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Making **museums attractions** to tourists: **serious leisure, meaningfulness** and **emotions** as drivers to engagement

Tornando os **museus atrações** para os turistas: **lazer sério, significância** e **emoções** como influenciadores do envolvimento comprometido

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Abstract | The aim of this study is to explore the relationships among the concepts of serous leisure, meaningfulness, emotions, word-of-mouth and passionate desire, as antecedents and outcomes of engagement with museums. The proposed model is tested with a sample of 461 visitors (from Portugal and abroad) in a culturally specific setting of Lisbon museums (where improvements and innovations were implemented). The findings contribute to a better understanding of visitors' perceptions about museums acting as tourist attractions. Several implications can be pointed out from the study findings, and interesting directions for future research are provided.

Keywords | Engagement, serious leisure, meaningful, museum, tourists

Resumo | O objetivo deste estudo é explorar as relações entre os conceitos de lazer sério, significância, emoções, passa-palavra e desejo apaixonados, como antecedentes e resultados do envolvimento comprometido com museus. O modelo proposto é testado com uma amostra de 461 visitantes (de Portugal e do estrangeiro) em um ambiente culturalmente específico de museus de Lisboa (onde as melhorias e inovações foram implementadas). Os resultados contribuem para uma melhor compreensão das perceções dos visitantes sobre museus atuando como atrações turísticas. Várias implicações podem ser apontadas a partir dos resultados do estudo e são apresentadas sugestões interessantes para futuras pesquisas.

Palavra-chave | Envolvimento comprometido, lazer sério, significância, museu, turistas

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1. Introduction

The contribution of museums' cultural property to the gross domestic product has become very important to several societies and marketing strategies and is of huge importance to several countries in order to attract potential visitors to museums. Several researchers argued that branded museums are more suitable to attract more visitors not only to the museums but also to other heritage places and related hospitality service establishments (Caldwell, 2000; Hollenbeck, Peters, & Zinkhan, 2008).

Diverse museums worldwide have started to create different tangible benefits as well as different communication strategies to create new bonds (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011) in order to achieve a product differentiation that leads to sustainable customer loyalty and satisfaction. In this vein, the concept of consumer engagement has brought huge attention and must be understood as a state of involvement and commitment to a specific market offer (Abdul-Ghani, Hyde, & Marshall, 2011).

Several studies have highlighted that higher levels of engagement brought superior rewards for cultural consumers (e.g., Edmonds, Muller & Connell, 2006). So, in order to achieve a more enjoyable, enriching and informative experience, visitors can enhance their knowledge of the museum by gathering information from various sources like family and friends, visitor information, mass media and websites (Falk & Dierking, 1992; Falk & Storksdieck, 2005; Sheng & Chen, 2012). Therefore, engagement is regarded here as more than being involved with the museum to embrace a proactive visitor relationship with the museum.

The current study intends to go further in understanding engagement to museums by analyzing the relationships among the concepts of serious leisure, meaningfulness, emotions, word-of-mouth and passionate desire, as antecedents and outcomes of engagement with Lisbon museums.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Serious Leisure

Cultural motivations are widely employed to engage tourists with historical sites, museums or art galleries (e.g., Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; McKercher, 2002). The current study analyzes the effect of serious leisure in its two intrinsic components: reflective and recreational motivations. Extrinsic motivation is also analyzed through museum prestige. Serious leisure has been studied to mean "the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for a participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge" (Stebbins, 1992, p. 3). This concept has been used to examine a variety of leisure activities. However, it has rarely been considered in tourism context (Black, 2005; Prentice, 2001; Brodie et al., 2011; Falk & Dierking, 1992; Falk & Storksdieck, 2005; Sheng & Chen, 2012). Gould et al. (2008) develop the Serious Leisure Inventory and Measure (SLIM) as an assessment tool employing 18 sub-dimensions and 54 operational points (Barbieri & Sotomayor, 2013). The multiple motivation benefits of serious leisure can help to predict engagement (Barbieri & Sotomayor, 2013; Taheri et al., 2014).

The way consumers live the experience of purchase a good (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Otto & Ritchie, 1996) or the experience at a hotel or lodging (Loureiro, 2014).

Therefore, the motivational process of serious leisure, the refreshing experience of visiting the museum, an enriching experience and also a self-identification with the museum will lead to generate positive emotions, a pleasant arousal Based on the above considerations, we propose (see figure 1):

H1: Serious leisure (reflective and recreational motivation) is positively related to tourists' enga-

gement with museums

H2: Serious leisure (reflective and recreational motivation) is positively related to tourists' pleasant arousal with museums.

2.2. Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness is the degree to which new services or tools are perceived as appropriate and useful for target customers (Amabile, 1983; Im & Workman, 2004), in order to lead to enhanced customer loyalty or word-of-mouth (Andrews & Smith, 1996; Sethi et al., 2001). We operationalize the meaningfulness as relevant, appropriate, and useful to visitors' needs, expectations, and desires (Im & Workman, 2004).

A place, a service, a museum regarded as meaningfulness by guests or visitors is expected to lead to positive emotions (Siu et al., 2013). Offering meaningful services or tools affect tourists' perceptions of a museum's relationship and interaction with visitors (Siu et al., 2013) and may contribute to engage tourists (Chathoth et al., 2014). In this vein, we formulate:

H3: The meaningfulness of the new tools of a museum is positively related to tourists' pleasant arousal with museums.

H4: The meaningfulness of the new tools of a museum is positively related to tourists' engagement with museums.

Emotions are mental states that emerge from the experience lived in events or from a consumer's own thoughts (e.g., Bagozzi et al., 1999; Jang & Namkung, 2009). When tourists visit museums, the experience and the mechanisms employed by the museums' managers to attract visitors could generate higher levels of engagement and this, in turn, leads to positive emotions (like pleasant arousal which comprises pleasure and arousal). We et al. (2013) reveal the connection between customer engagement and emotions in the case of hotel reviews.

In the museum context, we expect that the emotions developed during the museum visit will generate more than an involvement with the museum exhibition and commitment to the experience of the visit, a proactive visitor relationship (Brodie et al., 2013). Due to the expected link between positive emotions and engagement, we formulate that a visitor emotionally involved and excited with the experience at a museum will be more engaged with the museum. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Pleasant arousal is positively related to tourists' engagement with museums.

2.3. Outcomes of Pleasant arousal

Emotions have been regarded as drivers to recommendations or re-purchase goods and services (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Sherman et al., 1997). In the current study, we go beyond and analyze the effect of pleasant arousal on word-of-mouth, but also on passionate desire to visit again, a certain museum visited.

The passionate desire could be regarded as a lever to recommend and give suggestions to others. The expression "passionate desire" emerges from the work of Batra, Ahuvia and Bagozzi (2012), which proposes the brand love higher-order prototype model comprising seven latent constructs: self–brand integration (current and desired self-identity, life meaning, intrinsic rewards, and frequent thoughts); passion-driven behaviors (willingness to invest resources, passionate desire to use, involvement); positive emotional connection (intuitive fit, emotional attachment, positive affect); anticipated separation distress; overall attitude valence; attitude strength (certainty and confidence).

An individual that is passionate about a brand and hence demonstrates passion-driven behaviors reflects a strong desire to use the brand or the ob-

ject in question; he/she will invest time and money in that brand and frequently interacts with it (Batra et al., 2012). Here, we consider the passionate desire to visit the museum again, extending the concept of Batra et al. (2012). Positive emotions, such as pleasure and excitement to be inside the museum may generate and intrinsic passionate desire to visit the museum again. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Pleasant arousal is positively related to tourists' word-of-mouth communication.

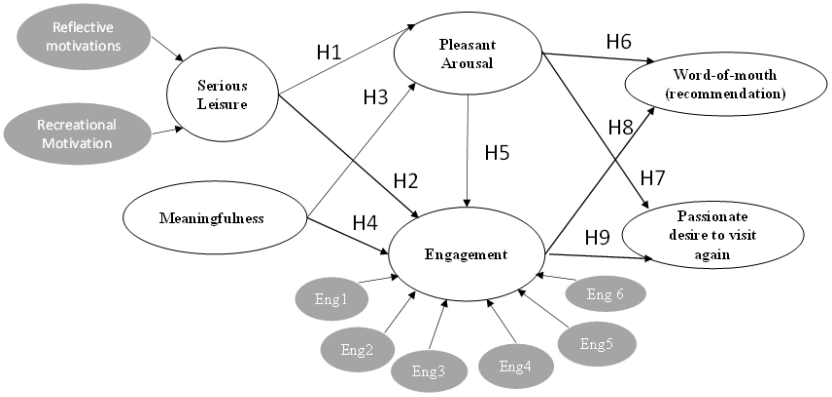
H7: Pleasant arousal is positively related to tourists' passionate desire to visit the museum again.

2.4. Outcomes of Engagement

Engagement indicates a significant potential relationship between motivations and visitors' level of commitment and interaction with museum offerings. Engaged tourists will be more willing to say positive things about a museum and recommend it to others (Yu & Littrell, 2003; Hollebeek, 2010). We expected that engaged visitors are a willingness to become passionate to the museum in such a way that desire to visit again. Therefore, we suggest:

H8: Tourists' engagement with museums is positively related to word-of-mouth communication.

H9: Tourists' engagement with museums is positively related to passionate desire to visit again.



Source: authors' elaboration

Figure 1 | Proposed model

3. Methodology

3.1. Data collection

A structured questionnaire was developed including multiple-item scales constructs of serious leisure (adapted from Gould et al., 2008; Taheri et al., 2014); meaningfulness (adapted from Siu et al., 2013); pleasant arousal (adapted from Loureiro, 2014); word-of-mouth (adapted from Loureiro & Kastenholz, 2011), passionate desire to visit again (adapted from Batra et al., 2012); and engagement (6 sentences adapted from Taheri et al., 2014), as well as socio-demographic variables. Due to the potential violation of face validity, the authors followed the panel rating approach for each questionnaire item as either 'very representative', 'moderately representative', or 'not at all representative' of the respective constructs. The results showed the majority of items were rated as 'very representative' (87%) and the rest being rated as

'moderately representative'. Therefore, all items were retained in the questionnaire.

Participants were asked to indicate their levels of agreement with each item on a seven-point Likert scale (1-completely disagree, 5-completely agree). Through convenience sampling, data was collected in several museums in Lisbon: Museu Nacional dos Coches, Museu da Eletricidade, Museu Nacional do Traje, Museu da Marinha, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Museu da Gulbenkian, Museu do Oriente. The authors chose these venues for two reasons: (i) all are popular visitor attractions in Lisbon (and even considered emblematic in Portugal); (ii) all have been considerable improvements, some have new facilities in recent times.

Questionnaires were distributed over 3 months where museum visitors (in local) were approached. A total of 500 people was surveyed, but 37 questionnaires were excluded from the sample because of incomplete responses. Thus, a sample of 461 respondents remained for the final analysis, which constitutes a 92% usable response rate. The original questionnaire was written in English (because most items were originally in English), then translated into Portuguese, Spanish and French and translated back to English (with the help of native linguists) (Sekaran, 1983). Back translation was used to ensure that the items in Portuguese and English communicated the same information.

3.2. Sample profile

Table 1 presents the profiles of the respondents. In Table 1, Portuguese means visitors from Lisbon and other places from Portugal. Foreigners mean visitors from different countries, mainly from Spain, French, Germany, and UK. Most participants are retired and visiting museums with friends or with an organized tour.

Table 1 | Sample profile

Gender:	Female: 49.4%	Nationality:	Portuguese: 67%
	Male: 50.6%		Foreigners: 33%
Age:	16-18 years:17.5%		36-45years: 8.9%
	18-25 years:30.5%		46-55 years: 7.6%
	26- 35years: 19.3%		55- 65 years: 11.0%
			Over 65 years: 5.0%

Source: Authors' elaboration

4. Results

4.1. Measurement results

A PLS model should be analyzed and interpreted in two stages. First, the measurement model or the adequacy of the measures is assessed by evaluating the reliability of the individual measures, the convergent validity and the discriminant validity of the constructs. Then, the structural model is evaluated. In order to evaluate the adequacy of the measures at the first-order construct level, item reliability is assessed by examining the loadings of the measures on their corresponding construct. Item loadings of scales measuring reflective constructs should be 0.7 or more, which indicates that over 50% of the variance in the observed variable is explained by the construct (Hair et al., 2014). In this study, the item loading of each item exceeds the value of 0.7 (see Table 2). All Cronbach's alpha values are above 0.7, and all composite reliability values in Table 2 are above 0.8. Therefore, all constructs are reliable. The measures demonstrate convergent validity as the average variance of manifest variables extracted by constructs (average variance extracted [AVE]) is above 0.5.

Regarding engagement, we have the parameter estimates of indicator weights, the significance of weight (t-value) and multicollinearity of indicators. Weight measures the contribution of each formative indicator to the variance of the latent variable (Taheri et al., 2014). A significance level of at least 0.05 suggests that an indicator is re-

levant to the construction of the formative index (engagement), and thus demonstrates a sufficient level of validity. They are formative because each dimension of engagement is distinct in nature but together represent the general concept of engagement. The degree of multicollinearity among the formative indicators should be assessed by variance inflation factor (VIF). The VIF indicates how much an indicator's variance is explained by the other indicators of the same construct. The commonly acceptable threshold for VIF is below 3.33 (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). Table 2 shows VIF values are < 3.33, and so the results did not seem to pose a multicollinearity problem. When considering serious leisure, the same comments could be made, that is, both formative indicators (reflective motivation and recreational motivation) are relevant to the construction of the formative index.

Table 2 | Measurement results

Latent variables and items	LV Mean	Item loading (Reflective measure)	Cronbach's Alfa	Composite reliability	AVE
Serious Leisure: reflective motivation	2.9		0.748	0.840	0.568
Visiting this museum helps me to express who I am		0.597			
Visiting this museum allows me to display my knowledge and expertise on certain subjects:		0.701			
Visiting this museum has a positive effect on how I feel about myself		0.583			
Visiting this museum allows me to interact with others who are interested in the same things as me		0.690			
Serious Leisure: recreational motivation	3.4		0.830	0.887	0.663
Visiting the museum is a lot of fun		0.737			
I get a lot of satisfaction from visiting this museum		0.735			
I find visiting this museum a refreshing experience		0.735			
Visiting this museum is an enriching experience for me		0.720			
Meaningfulness	3.5		0.889	0.923	0.751
This museum is relevant to visitors' needs and expectations.		0.876			
This museum is considered suitable for visitors' desires.		0.866			
This museum is appropriate for visitors' needs and expectations.		0.870			
This museum is useful (has meaning) for visitors.		0.853			
Pleasant arousal	3.7		0.858	0.904	0.701
This museum is interesting		0.839			
This museum is enjoyable		0.870			
This museum is exciting		0.806			
This museum is stimulating		0.834			

Word-of-mouth	3.7		0.891	0.932	0.820
I will speak well about this museum to other people		0.903			
I will recommend this museum if someone asks for my advice		0.912			
I will encourage my friends and relatives to visit this museum		0.903			
Passionate desire to visit again	3.1		0.739	0.885	0.793
I Feel myself desiring to visit again		0.883			
I Feel a sense of longing to this museum		0.898			
Formative Construct: Engagement	Mean	Weight	t-value	VIF	
Using (interactive) panels	2.4	0.287**	2.683	1.825	
Using guided tour	2.8	0.159*	1.968	1.085	
Using videos and audios	2.6	0.112*	1.966	1.678	
Using social interaction space	2.8	0.194*	1.987	1.466	
Using my own guide book and literature	2.6	0.516***	3.683	1.202	
Playing with materials such as toys. jigsaw puzzle and quizzes	2.7	0.206**	2.694	1.520	
Formative construct: Serious Leisure	Mean	Weight	t-value	VIF	
Reflective motivation	2.9	0.489***	3.413	1.487	
Recreational motivation	3.4	0.633***	3.524	1.487	

Note: *p<0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001

In what concerns to discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be greater than the correlation between the construct and other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2014). Data shows that this criterion has been met. The last part of Table 3 shows that the correlations between each first-order construct and the second-order construct is >0.71revealing that they have more than half of their variance in common, as expected (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011).

Table 3 | Discriminant validity

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
$AVE^{1/2}$		0.866	0.891	0.837	0.814	0.754	0.906
1.Engagement	1.000						
2.Meaningfulness	0.311	1.000					
3.Paisionate desire	0.462	0.433	1.000				
4.Pleasant arousal	0.238	0.536	0.477	1.000			
5.Recreational motivation	0.288	0.642	0.488	0.647	1.000		
6.Reflective motivation	0.430	0.468	0.459	0.440	0.582	1.000	
7.Word-of-mouth	0.381	0.494	0.629	0.513	0.486	0.341	1.000
	Correlation between first- and second-order constructs						
	Recreational motivation			Reflective motivation			
Serious leisure	0.918			0.858			

Source: Authors' elaboration

4.2. Structural results

In this study, a non-parametric approach, known as Bootstrap (500 re-sampling), was used to estimate the precision of the PLS estimates and support the hypotheses (Hair et al., 2014). All path coefficients are found to be significant at the 0.001 and 0.01 levels, except hypothesis H4 and H5 (see Table 4).

Table 4 | Structural results

Path	Standardized coefficient direct Effect	t-value	Standardized coefficient total effect	t-value	Test result
Serious leisure → Pleasant arousal	0.477***	4.033	0.477***	4.033	H1: supported
Serious leisure → Engagement	0.347**	2.618	0.329**	2.634	H2: supported
Meaningfulness → Pleasant arousal	0.232*	1.968	0.232*	1.968	H3: supported
Meaningfulness → Engagement	0.111 ns	0.841	0.102 ns	0.792	H4: not supported
Pleasant arousal → Engagement	-0.040 ns	0.308	-0.040 ns	0.308	H5: not supported
Pleasant arousal → word-of-mouth	0.447***	4.954	0.436***	4.383	H6: supported
Pleasant arousal → Passionate desire	0.390***	4.431	0.375***	3.717	H7: supported
Engagement→ word-of-mouth	0.281**	3.256	0.281**	3.256	H8: supported
Engagement→ Passionate desire	0.368***	4.759	0.368***	4.759	H9; supported
R^2 Engagement = 0.162	Q^2 Engagement = 0.19		R^2 Passionate desire = 0.356		Q^2 Passionate desire = 0.28
R^2 Pleasant arousal = 0.422	Q^2 Pleasant arousal = 0.29		R^2 Word-of-mouth = 0.338		Q^2 Word-of-mouth = 0.27
GoF = 0.54					

Note: *p<0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001

Source: Authors' elaboration

As models yielding significant bootstrap statistics can still be invalid in a predictive sense, measures of predictive validity (such as R2 and Q2) for focal endogenous constructs should be employed. All values of Q^2 (chi-squared of the Stone–Geisser criterion) are positive, so the relations in the model have predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2014). The model also demonstrated a good value of GoF.

5. Conclusions and implications

The results reveal that serious leisure has a strong positive influence on both pleasant arousal and engagement. By contrast, meaningfulness and the relevance of the museum do not exercise significant influence on engagement among visitors of Lisbon museums. These findings are aligned

with previous studies (Brodie et al., 2011; Sheng & Chen, 2012; Taheri et al., 2014), which stress the importance of reflective and recreational motivations on engagement. Actually, recreational motivation dimension emerges as the most relevant in shaping the overall serious leisure. These findings suggest that museum should provide a refreshing experience, an enriching experience to engage visitors.

Following Amabile (1983) and Im and Workman (2004), meaningfulness by itself it is not enough to lead to engagement. The indirect effect of meaningfulness through pleasant arousal does not play an important role on engagement, highlighting positive emotions (pleasant arousal) and meaningfulness are not enough to engage visitors, keeping them interested and committed with the visit. Therefore, pleasant arousal does not act as a mediator between meaningfulness and engagement. Although other studies are needed to consolidate the findings, the current study stresses the role of emotions on enhancing engagement and the willingness to recommend the museum to others or the desire to visit again.

Engaged tourists tend to recommend the museum to others, as suggested by Yu and Littrell (2003), and Loureiro and Kastenholz (2011) and even, it seems to be more effective than emotions on creating a passionate desire to return to the museum. Actually, when we consider the formative index engagement, visitors show their interest on using their own information about the museum and like to play with entertainment materials during the visit.

5.1. Managerial implications

Characteristics of serious leisure enhance engagement, positive word-of-mouth and the desire to return in the future, suggesting that museums facilities should be prepared with equipment and devices that allow visitors do activities interacting with others, get more knowledge about the expositions and display such information and expertise. This interaction amongst visitors could yield benefits to museum managers. Levels of engagement with a place may contribute to visitors' cognitive enjoyment, create favorable memories and word-of-mouth. Consequently, museum managers can enhance engagement to foster increasing levels of visitor desire to return.

Positive emotions, have fun during the visit, is another key to museum managers. They should be aware of such findings and prepare the museums to be more interactive, even among visitors and retain the visitors in the narrative of the story of each painting, sculpture, or object in expositions in the museum. Create quizzes, games and other mechanisms that are regularly updated will contribute for positive emotions and be engaged with the museum.

5.2. Limitations and future research

Although a review of the literature highlighted potential cues that tourists use in evaluating the engagement with, and consequently their behavioral intentions towards the place, only Serious Leisure emerged with significant results for tourists visiting Lisbon museums. This represents a limitation of this study but also opens avenues for future research.

Secondly, the use of PLS has some limitations. Further study may require a combination of several methodological approaches, for instance: in-depth interviews with visitors and managers. Finally, it would be interesting to do a comparison study between two or more different East Asian and Occidental countries by applying the conceptual framework developed in this study: cross-cultural studies. Those studies may have implications for managing attractions across cultures and extend the generalizability of the model.

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