

CUSTOMERS FRUSTRATION AND ITS IMPLICATION TOWARDS INTENTION TO QUEUE: AN EVIDENCE OF A MALAYSIAN THEME PARK IN KUALA LUMPUR

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to determine how customer frustration and its implication towards intention to queue in a Malaysian theme park located in Kuala Lumpur. The changes of customer's mood or frustration is affected due to environment and behavior such as staff inefficiencies, ineffectiveness system, and delay in providing good services that caused the customer preference to participate in queue management systems.

Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur (original name is disguised) was selected for this research as they have appropriate setting and relevant to this research. In this research, primary data is used and collection of data is through the distribution of questionnaires survey forms to the respondents. The data gathered from the selected respondents were being analyzed by using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. Based on the findings it is clearly indicated that there is a positive relationship between customer frustration and intention to queue at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.

Keywords: *customers frustration, intention to queue, staff efficiencies, service delay, system effectiveness, waiting time and theme park*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of theme park is not only as extension to tourism sector but it is considered as a new tourism destination and it complement to the tourism pattern (Wang Qian and Sun Qiang, 2013). For example, in recent articles (Zoltak,1998) it has been argued that many of the Asian countries such as China, Thailand and Malaysia are now actively promoting the construction of

major theme parks in order to accommodate the increase of tourism entering the countries and as well as to add value to the country revenue. In order to develop good theme parks, managing the quality of services within the theme park is a particularly difficult and very complex. The most challenges area that amusement park is facing the managing the long queue lines at a popular attractions area (O'Brien Tim, 2001). This has been agreed by Koseluk Chriss (2004), that with long queue lines growing and with visitors spending more than half of their time in lining up and its becoming an increasing problem for amusement parks, and the service industry in general. Since Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur has just started their operations on February 28, 2012, Apollo Theme Park is no exception from facing the same problems related to queue management systems as the other theme parks in all over the world such as Disneyland, Universal Studio, Six Flags etc. A few samples on factors affecting customer's satisfaction during waiting time for queuing can be seen at places such as withdrawal money at ATM machines, queuing for movie tickets or queuing for tickets at toll highways. As shown by past studies, queuing is not only involved inconvenience but it also a frustration to some people in their daily routine environment. By improving the efficiencies of the queuing management system, it will help the organization to gain better quality in their services given to customers, thus, add more income to the organisation.

However, according to Taylor (1994), there are different types of category in waiting mode. Customers can wait before, during, or after a transaction of service. A few categories are identified as pre-process, in-process, and post-process waiting. For example, in a theme park the time spent from the staff started to register the customer data, could be judged as pre-process waiting whereas the time from registration counter until the customer interacts with the activities could be categorized as the in-process waiting. After interacting with the activities, the time that the customer spent through the discharge process is identified as post-process waiting. Pre-process wait can be categorized as preschedule wait, delay, and queue-wait. A preschedule wait is when a customer has to wait because they arrive earlier than the activity time. For example, when a customer arrives early by 15 minutes than the actual time of business hours, to enter one of the scenic spot at the theme park, the customer will have to wait for up to 15 minutes before being served. These is the delay that occurs when, even though the customer is ready and on schedule, he or she is not being served. Delay, therefore, is the time that customers have to spend between their scheduled time and the time for commences. Finally, there is a queue-waiting when there is no schedule time and customers are served on a first-come, first-served basis.

The proposition that customers intensely and universally dislike queuing is based on the idea that people typically experience emotional discomfort (notably feelings of being cramped and crowded and frustrated for not being able to get away) while waiting-in-line (Schopler and Stockdale, 1977). A review of the literature on time perception has indicated that people are increasingly concerned with using their time efficiently and that customers respond emotionally if they are frustrated in their attempts to do so (Taylor, 1994).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Every organization that interacts with customers will be dealing with issues of queue management systems. In daily life, customers wait for service in a variety of settings, including manufacturing and service business, profit and non-profit organizations, as well as private and public agencies (Davis & Heineke, 1994). Apart from that, these are some of the reviews from the "tripadvisor.com.my" related to customers experience queuing in Apollo Theme Park.

An anonymous message, mentioned that *"My first visit was in March 2012, due to that was school holiday during morning session, the place are very crowded & unorganized. We reached there at 10am and after long queue, finally we entered at 12pm, can you imagine the long queue duration? and the play time is very limited till 3pm only. It is very rushing for us to try*

on all session caused every session were very long queue & some even not in organized (reviews at tripadvisor.com.my, 2013).

One of the visitors also responded to the tripadvisor.com.my. The anonymous stated, that "Our two kids and us were here in March 2013. We took the 4 to 9pm slot, and bought our tickets online earlier.... to avoid "queues". To think that we bought our tickets online to avoid queues and end up doing just that the entire time! And mind you, we have two impatient boys waiting to get through the queues! You know what kind of ordeal that can be? Seriously, are you guys trying to test the patience of the children, or for that matter, their parents? (reviews at tripadvisor.com.my, 2013).

These statements clearly shows that there is a need to study how effective the Queue Management at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur as it can result in customers' decision to revisit.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors of customers' frustration and their intention to queue. Apart from that, the factor of customer frustration is being evaluated base on staff efficiencies, system effectiveness, and service delay and its implication towards customer's intention to queue.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Throughout this study, the researcher expected that the outcomes of this study will provide valuable information to the organization and further improve their queue management system and increasing its efficiencies, thus maximize their profitability and the effectiveness of their service system (James Harper, 2013).

In many instances, queue management has help to speed up customers need and at the same time it can increase on sales and profitability. The effective management of queues can also increase staff productivity and operational efficiencies. The effectiveness of queuing system is to ensure that customer waiting times are reduced, therefore simultaneously reducing customer frustration and improving customer retention and company reputation. Hopefully the findings of this study will provide some relevant explanations of customer frustration which influences the customer intention to queue in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur. Thus, this information will provide the management team on a better perception and understanding of customer frustration with the evaluation of their staff efficiencies, system effectiveness, and service delay.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study is to determine the extent to which customer frustration is affected by the staff efficiencies, system effectiveness, and service delay that impact to their intention to queue. The study will address the following objectives:

- i. To identify the staff efficiencies of queue system in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.
- ii. To determine the level of system effectiveness in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.
- iii. To determine the level of service delay during queue in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.
- iv. To determine the relationship between staff efficiency, system effectiveness, service delay and intention to queue.

H3: There is a relationship between service delay and intention to queue.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The primary data was collected on site setting through observations and questionnaires instruments. A descriptive research design using a quantitative approach through cross sectional study is considered the most appropriate method to be used. Creswell (2007), noted that a quantitative approach is one in which the researcher primarily uses post positivist claims for developing knowledge and collecting data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data with the ability to attain large number of respondents. Furthermore, Shaw and Wright (1967) stated that the self-reported survey is one of the best ways in collecting data on human feelings, perceptions, attitudes or any activity from the selected respondents. It is believed that this approach will give a significant meaningful result on the issue that will be investigated. This approach has been chosen as to ensure that the research would be based upon actual customer experience in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.

Sample Size and Population

The research population comprised of all visitors at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur customers. A total of 50 respondents were randomly selected. The questionnaires survey form has been simplify in order to achieve easy understanding by the respondent for the study. There are six sections in the questionnaires which is under the Section A, Section B, Section C, Section D, Section E, and Section F. Random approach being done on one to one respondent for two (2) days and briefing were done on the intention of the survey is meant for the study purposes only. Explanation were given on the need for respondent to participate on the questionnaires survey form and with no monetary awards.

Research Instruments

Section A of the questionnaires dealt with Demographic data such as gender, age, marital status, occupational level, nationality and educational level. From this, we can keep a profile of respondents that have visited Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur. Under Section B, part of the questionnaires are based on the evaluation of the Staff Efficiencies, which include items on degree of overall speed delivered, service flow, attentiveness by the employee, staff awareness during queue and number of staff on each establishment. This is to measure the degree of overall staff efficiencies that based on the customer perceptions. Similar items were asked in the third part in Section C of the questionnaires, but more on the evaluation of the System Effectiveness. Under this section, it is more towards customers' opinion on the system that were used. Items included such as application of service line that guides queue system, policies of queuing at the establishment, information on the signage, and the accuracy of the information given by the staff.

The fourth part in Section D is evaluation on the Service Delay, included items on time taken by other customers, behavior while using the service, space to accommodate crowd, arrangement of queuing and level of fairness in queuing process. As a result, we may identify the customer level of satisfaction based on the items provided. While in Section E, questionnaires focus on dependent variable question under Intention to Queue. This section is focusing more on customer intention to queue according to the items provided and in order to validate all the questionnaires, a short response is prepared under Section F.

Procedure for Data Collection

Through this study, 50 random respondents were selected to participate in the data collection. The respondents were Apollo Theme Park's customer and received no academic or monetary awards for their participation. We had categorized the respondents into two (2) age groups, respondents over 18 years and above act as a guardian and parents, while respondents under 13 to 17 years old were categorized as a child respondent. The respondent were briefed about the research intention and were given the Questionnaire Survey Form which included Section A, B, C, D, E and F. While answering the questionnaire, the respondents were briefly explained on each of the section and there were no right or wrong answers.

The Questionnaires that were developed are using 5-point Likert scales and mainly the questions touched on staff efficiencies, system effectiveness, service delay and intention to queue. Apart using the questionnaires survey form, we also make an observation on the queuing management systems at Apollo Theme Park registration counter. The observation showed that the existing queuing system at Apollo Theme Park can be considered as congested and cramp during their peak hours especially during the shift changes between morning shift and the evening shift.

Procedure for Data Analyses

The data were calculated and entered into a computer system for analyses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the research data. SPSS consists of an integrated series of computer programs which enable the user to read data from questionnaire surveys and other sources, to manipulate them in various ways and to produce a wide range of statistical analyses and reports, together with documentation (surveyresearch.weebly.com, 2012). Apart from questionnaires, the researchers also made an observation of their queuing system at registration counter and existing process which can be considered as a bottle neck during the transaction between morning shift and the evening shift. Out of 50 questionnaires, 45 were accepted for the data analyses. 30 questionnaires for the parent respondents and 15 for the child respondents.

Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics for Customers Frustration Factors

Customers Frustration Factors	Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
System Effectiveness	.582	4
Staff Effectiveness	.790	4
Service Delay	.786	4

Based from Reliability Statistics, the score of the Cronbach's Alpha for system effectiveness and intention to queue show (0.582), staff efficiencies and intention to queue show (0.790), and service delay and intention to queue was (0.786), which can be considered as reliable. Based on Julie Pallant (2002, 2005) the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 to consider as reliable data. Meanwhile, it has been argue by certain scholar Pierre-Yves, Chandon, and Philippe (1996) agreed that when measuring attitude, an alpha score of 0.50 and above is usually acceptable.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Background of Respondents

Table 1.1 The frequency and percentage of the background of respondents reported under gender, age and marital status.

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	21	46.7
Female	24	53.3
TOTAL	45	100.0
Age		
13 to 17 years	15	33.3
18 to 25 years	6	13.3
26 to 30 years	2	4.4
31 to 35 years	5	11.1
36 to 40 years	11	24.4
41 and above	6	13.3
TOTAL	45	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	21	46.7
Married	24	53.3
TOTAL	45	100.0

From above Table 1.1, the respondents under gender category comprised of 21 males respondents with 46.7%, and 24 female respondents with 53.3%. In terms of age group, we classify the group with two categories which is between the ages of 13 to 17 years old as children category, and between 18 years old and above is considered as a guardian category. Children category arrive at 33.3% with 15 frequency while guardian category arrives at 66.7% with 30 frequency. Consequently, it is practical to assume that female gender is more caring as they are able to accompany their love one to Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur when compared to male gender. In terms of marital status, 24 respondents were married (53.3%) and 21 respondents are single (46.7%) and this can be assumed that married couple are more concerned when it involves knowledge and educational related program for their children.

THE RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSES AND RESEARCH FINDING.

Analysis of the Staff Efficiencies

The results of staff efficiencies received 45 respondents involved in this research and were analyzed by using the analysis of mean and standard deviation. The results of staff efficiencies are shown in Table 1.4

Table 1.4: The Mean Scores for Section B (Staff Efficiencies) of the Questionnaires

No	Items	M	S.D
1	The overall speed of service delivered	3.56	.785
2	The speed of service flow	3.31	.996
3	The attentiveness by the employee	3.44	.893
4	The staff awareness during queue process	3.47	.815
5	The number of staff on each establishment	3.53	.944

The questionnaire on Section B, C and D were rated with 5 Likert scale ranges from Unsatisfied (1), Less Satisfied (2), Slightly Satisfied (3), Satisfied (4) and Very Satisfied (5).

As shown by Table 1.4, In term of overall speed of service delivered, the majority of respondents are slightly satisfied (Item 1, M=3.56) these related with the item no 2 which is the speed of service flow with most of them answered slightly satisfied (M=3.31). Similar score were given to the attentiveness by the employee (Item 3, M=3.44). In addition, customers also just slightly satisfied about the staff awareness during queue process (M=3.47, item 4). Assuming that some of the establishment are lack of staff with reflect on (Item 5) the number of staff on each establishment with most of the respondents are slightly satisfied (M=3.53). It seems that the overall of staff efficiencies delivered by Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur are just acceptable by the customers' reaction.

Analysis of the System Effectiveness

Table 1.5: The Mean Scores for Section C (System Effectiveness) of the Questionnaires

No	Items	M	S.D
1	The application of service line that guides queue system	3.18	.960
2	The policies of queuing at the establishment (e.g. limitations of queuing)	3.20	.786
3	The information of the signage	3.62	.912
4	The accuracy of the information given by the staff	3.47	1.120

From Table 1.5, majority of them are slightly satisfied with the application of service line that guides queue system (Item 1, M=3.18; 0.960). This is in line with the score given to the information of the signage (Item 3, M=3.62; 0.912). Similar score were given on (Item 2, M=3.20; 0.786) on policies of queuing system at the establishment (e.g. limitations of queuing) whereby all of the respondents answered slightly satisfied. It can be assumed that in order to have effectiveness in queue management there is a need to improve on the system flow, such as staff should give accurate information about the activities. According to the table, (Item 4) respondents answered slightly satisfied with the accuracy of the information given by the staff (M=3.47) with standard deviation 1.120, where there is a tendency of the answer lead to less satisfied.

Analysis of the Service Delay

Table 1.6: The Mean Scores for Section D (Service Delay) of the Questionnaires

No	Items	M	S.D
1	Time taken by other customer	3.27	.986
2	Other customers behavior while using the service	3.36	.679

3	The space to accommodate crowd	2.80	1.079
4	The arrangement of queuing layout	3.13	.991
5	Level of fairness in queuing process	3.53	1.057

In evaluation on service delay, the respondents are slightly satisfied with time taken by other customer (Item 1, M=3.27; 0.986) same goes with (Item 2) on other customers behavior while using the service (M=3.36; 0.679). Different from the rest of the item, most of them are less satisfied with the space to accommodate crowd (Item 3, M=3.13; 0.991) with standard deviation above 1.0 and this shows that there is a probability that they may not satisfied with the service at compared to the arrangement of queuing layout with mean 3.13 and standard deviation 0.991.

From Table 1.6 above, on (Item 4) the arrangement of queuing layout, respondents are slightly satisfied (M=3.13). This can be seen match with mean score of (Item 1 and Item 3) Section C with the same answer of the respondents are slightly satisfied. Similar response were given on (Item 5) level of fairness in queuing process, majority of the respondents are slightly satisfied (M=3.53) with standard deviation of 1.057 meaning that it has a tendencies answer satisfied. What could be said is that, the staffs and the trainees who handling the establishment probably not being given enough training or understanding when it comes to deal with different situation or maybe, the arrangement of the layout itself could be contribute to the service delay due to the inefficient system.

Analysis of the Respondents Intention to Queue

The descriptive statistic of the mean score was applied in examining the respondent intention to queue. Table 1.7 below reports the respondent views.

Table 1.7: The Mean Scores for Section E (Intention to Queue) of the Questionnaires

No	Items	M	S.D
1	I will join the queue because of the staff efficiencies	3.56	.755
2	I will join the queue because of the system effectiveness	3.51	.661
3	I will queue if there is no service delay	3.76	.957
4	I will queue if the service progress accordingly	4.00	.739
5	I will queue because of the valuable experiences	3.96	.952

The questionnaire on Section E were rated with 5 Likert scale ranges from Totally Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Slightly Disagree (3), Agree (4) and Totally Agree (5).

Based on Table 1.7 above, queuing because of the staff efficiencies is at mean 3.56 with standard deviation 0.755, while queuing because of system effectiveness is at mean 3.51 with standard deviation 0.661, queuing if only no service delay mean is 3.76 with standard deviation 0.957, queuing if service progress accordingly mean is 4.00 with standard deviation 0.739 and finally queuing because valuable experience mean is 3.96 with standard deviation 0.952. This state the fact that customer are concern more about the service progress accordingly in Apollo Theme Park. Apart from that, majority of customer were slightly disagree with (Item 5), I will queue because of the valuable experiences (M=3.96) and standard deviation reaching .952 closest to 1. There is slightly probability that they could agree. In other word, since majority of the

respondents are guardian, they are more likely to slightly disagree with item no 5 since Apollo Theme Park are edutainment based on children environment.

Hypothesis test

A linear regression was used to determine whether the positive relationship was present between frustration (independent variable) and intention to queue (dependent variable). As shown in Table 6, the value of R Square is 15.9% stated that there is positive relationship between Frustration (Independent Variables) and Intention to queue (Dependent Variable). This is supported with Beta (B) values which also score a positive value with 17%. Based on the results, it shows a strong significance with total .000 and .007. According to Julie Pallant (2005) if the Sig. value is less than .05, then the variable is a significant contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. It can be assumed that customer frustration can influence their intention to queue in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur.

Model Summary b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.399a	.159	.140		2.80256

- a. Predictors : (Constant), iv_value
- b. Dependent Variable: dv_value

Coefficients a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	10.831	2.814		3.848	.000
iv_value	.170	.059	.399	2.855	.007

- a. Dependent Variable : dv_value

What is the level of staff efficiencies on queue system in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur?

From the analysis report, majority of the respondents are under slightly satisfied with the overall speed of service delivered and speed of service flow rendered by Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur. They are also slightly satisfied with the attentiveness shown by the employee during the queuing system.

From the observation, the researcher notice that most of the Apollo Theme Park staff focus or give extra attention to the children at every scenic spot at the theme park since the park is meant for the children with or without accompanying guardian. Due to this, customer or

guardian highlighted their unhappiness on the handling of the queuing system and due to lack of communication skill and handling complaints these had caused the disruption in queuing system.

Customer feel slightly satisfied with the staff awareness during queuing process. This can be supported from the observation during the research period, whereby Apollo Theme Park staff lack of concern and awareness on queuing flow process. Some of the respondent note down the comment on the short response, stated that there is a situation where other customers would jump queue but no staffs seems to stop them. This proves that there is lack of staff awareness and poor handling on queuing system at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur. It can be concluded that the level of staff efficiencies on queue system in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur is still not exceeding the demand of customer.

What is the level of system effectiveness in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur?

The level of system effectiveness in Apollo Theme Park were further corroborated through analysis of customers view towards application of service line, policies of queuing, information of the signage and the accuracy of the information given by the staff. Results revealed that customers are slightly satisfied with the application of service line that guides queue system. This can be concluded with the observation whereby only a few of establishment have a proper physical signage (e.g. air asia and firefighter) that can guide the customer easily understand where they should queue. This is probably due to the insufficient space layout of a certain establishment. Customers also slightly satisfied with the policies of queuing system at the establishment (e.g. limitations of queuing). Based on the observation, certain establishment did not have a limitations on queuing where they can monitor the queuing thus promoting the rest of other establishment that are not fully occupied. On the other hand, staff should also guide and provide correct information on the signage to the customer. During the observation, customer explicitly express that the staff are not giving them proper information as expected. It can be concluded that even though customer are satisfied with the effectiveness of the system, there are certain ideas demanding that Apollo Theme Park should provide extra services to the customers.

What is the level of service delay during queue in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur?

Based on the results, customers are slightly satisfied with the time taken by other customers and similar response were received from other customers while using the service. Apparently, they are less satisfied with the crowded space at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur as it delays the queuing process. During the observation period, it is noticed that the space at the entrance on ground floor was quite small to accommodate for a bigger crowd. As compared to inside environment, Apollo Theme Park received thousands of parent and children touring the theme park. Customers are slightly satisfied with the arrangement of queuing layout, this findings can be matched with time taken by other customers and space to accommodate crowd whereby customers answer slightly satisfied. The same notion was given to the level of fairness in queuing process. Some of customer highlight on the short response section, stated that there is a situation where guardian queuing for their children at certain establishment and there was no action taken by the Apollo Theme Park team. It can be concluded that the staff were lack of understanding and low concern about queuing system in Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur. The conclusion is that the customers can still tolerate the service delay, and at the same time hoping for further improvement in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the overall findings, majority of the respondent seems slightly satisfied with the level of staff efficiencies. This means the overall performance of staff in term of speed, attentiveness, awareness, and number of staff on each establishment is acceptable to the customers. Even though the overall findings on these section is slightly satisfied, the management should not neglect this responsibility but to further improve the service and give serious attention to it. The management could consider providing proper training for their full time staff and also provide training for their trainees. In addition, the managements should take an initiative by educating them to be more sensitive and alert on this aspect, such as speed, attentiveness, awareness, and number of staff on each establishment. Even though the training may incur cost, but for future needs it would help the staff and trainees to better understand on the importance of staff efficiencies.

It also appeared that system effectiveness results show that overall queuing system practiced by Apollo Theme Park is acceptable to customers. The survey highlighted issues related to policies, information of the signage, and the accuracy of the information. The management of Apollo Theme Park should always improve their queuing system in order to meet customer satisfaction so that they are happy to visit the theme park again.

For a future research on queue management system can be done at other theme attraction throughout Malaysia to assist management of the theme park to improve its customer satisfaction in the service given. The number of respondent is a basic limitation of this research. Total 50 respondents have been interviewed during data collection and only 45 responded could be used. Ideally, with more respondent the result will be more accurate. The second limitation may be related to the date of the research site. It is assumed that the results obtained are only representing customer's population within school holidays. There is a limitation to the question arise that is whether the findings would be the same or different, if the survey was to be conducted during normal days. Since this research only focused on the queue management system at Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur, the results obtained would only reveal minor aspect of Apollo Theme Park Kuala Lumpur and results will not represent other theme park in Malaysia.

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