freeway (toll access). Located in the city center at the Grand Ballroom of The Ritz Carlton Pacific Place Hotel Jakarta makes it easy for visitors who attend. The visitor survey results showed that 56% strongly agreed with the easy accessibility of the event. The Director of Kinarya also conveyed as the event organizer states that:

"Indeed, the location that organizes the event chosen must have easy accessibility. Selecting the Ritz Carlton requires much consideration because we previously had an agreement with another venue. After all, this year's event was held in a pandemic era where health protocols were the main consideration that had to be implemented by the event organizers. Efforts to change the event venue must also meet the CHSE standards issued by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. Therefore, the hotel is the right choice for us to continue holding MUFFEST+ in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Muffest+ was held during the holy month of Ramadhan. It was also the result of a survey conducted by researchers that 40% - 4% agreed or disagreed with the accessibility indicator. For the implementation period for visitors who are resellers of certain products, it is not appropriate to hold it during the holy month of Ramadan because they consider that it should be done 4-3 months before the month of Ramadan so that they can resell it offline and online. There is no problem with the implementation period for visitors because they, as buyers, can immediately use the products/services offered.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

MUFFEST+ 2022 has various events: fashion shows, fairs, talk shows, international programs, and competitions. The event was attended by 100 designers at fashion shows, 200 brands, and several public figures involved in the Muslim fashion industry. These programs are packaged to attract and provide high enthusiasm for visitors to provide a visitor experience. The MUFFEST+ event saw an increase in visitors during the event. Also, the experience was gained from the service felt by visitors because of the readiness of the organizers to be fast and responsive in serving and handling visitor complaints. The information provided is apparent through the floor plan and direct information from the organizers. The visitor experience provides an unforgettable moment. The accessibility of the event is very strategic because it can be reached by both private and public transportation. Also, the location of the event is near the city center. It shows that what is a priority for visitors in getting experience are programs and services because it is proven to be an exciting experience and can provide purchasing decisions on these products for visitors.

The limitation of this research is the potential to enhance the strength of our findings by incorporating a larger number of informants. This would allow us to view the findings from various visitor perspectives, thereby enriching the depth and breadth of our research. Secondly, we propose making comparisons with several other Muslim events in Indonesia. The findings of this research have various recommendations for practitioners. One such recommendation is to foster collaboration with the Muslim fashion industry from abroad. This could significantly boost the presence of the MUFFEST+ event at the ASEAN and ASIA levels, opening up new opportunities and markets. When determining the location for holding the event, a more expansive venue can be considered due to the enthusiasm of visitors who want to come, thereby accommodating more visitors. The recommendations for further research can be carried out in a quantitative manner and can be compared with similar events.



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