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# Antecedents to Travel Intention and Event Experience of Kochi Muziris Biennale

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**Abstract.** Kochi Muziris Biennale (KMB) is a flagship initiative of the Kochi Biennale Foundation started its first edition in 2012 and successfully hosted few more editions. The covid pandemic situation have affected the hosting the 2020 edition and the present study examined the antecedents to travel intention, event experience, event satisfaction and revisit intention of visitors of earlier editions in the light of the expectation of a delayed 2020 edition very soon. The study was conducted among 212 visitors responding to queries. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was devised to assess the antecedents to travel intention and more scales were adopted from literature. Nonparametric procedures were used to draw the inferences. The study affirmed the positive influence of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control on the travel intention. The study could also emphasize the positive relationship between event experience, event satisfaction and revisit intention. Much awaited new edition of KMB is expected to have visitor support as in the past.

**Key Words:** *Event Experience, Kochi Muziris Biennale, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Travel Intention*

## INTRODUCTION

The 'Kochi-Muziris Biennale' (KMB) was always intended to be a catalyst for change. It was conceived with the goal of changing people's perceptions of art, culture, and, most crucially, ideas. An exhibition displaying the greatest of contemporary art in a city with a long history of international ties would serve as a source of inspiration as well as a trigger for many types of change, ushering in a new era of internationalism.(1) From being city known for cultural and economic heritage, Kochi have always been the one of the centers of tourist attraction in the State. KMB have added flavor to the destination image of Kochi and the event experience is worth noticing.

The inaugural Kochi-Muziris Biennale, which took place in 2012, was noted for its location specificity, whilst the second edition focused on the curator's conceptual 'journey.' In 2016–17, the third edition focused on time from a philosophical, material, and political standpoint. The Australian Embassy, the Norwegian Embassy, the Spanish Embassy, and the French Embassy all contributed to the event, as did arts councils, the Swedish Art Grant Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists, the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts, the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, and the Istituto Italiano Di Cultura. The patrons of the event included Aarti and Amit Lohia (Lohia Foundation), Anju Shah (G P Foundation), Asha Jadeja (Jadeja Motwani Family Foundation), Feroze and Mohit Gujral (Gujral Foundation/Outset India), Pheroza Godrej (Godrej Group) and Yusuff Ali M.A. (Lulu Group)

International). The event is, thus, a major driver of arts and culture in Kerala and across India as well. Chief Minister of the State Mr. Pinarayi Vijayan had also quoted that “though the Biennale is primarily an art event, it has economic and social benefits too. It has energised the tourism sector. The statistics show that lakhs of cultural enthusiasts surged to Kochi from around different corners of the world to view the first two editions. Both Kochi and Kerala benefit from this influx.” (1)

## Research Problem

Hosting exceptional events may be a one-of-a-kind chance to improve tourism, resulting in increased loyalty and connection to the location and its assets.(2) The importance of experiences is growing in events and festivals, which are good examples of the experience economy.(3) The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has been shown to be useful in predicting traveller intents and behaviors in previous investigations.(4) For both established and rising places, events have become a new and alternative kind of tourism attraction in recent decades. The importance of scheduled events in the tourist industry has long been acknowledged. The events sector has seen unprecedented expansion, bringing attention to the question of their event experience. Festivals and events are playing an increasingly crucial role in affecting the competitiveness of destinations, and thus it is essential to gain a better understanding of visitors' experiences.(2) The present study aims to study the antecedents of travel intention of visitors to Kochi Muziris Biennale along with the event experience of visitors.

## Research Hypotheses

The antecedents to travel intention to a destination could be assessed in different ways, in which the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) approach is prominent. (4) Considering the importance of the influence of antecedents to travel intention, the first hypothesis is framed:

H<sub>1</sub>: Visitor's Attitude, Visitors' Subjective Norms and Visitors' Perceived Behavioral Control are positively correlated to Travel Intention

Theoretical support states that event experience results in event satisfaction and a positive intention for revisit.(2,4,5) Keeping the spirit of literature in mind, the second and third hypotheses are framed:

H<sub>2</sub>: Event Experience is positively correlated to Event Satisfaction

H<sub>3</sub>: Event Experience and Event Satisfaction are positively correlated to Revisit Intention

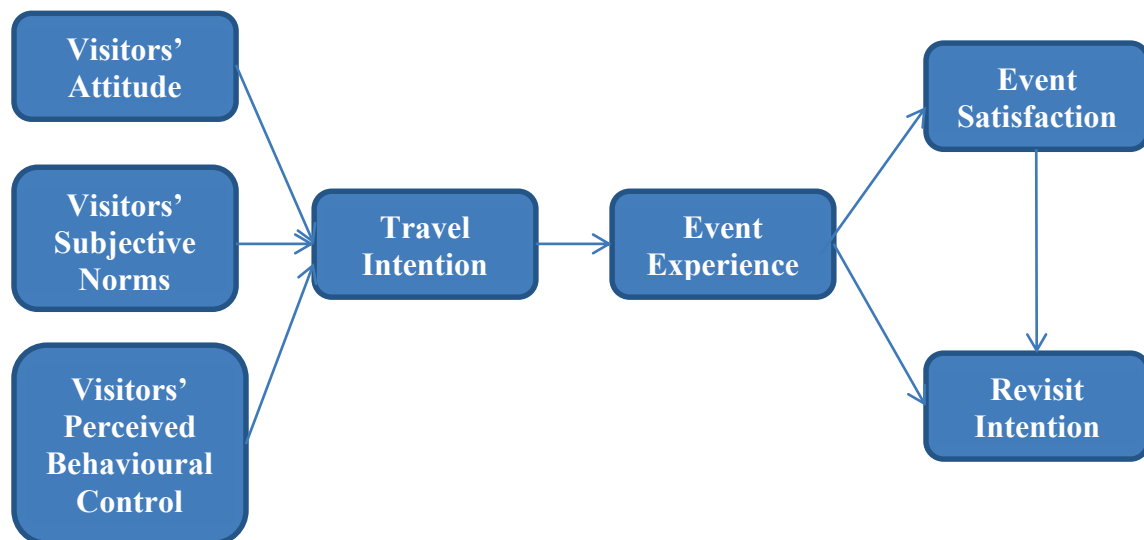


FIGURE 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

## METHOD

Convenience sampling has been used to collect the responses from visitors of Kochi Muziris Biennale using structure questionnaires. The measures has been adapted from previous studies.(2–4) 212 responses were received as part of the data collection out of which 50.9% was from female and 49.1% from male visitors. Average age of the visitors was 29.78. The visitors in the sample included 41.5% of students and 44.3% of employed individuals. 35.8% of the visitors in the sample were graduates and 38.7% were post graduates. 45.3% of the sample were residents of outside Ernakulam District and visited Kochi for the purpose of witnessing Biennale. 48.1% of the visitors in the sample have visited more than one edition of KMB, while 44.3% of the visitors in the sample attribute themselves as art lovers than being regarded as artists or casual visitors.

Cronbach's Alpha for all the constructs of the study was above 0.8 (Table 1) and are found to be eligible for further statistical procedures. Test normality produced significant p values ( $< 0.05$ ) and it could be observed that the data is not normally distributed. Nonparametric procedures are adopted to draw inferences on the hypotheses.

## RESULTS

Analysis of the collected information provided support to the research hypotheses of the study. Significant positive responses were received with respect to all constructs under study viz., Visitors' Attitude, Visitors' Subjective Norms, Visitors' Perceived Behavioral Control, Travel Intention, Event Experience, Event Satisfaction and Revisit Intention. Table 1 shows the significant values reported in support of the same.

TPB approach could evidence the antecedents of travel intention of visitors. Event experience, event satisfaction and revisit intentions were assessed further to infer on the correlation between the constructs.

Correlation analysis shows that there exists a significant positive correlation between the antecedents to travel intention. And hence  $H_1$  is supported ( $p < 0.001$ ). Further analysis also showed that Event Experience is positively correlated to Event Satisfaction which supports  $H_2$  ( $p < 0.001$ ). Event Satisfaction are significantly positively correlated to Revisit Intention. Hence,  $H_3$  is also supported ( $p < 0.001$ ).

### Tables

**TABLE 1.** Reliability, Normality and Descriptive Statistics

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	P Value (SW Test)	Mean	Median	SD	Z	P Value (Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test)
Visitors Attitude (3 items)	0.839	0.000	4.3585	4.6667	0.7223	-12.337	0.000
Visitor's Subjective Norms (3 items)	0.877	0.000	3.8176	4.0000	1.0437	-9.026	0.000
Visitor's Perceived Behavioral Control (3 items)	0.849	0.000	4.1792	4.3333	0.9019	-11.302	0.000
Travel Intention (3 items)	0.870	0.000	3.9277	4.0000	0.9594	-9.999	0.000
Event Experience (18 items)	0.949	0.000	3.9581	4.0625	0.7547	-11.058	0.000
Event Satisfaction (4 items)	0.909	0.000	4.2099	4.2500	0.7582	-12.001	0.000
Revisit Intention (3 items)	0.893	0.000	4.2138	4.3333	0.8477	-11.597	0.000

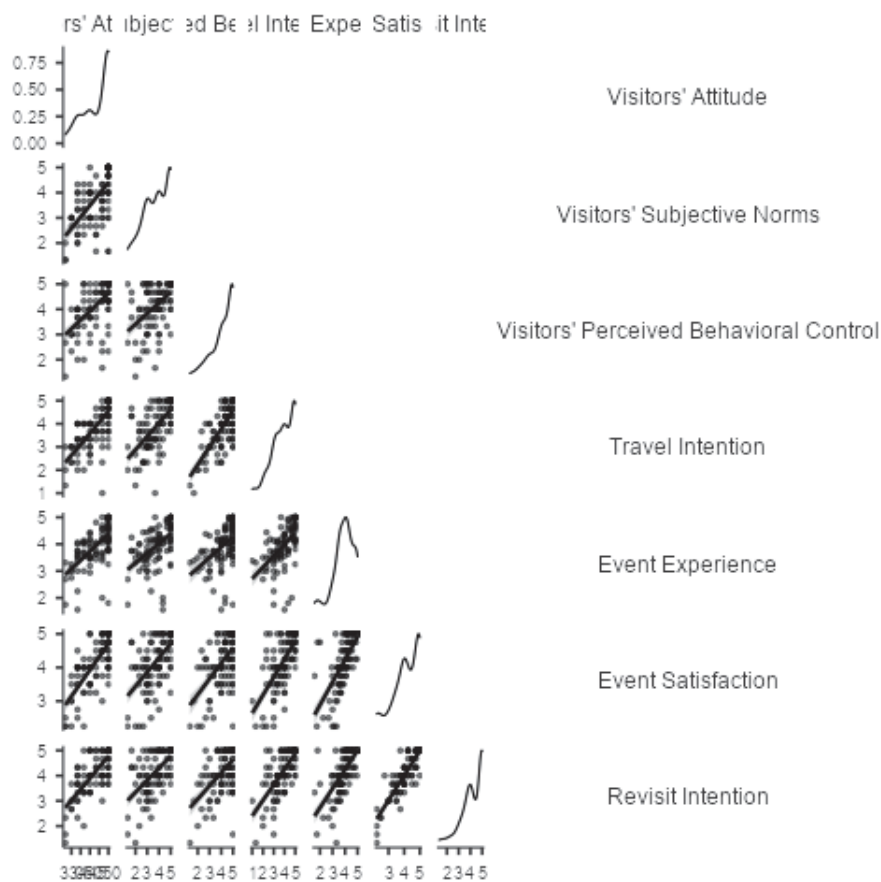
Source: Researchers' Computations (6,7)

**TABLE 2.** Correlation Matrix

		Visitors' Attitude	Visitors' Subjective Norms	Visitors' Perceived Behavioral Control	Travel Intention	Event Experience	Event Satisfaction	Revisit Intention
Visitors' Attitude	Spearman's rho	—						
	p-value	—						
Visitors' Subjective Norms	Spearman's rho	0.678 ***	—					
	p-value	< .001	—					
Visitors' Perceived Behavioral Control	Spearman's rho	0.612 ***	0.534 ***	—				
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—				
Travel Intention	Spearman's rho	0.768 ***	0.682 ***	0.679 ***	—			
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	—			
Event Experience	Spearman's rho	0.673 ***	0.595 ***	0.568 ***	0.661 ***	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	—		
Event Satisfaction	Spearman's rho	0.715 ***	0.611 ***	0.527 ***	0.673 ***	0.751 ***	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
Revisit Intention	Spearman's rho	0.719 ***	0.598 ***	0.502 ***	0.700 ***	0.725 ***	0.860 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	—

Source: Researchers' Computations (6,7)

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$



**FIGURE 2.** Correlation Diagram with Density

## CONCLUSION

Travel intention and event experience has been found to be promising at the Kochi Muziris Biennale. The positive spirit towards the antecedents and travel intention is expected to persist and contribute towards the success of the future editions of KMB. The evidence from collected responses is predominantly supporting the revisit intentions. The post covid regime expects the successful conduct of more events like KMB to foster fruitful movements of people to different destinations.

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