

# FESTIVAL AS AN AGENT FOR BEHAVIOR CHANGE: A STUDY OF GARDEN FESTIVAL IN MALAYSIA

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## ABSTRACT

*A number of studies have been conducted to examine tourists' behavior. However, there has been little research conducted to study on visitors' behavior in the garden festival. Today, festival is the one of the fastest growing in tourism industries in Malaysia. Festival as a vehicles for behavior change who visit them. This paper examines visitors' involvement at the festival and provides an integrated approach to understand the effect of the visitors behavior based on the perceived value and satisfaction as relates to their behavior intention to revisit and construct own garden using the modified theory of reasoned action (TRA). The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of perceived value on intention to revisit and construct own garden, satisfaction, and satisfaction on intention to revisit and construct own garden. Results indicated that the perceived value of garden showcase at garden festival are good predictors of visitors behavior change. Thus, the most significant contribution of this study is a theoretical understanding with empirical results using the new factors of perceived value of garden festival, satisfaction and behavior intention to revisit and construct own garden in the contact of the modified TRA. This will be useful for garden festival organizers as well as marketing organization*

*Keywords: garden festival, satisfaction, behaviour change, TRA*

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Festivals, exhibition and conferences on gardens and environmental products have become an important products in Malaysia. These events are crucial not only to generate income to our economic sector and local communities, but also to be a platform to seek knowledge and building professional networking. For example, the local government of Putrajaya Cooperation embarked into this opportunity by creating their own brand festival known as Royal FloriaPutrajaya Flower and Garden Festival. This event was conducted since 2007. Royal FloriaPutrajaya is one of the milestone for Putrajaya to be a garden city by 2020. Royal FloriaPutrajayaprovides a platform to extend knowledge and educate public environmental design awareness through varieties and attractive garden showcase. The showcases ranges from commercial products in horticulture and landscaping industry, garden displays, demonstrations by garden designers and flower shows from exponents.

Research by MASTIC (2004) and IKIM (2004) inform that there were lack of environmental awareness among Malaysian communities. Study by Jamilah (2012) [1] shows that the community has quite a sufficient of general knowledge on environment is high, but still low in detail aspect of environmental knowledge and reaction to action. The how effective of garden festival in educating publics environmental design awareness. Malaysia in general, also has insufficient information on how much visitors and participants who participated and engaged themselves with the showcases will benefit them in terms of education, knowledge as well as behavioral intention and awareness. Nor Atiah Ismail (2015) [8] in her research informs a close relationship between the Malaysian communities with their house gardens. The communities however, are still lacking on the knowledge and information of the best garden practices.



Photo 1: Shows an example of garden showcase by selected secondary and primary school



Photo 2: Exemplifies garden showcase by the corporate entity

The importance of FLORIA is highly recognized until a decision was made by the higher authority to dedicate a special location particularly for this event. Currently, FLORIA showcase area is located at Precinct 4, stretching on 11.7 hectare of land adjacent to the mainstream of Putrajaya lakes and gardens. The FLORIA garden showcase is the main attraction with multi variety of display of outdoor gardens design from the government, corporate, private, universities and schools who participated every year during the showcase events.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Relevant method has been adopted to measure people's perception towards garden showcase in which, benefitted public and community in terms of knowledge and an environmental design awareness while helping community to increase their behavioral awareness. In this study, a total of 20 items in the questionnaire had been deliberated by the research committee, representing various aspects of benefit garden festival in educate public awareness. A total of 428 questionnaires were collected from the visitors during the garden festival that was held 30 Mei – 7 June 2015. The data is analyzed using Initial Theoretical Model of Perceived Value, Satisfaction, and Behavior to examine the construct in order to find correlation between variables. A new proposed model of this study is developed using an empirical equation model (SEM).

These method have been adopted in previous research in marketing perceived value informs that there had been a significant predictor of customer satisfaction and behavior intention in tourism (Cronin et al., 2000)(2). Another example is by Ravald and Gronroos (1996) (3) suggest the value is important construct of relationship in marketing and become most successful in determinat customer satisfaction and royalty.

Most of the researcher develop conceptual model based on the initial theoretical approach. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) [4] in their research adopted this method to test their relationship. The result indicated value has strong and there are significant effects on satisfaction, which in turn affect behavior intention such as worth-of-mouth and intention of purchase.

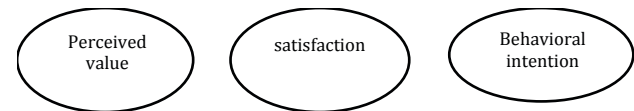


Figure 1: The initial construct by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975)

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of participant's profile

Categories	Sub-categories	No. of Participants	Percentage
Resident	Resident	67	15.7
	Non-Resident	361	84.3
How do you know about Floria	Internet	157	36.7
	Newspaper/Magazine/Brochure	65	15.2
	TV/Radio	56	13.1
	Friends/Relative	150	35
Gender	Male	168	39.3
	Female	260	60.7
Age	18-24	172	40.2
	25-34	136	31.8
	35-44	60	14
	45-54	45	10.5
	55 and above	15	3.5
Marital	Single	234	54.7
	Married	180	42.1
	Widowed	14	3.3
Income	RM1000 below	170	39.7
	RM1001-1999	66	15.4
	RM2000-3999	103	24.1
	RM 4000 above	89	20.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>428</b>	<b>100</b>

#### i) Profile of respondent

The results of descriptive analysis for demographic information derived from the following. (N = 428), (39.3%) of the respondent is male and (60.7%) female. (42.1%) is married and (54.7%) comprises of unmarried respondent. In terms of age group, (40.2%) is 18-24 years old followed by 25-34 years old (31.8%), 35-44 years old (14%), 45-54 years old (10.5%), and 55 years old and above (3.5%). Most of the respondents below 24 years old categorized themselves at lower annual income level (39.7%) and considered themselves as young and graduate student. Community with middle annual income level (24.1%) takes more than half 361 (84.3%). The majority of them are non-resident of Putrajaya. This situation provides an indication that the information on FLORIA is widely spread. Data informs that most of them using internet 157 (36.7%) as a media to get information of FLORIA.

#### ii) Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS Graphic is applied to establish reliability and validity of multi-item measurement. First, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to analyze the internal consistency of the construct and its reliability. The recommended minimum Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability of 0.70 (Nunnally 1978) [5] is used to test the reliabilities of each factor. The reliability test is satisfied as the reliability varied from 0.77 (perceived value) to 0.91 (satisfaction). The results indicated that CFA is excellent. The result of construct composite reliability (CR) (0.76 for Perceived value and 0.89 for satisfaction) and average variance extracted (AVE) (0.518 for perceived value and 0.56 for satisfaction) of all constructs satisfied the required level (Table 3). Two items (i.e., I would like to refine new ideas of garden design every time I visited FLORIA and this is my first experience visiting FLORIA and witnessing a various type of garden concept) were dropped due to low standardized regression loadings. Based on Cronbach's alpha for the perceived value (Environmental Design) were 0.77, which are considered above satisfactory (Nunnally, 1978). Researchers calling for a multi-attribute scale for satisfaction (Yuan & Jang, 2008; Zeithaml et., al., 1996)[6] The scale had a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.91. Two items (i.e., I will definitely build my own house garden after this, and I will come back to FLORIA in the future) are dropped due to low standardized regression loadings and produced a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.85.

Table 2: The CFA Result for the Measurement

Constructs and Measure Mean (SD)	Factor Loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
<b>Perceived Value (ED)</b>		<b>0.769</b>	<b>0.763</b>	<b>0.518</b>
ED1 Lots of garden design ideas	0.685			
ED2 Provide me extra knowledge of using recycle materials in garden design	0.689			
ED5 Witnessing a various type of garden concept	0.781			
<b>Satisfaction (VS)</b>		<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.887</b>	<b>0.565</b>
VS1 Learn latest information	0.777			
VS2 Increase my knowledge on tree and garden design	0.851			
VS3 Unique experience I rarely experienced before	0.814			
VS4 I am confident Floria will be an icon to Malaysia in effort to save the environment	0.688			
VS5 I have confident garden showcase as a main garden references for public Garden showcase at Floria is	0.709			
VS6 beyond my expectation Using recycle material in garden design is able to reduce cost	0.739			
VS7 Inspired me to build my own house garden	0.749			
<b>Behavior (VB)</b>		<b>0.853</b>	<b>0.856</b>	<b>0.547</b>
VB2 I will inform positive matters about Floria to my friend I will recommend to my relatives	0.696			
VB3 and friends to visit Floria Floria showcase indirectly remind us to take care of environment	0.618			
VB4 I am willing to used recycle material in my garden design I am willing to participate in ant program related to environment in the neighbourhood	0.68			
VB5	0.84			
VB6	0.837			

Table 3: The result of the conceptual model with structural equation modeling

Path	Estimate	S. E.	C. R	P	Result
ED → VS	0.882	0.066	13.283	***	significant
VS → VB	0.885	0.203	4.367	***	Significat
ED → VB	-0.176	0.183	-0.98	0.335	Not significant
	R <sup>2</sup>				
Endogenous construct	0.872				
Satisfaction Behavior	0.656				

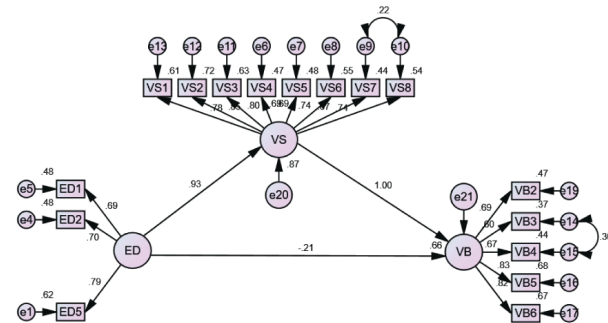


Figure 2: Structural equation modeling (SEM)

Model fit statistics:  $\chi^2 = 337.149$ ,  $df = 99$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ,  $GFI = .902$ ,  $RMSEA = .078$ ,  $CFI = .936$ , \*significant at  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*significant at  $p < 0.01$

iii) Structural equation model analysis and hypotheses testing result

The model fit for structural equation was good with  $\chi^2 = 337.149$ ,  $df = 99$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ,  $GFI = .902$ ,  $RMSEA = .078$ ,  $CFI = .936$  by indicating a strong predictive validity. The standardized path estimated with all relationship in the model are shown in Table 2. The purpose of this study is to examine effect of garden showcase (Environmental Design) on visitors environmental design behavior and satisfaction and satisfaction on visitor environmental design

behavior. Statistic and results of the relationship between gardens showcase shows most significant effect on visitors' satisfaction. Environmental design were found to have significant effect on visitor satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.93$ ) and visitors satisfaction intention to participate in environmental program and using recycle material is predicted by the environmental design ( $\beta = 1.00$ ) and the direct effect environmental design to behavior is significant but after satisfaction enter the model, environmental design to behavior become not significant. Therefore, satisfaction fully mediate in path between environmental design to behavior ( $\beta = -0.21$ ). Figure 4 describes the constructs of all structural paths.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The current study explore the interrelationships among visitor's environmental design as a perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The garden showcase is the dimension that is strongly associated with value. Since garden showcase value is the first elements in effecting visitors behavioral via satisfaction and presumed to be major contributors to change visitors' behaviors. Another significant findings of this study informs on the theoretical understanding with empirical results. In conclusion, this study provides a model which was constructed based on the theory of previous studies by proposing construct perceived value of environmental design to explain the garden showcase behavioral intention to be more environmental awareness after attending the festival.

In details, the testing of the present model of festival visitor's behavioral intentions indicated that perceived value of garden showcase provide; 1) Lots of garden design ideas; 2) Provide me extra knowledge of using recycle materials in garden design; and 3) Witnessing a various type of garden concept are not significant predictor of visitors' behavioural intention of environmental design awareness. Thus, this result informs that the authentic element of the garden festival program along with the visitors' experience while taking part in the festival. "The significant linkage between and satisfaction implies that festival visitors are more concerned with the core attractions are offered in a festival and the opportunities available to experience real entertainment and either pay less attention to typical amenities offered by organizers or consider them expected quality level" (Papadimitriou, 2013, p. 56)[7]. In the case of Royal FLORIA Putrajaya, the organizing committee continuously monitor and assess the quality of the festival program over the past seven years. The findings of the assessment have allowed the organizer to improve the festival program; for examples by introducing more garden showcases, demonstration of garden construction and participatory from event associated with landscape industry. Overall findings suggest that understanding post-visitation garden

festival enable organizers to be more efficiently and effectively construct appealing event that promote environmental design and repeat visitation. This study however, informs that the organizer has successfully designed various experiential programs with responsive participation from the visitors that provided hedonic experiences for the visitors, thus boost-up their knowledge of environmental design, build environmental design satisfaction, and behavioral intention to be passionately attracted into an environmental design

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