Thesis

Designing cultural Events experiential learning events through education

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The idea behind this title is purely for my own interest, as I believe this could be a very beneficial niche for future events related modules. It all started, due to the fact that the Institute has introduced a module where students have to come up with an idea of an event, plan it and execute it in real life.

This gave me more motivation as a lecturer, to explore various methods and events, to influence the students and bring about excitement in delivering the final product.
The main scope of this thesis is to understand more the types of learning students go through in an educational environment of designing cultural events through experiential learning. In order to arrive at the findings, various theories and school of thought were explored. This brought about an array of completely new perspectives on events motives and influences on both students and participants. Having designed such events and had students operate and participate actively, gave rise to some questions that students themselves ask when events are organised. This experiment was an eye opener for the students as realised what type of thinking and planning goes behind making dreams come true in relation to events. At the end of the thesis, students appreciated and understood the value of the types of learning and experience gathered from participating in such activities.

This research proved to be a very valuable one for me, as it gave me an insight of students wants and needs are when setting up and event, as well as, an inside look of the learning done by the students during this process.

Keywords
Interactivity, events, experiential learning, visual design, motivation, events canvas

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1 Introduction

Hands on practical's in higher institution has always evolved in a consistent manner, where students learn as they progress in their studies. The creating and delivering exciting memories to participants, is always a plus side of every event. Events nowhere days are seeking to improve the visitor's experiences to be authentic and unique. This study is all about creating such emotions and experiences not only to the visitors, but mostly importantly to the students who are giving a service in the event, as well as, measuring how much learning was obtained through this understanding. The primary concern in this research project was to facilitate student learning by designing an experiential learning model to provide students with the opportunity to experience a real event and in some way counter the knowledge-practice gap recognised in many vocationally orientated disciplines (Ruhanen, 2005). Enabling students to make the transition form study to work, requires vocational relevance which experiential learning methods and techniques can provide (Daly, 2001). It is very discouraging to walk into a classroom, ask prospective students what cultural events are occurring around them and have blank faces staring back. Instilling a cultural approach in today's youngsters is becoming very difficult, as none seem to have an interest in such an important part of societal interaction. An important part of the whole experiential learning is also the memories that students will take home and remember for the rest of their life.

1.2 Justification of this study

A study is often conducted to increase and advance in the knowledge. In this case, to provide information that can be used and applied to help the researcher understand and control their environment. This topic is very close to my heart. As an events lecturer, it is very hard to motivate and keep students interested in all sorts of events occurring around us, especially locally. Interactivity is tied to a long history of successful events. In fact, interactivity and teaching has proved to be a very fundamental approach in education. In the aspect of teaching and learning, the teacher student relationship was a one-way approach, but in making the event an interactive one, the teaching and learning has become bidirectional. So, by combing the two together, in an ideal world, this would be successful in keeping participants abreast with upcoming events and motivated in its organisation. The lack of motivation and participation in students is one of the difficulties being faced and raised in the education system. This study is needed to promote how designing cultural events will aid in the motivational, experiential and participation of students in the said events. This will be proven through an event, which will be designed accordingly for this purpose, where post event feedback will be gathered in order to obtain the data provided.

1.3   Aims and Objectives

This research is boosted by issues in cultural activities in relation to interactivity. The main aim is to create different interactive scenarios which can motivate students in cultural events, and therefore enhance the learning and knowledge in an educational setting. The objective behind this study is to determine that experiential learning, involves different approaches, making the learning and motivation grasped in a unique style. Through such experiences, the learner has been exposed to a memorable, rich and effective experience for and to learn. Experiential learning also gives participants their own identity and uniqueness in creating their own events. The sub objectives of this study include:

1. Create experiential learning approaches to motivate students
2. How to create an individual experiential (observation) learning experience
3. How to analyse students to memorable, rich and effectives cultural event scenarios.

Within these parameters of research, another sub objective comes into play, that of exploring the level of experience in relationship with the cognitive and emotions. This relationship can be seen in the various schools of psychological thought. Emotions are regarded as subjective, a first-hand experience of both sensations and intentions are defined as either pleasure or pain. Such a philosophy also plays a part in experiential learning, as through feelings and self-absorption within an event, will aid in the making that event memorable and unique. After all:

Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.

It is very difficult in order to understand the emotions of the learners and making use of such a phase for coaching and facilitating the learning curve. After all emotions are part of life's roller coaster, which help in making experiences more interesting and challenging. It is through such daily interactions, that one learns, reflects and adds knowledge. This is part of the fast thinking process approach. When people see, hear, smell or feel something, the sensory data is doubled in size and therefore the information and the learning exposure are quickly retrieved and absorbed in their experience. Emotional memories help the brain in sending messages to remember a certain occurrence in one's lifetime.

The primary concern in this research project was to facilitate student learning by designing an experiential learning model to provide students with the opportunity to experience a real event and in some way counter the knowledge-practice gap recognised in many vocationally orientated discipline

1.4 Thesis Structure

This chapter provides the background information of the study, which leads to the research problem. It briefly analyses the problem in the literature and identifies the impact which the study seeks to address. The proposal of the study is to see the importance of designing cultural events to instigate some form of learning from it.

Chapter 2 looks at the literature review that helped in giving a clearer picture on the background of event creation. This chapter gave an insight to all the various motivation that play an important part in creating an event for the use of education. Here all relevant literature on the topic at hand, is displayed and examined in order to be able to obtain, factors and variables to focus on the study at hand. Certain topics and motivations became very clear once the research began and a more detailed approach was used. Making use of the of the events held with the students either on ITS (Institute of Tourism Studies) campus or in other locations, gave more indication into what really matters in the literature review for this study. Having a module on which such research is linked to, is a blessing in disguise, as it gives the research a better understanding of what does beyond the event itself and not just through observations, but also through operating the various events and being a tutor to the students proceeding in such events.

Chapter 3 explains the choice of methodology and methods adopted in this research-based subject, on the analysis and objectives required. It explored the methodological position to be used and discovered the various research paradigms which lead to the choice of the data collection approach adopted. Various data collection was used for this research, in order to get as much data and information as possible from the participants. This chapter explains in detail how making use of different types of methodology, aids in extracting information from the participants, thus making it possible to collect findings and reflect on them.

Chapter 4 presents the research findings of the qualitative data collected during the observation, questionnaires and interviews that were conducted. In this chapter, all questions and interviews asked are being analysed and compared with the main literature review.

Chapter 5 presents the research conclusions which includes an evaluation of the study. In this chapter the importance of the study is highlighted, as the end result gives out a holistic picture of the importance in designing events for experiential learning.

2 Literature Review

It is of vital importance that the designing of events in education has a prominent effect on those whom operate the event, as well as those attending the event. Having an event which becomes a success, is the utmost for event planners. However, an event that is also educational is much more satisfying to all those whom work the activity much to their satisfaction. Academia and industry are experiencing a change in the way which events are considered. It has become of great importance that rather on focusing only on the logistical and operational aspects, events are being considered as, socially constructed staged experiences lived differently by different audiences that require designing instead of managing (Brown, 2005). Brown argues that this generates a rich, new field to be explored. On the other hand, O'Toole (2011), considers it as a purposeful arrangement of elements of an event to maximise the positive impression on the attendees and other key stakeholders. Others explore the idea the event design relates to the activation of sensory and emotional experiences and is not just a simple production. Getz (Getz, 2012), identifies design with the implementation of themes, settings, consumables, services and programmes that deliver experiences for several stakeholders to derive specific objectives. Within the event design there is also the element of the deign thinking. Generally, Design thinking (DT) is an innovate process aims at discovering the needs and opportunities to create new solutions but also an approach for business transformation and strategy that connect people through design.

2.1 Event experience design concept

Event design has progress meaningfully in the past 20 years. In the beginning, the concept mainly focused on the decor and theme of an event, giving a boost to the aesthetics of the experience. However, throughout time, event design started to shift its focus on delivering specific goals via problem solving activities. Both Berridge (2012) and Brown (2007) and Getz (2012), argue that three foundations of the setting, people and management allow an event concept to be more a practical approach. The event design needs to be as fundamental at the various levels of the organisational structure, culture, processes and values, as much as possible for the staging experience to be purposeful. This gives a much more in-depth thinking process about all the decisions about planning and managing the event. Such an approach gives a whole new meaning to the event, where experience creation is the main target of the activity. It is up to the event designer or planner to provide the complete positive experience and aid in making the activity and its components reachable and available to the audience at hand. In fact, Brown and Hutton (2013), have identified the three pillars of design – to capture the audience, to provide the foundation for an optimal experience and to deliver the event objectives.

However, in this study, was also highlight other principles such as emotions, authenticity, and surprise. The psychological, physiological and behavioural elements of the audience are important to be understood in order to design effective experiences. For an overall impact of the event design, the design should be based on the site location, the activities and interactions focused on the sensory, emotional and learning components for a complete understanding (Beard, 2014). Confirmation of this argument McLoughlin (2015) states, that characteristics of an event design needs to include in delivering a participative, emotional and a memorable experience. He argues that a mapping of some kind for the physical and emotional elements is needed. In order to give a clear idea on the aims of the event's objectives and activities, as well as, the level of participation involved in such events. Due to such thinking, an "experience relationship" can be created between the designers and their audience. This all revolves around the service design concept, where services are developed through interaction with several stakeholders and the designer's approaches. Using a service design approach in events design, aids in targeting the needs, emotions, and experiences of the prospective customers and the value they will perceive during the event. However, the only way to create and deliver personal experience is to co create it with the participants, so the participants will not be passive towards the event and it design, since they are a key component of the whole activity.

The concept of event design has evolved over the past years by several authors, who came up with various event design characteristics. To start with, events design was mostly associated with the themes and décor, to emphasis the aesthetic part of the event (Shone & Parry, 2013). The result of event design is to deliver the main objectives of the event through the core activity. As indicated by Getz (Getz, 2012), event design is based on setting, people and management. The design should be communicated at different levels of the organisational structure, culture, processes and values, including components leading to the staging of an experience that need to be purposefully created (Berridge, 2007) (Brown, 2014). This concept brought about a shift from event management domination to a total revamp of event design, where the latter has control over planning and managing the actual event. This type of logic and thinking, triggers the idea that events are key components for creating experiences and memory making. The event designer can only provide opportunities that affect the audience behaviour and hopefully generate positive experiences, choreographing as may event components as to make life easy in making the objectives a reality. Brown and Hutton (Brown & Hutton, 2013) recognised three pillars of design: to capture the audience, to provide the foundation for an optimal experience and to deliver the event objectives such an authenticity, emotions and surprise factor amongst others. Most thoughts and behaviour features need to be understood for the event design to be effective.

Throughout history, expressing and feeling emotions have always been regarded as a weakness and irrationality, however, such expressions were always associated and linked to learning and development (Scott, et al., 2017). John Dewey argues that there is a co relation between experience and experiential learning, that is forms a base for intellectual or cognitive side of people, which alienates them from the immediate environment and therefore create an emotional bond. Life is a rollercoaster of emotions and therefore are important to motivate and satisfy life, even though not all the correct and right emotions are experience at the right time, place, size or frequency. This perhaps triggers more the memory for experiential learning, since the emotion is associated with the event.

Experience design is focused mainly on the attendees. It is through the customer service and experience what will set apart the events from competitors and make them memorable. Most importantly a happy participant is more often than not, a returning guest, who also sets the standards for any next events in the pipeline. Ensuring that events are memorable for the right reasons, will keep guests happy and keep them coming back to other events, which also means that there is consistency in what is being done

2.2 Experiential Learning theory

Learning from experience is one of the most vital lessons and natural ways of learning from everyone. It mostly gives the opportunity for the member of the audience to reflect and think of what has been absorbed through the event. This gives great unpinning knowledge to the audience attending the event. The most important theory for experiential learning is that of David Kolb. The works of Kolb is an amalgamation of a number of schools of thought, which includes the philosophical pragmatism (Dewey), social psychology (Lewin) and cognitive development theory (Piaget). Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) highlights cognition over affect, and behaviour learning theories, where experience has a central role in the ELT's process. According to Kolb's theory, learning styles are influenced by personality type, educational specialisation, career choice, current job roles and tasks and cultural influences (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Such theory evolves around the process of transforming knowledge into experience. There are four stages in this learning model, where two polar opposite dimensions of grasping experience are utilised – concrete experience (CE) and abstract conceptualisation (AC), while two polar opposite dimensions of transformation experience – reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE) are mentioned. This model gives an opportunity to the learner to go through all the phases at each stage, that is, experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting. During the grasping experience, the individuals will identify new information by immersing themselves in the reality via its tangibility. On the other hand, the opposite can be experienced through abstract conceptualisation. Through this style, new information is

acquired via symbolic representation through thinking, analysing, and other systematically planning. In the transformational phase, reflective observation gives the ability to monitor others involved in the experience and reflect on what occurs, while on the other hand the active experimentation stage encourages to jump in and start doing things. Kolb notes that the learner can approach the model at any stage and phase. On the other hand, Wilson identified six main perspectives on learning which include the following: behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, social learning, humanism and cognitive neuroscience. He argues that there is no real agreement among the various definitions of learning, however, most highlight that behavioural change, cognition and experience are the most used. Kolb also recognised four different learning styles which can be identified with different types of individuals. These styles consist of the following:

1. Assimilators – those who learn via sound logical theories
2. Convergers – those who learn better with practical applications of concepts and theories
3. Accommodators- who learn better when a hands-on experience is used
4. Divergers – who learn better when allowed to, observe and collect a wide range of information.

Experience connects not just the skills and knowledge, but also an individual and the object involved in the collaboration. Dewey (1933) mentions the assimilation of experience as a lens through which analyses between individuals and their environment are made, where it very clear that experience is something that links between the action and thought. Dewey, through his theory was able to connect opposites to interconnect it; person and nature, subject and object, knowing and doing, mind and body. Generally, it is via this process that theory comes into practice and give experience a unifying concept. However, it not always the case, that individuals learn from experience. There are quite a lot situations where an experience does not lead to learning, or were an event has very little impact. Piaget (1950) identified four main stages of cognitive development, resulting in sensori -motor (0-2 years), pre-operational thought (2-7 years), concrete operations (7-11 years) and formal operations (11-15 years). Piaget argues that if a child has not attained the development capability, then no experience will be a learning and responsive for them. Some experiences are there to reconfirm what is already taught, and little attention is paid to them. This means that if no attention is being paid, there is no new opportunity for new learning. Dewey (1933), insists that people will not learn from experience, but rather from the reflection on the experience. In every event, individuals must pay attention to the opportunity of new learning rather, otherwise such will not happen. For the learning to occur, there must be reflection on what happened, how it happened and why. Not including these in the learning process, the experience will just fade in the background. Having said so, for this to occur, a level of interest in the event must be attained as well.

Atherton (Atherton, 2005) argues that experiential learning is a type of holistic learning which identifies a range of learning styles. Such theory focuses on the participants who reflect on their involvements in the event, producing understanding and transfer of skills and knowledge. Experiential is mainly absorbed via the doing and using the process of learning through such hands-on approach. This type of learning has been used in a variety of ways to promote innovation with various learning styles, environment and programs. It has also been observer by academics that experiential learning theory is a very useful tool to understand batter the learning, and can lead to a more deep comprehensive learning, which compared to other types of learning such as teacher centre approach (Sewchuk, 2005).

2.2.1 Experiential learning for students

It has been proven that by various researchers, that experiential learning has a great impact on the elements of employability for students. This was reflected by a study done in the United Kingdom with reference to those following a degree in arts management and event management (Beaven & R, 2006). This is due to the fact that such courses, provide students with training in preparation for this kind of work. Empirical research has demonstrated that education services and providers, use a dynamic range of approaches to be able to support student employability which includes work placements and experience, professional development training and opportunities to gain experience of running live events (Beaven & R, 2006). As part of their studies within the Institute of Tourism Studies, especially those who opt to embark in an events management career, requires students to manage the conceptualisation, planning, funding and delivery of at least two live events during their study years. In the events industry, it is vital that students need to learn about cultures in order to survive this millennium. It is only recently that concept of cultural intelligence came about in studies. This means that acquiring such knowledge students can be competent at an event. Albert Bandura (1977) came about with social behavioural learning which includes classical conditioning and operant conditioning. However, he also added two important elements that of mediating processes that occur between stimuli and responses, as well as, learning behaviour through observational learning (Mcleod, 2016). This theory mainly involves children, however, most of the theory says applies to students who are also learning this trade. During an event, students are surrounded with influential models, where examples can be taken from. Most of the time during an event, attention to such role models is taken into consideration, especially to their behaviour and attitude within the event. It is more likely that such behaviour might be copied from the students at another event in a later stage. In a first instance students, most likely attend and imitate the behaviour of the model. If students observe that certain type of behaviour is rewarded, it is most likely that such

attitude will continue to be performed. This also relates to attachment to specific models that possess qualities seen as rewarding.

On the other hand, Bandura (1986), also refers to social learning theory as a 'bridge' between traditional learning theory and the cognitive approach (Mcleod, 2016). This is due to the mental factors involved in the learning. Bandura (Bandura, 1986), argues that humans are active information processors and think about the relationship between their behaviour and its consequences. It is also through mediation processes, that an event is successful, not just through observing others. There are four types of mediation processes:

- Attention: how student' s is exposed to behaviour. In order to imitate, a behaviour needs to grab attention. This is extremely important to be influencing others by imitation.
- Retention: how student' s remember behaviour. Social learning is not immediate, so this process can be vital in that scenario.
- Reproduction: the student's ability to perform such behaviour just demonstrated.
- Motivation: the will to perform the behaviour. At the end of the day within this industry, it is always a case of performance for the benefit of others.

During their studies, students, face a multitude of skills and knowledge that aid in making them better event planners. This is due to the following elements instilled in the students via experiential learning. This includes in achieving understanding the subject matter and specialising in it, gain skills both in theoretical and hands on approaches, efficacy beliefs, which are qualities that determine students' beliefs that a difference can be made, and meta cognition learning, meaning how to learn and to reflect on this learning. Clearly, an emphasis on this matter is made, but studies show that such a concept of experiential learning is still a mystery to academics and need persuasion. This is also clearly seen by Malta's tourism industry, where, employers, ask for employees to be qualified, rather than just relaying on experience. Having qualifications in vocational subjects has becoming the norm, so much so, that such subjects are even taught at obligatory school for the past five years. For employability reasons, students having experience in their sector contributes greatly to being better employed, according to a research done by Harvey and Green (Harvey and Green 1994). The attitude of employers towards students having already experience in the field, brings a direct assist to the company for which they have been employed. Therefore, in vocational schools such as ITS (Institute of Tourism Studies), having modules that target such skill sets, is a major contribution to the students experiential learning, both directly and indirectly. When students do things on their own, such as creating an event from scratch, they are using all the knowledge which was previously obtained from other educational institutions, as well as, developing ways of

thinking and analysing perspectives from not just the point of view of the organiser, but also as a participant. Experience is highly valued for employability. In their study, Harvey and Green (2004), compiled a list for employers, a list of 16 transferable skills, out of which the following resulted in being the main requirements, that employers look for. These consisted of the following: written communication, willingness to learn, reliability, commitment, oral communication, flexibility, self-motivation and time management. Within vocational training schools, these skills can all be accomplished via the various modules found within the academic learning, as well as, training through the experience gathered whilst attending the lectures. Work based learning is a way of gaining acceptable experience and encourage employers to invest in such new trainees. Through event organisation students gain the following essential skills such as: project management, work with audiences or customers, hands on production experience, budgeting, work with performers or artists, promotion and public relations, fundraising, development and planning a marketing programme. Opportunities such as embedding experiential learning within live event production is beneficial to the students as learning is also made more fun and hands on.

2.2.2 Creating experiential learning approaches for education

In the education sector, especially those relating to vocational training, experiential learning approaches play a crucial role in education. At the end of the day, the main purpose of the education system is to provide the industry with skilled employees and promote economic growth. The concept of a learning landscape is needed to improve analysis and application of experiential approaches. The learning landscape approach emphasises the influences impacting the students learning process. This is a conceptual model in which the student's learning experiences can be examined, highlighted, that all the learning is not isolated from a single module, but rather is influenced by each other throughout the course of studies. In this case unique learning is affected by various influences beyond the education, that students enjoy, including social relationships and experiences of places and space (Backman, et al., 2019). This includes formal, informal and non-formal learning. Most students cite that the most powerful tool of learning experience is that of moving, touching, stretching or challenging in some way. Sometimes it can be work related, sometimes not. When creating experiential learning, the development of personal understanding, and skills via analysis, as well as, reflection on the activity should be kept in mind. When given students the go ahead of experimental learning, means that it is all about giving students the opportunity to experiment with various techniques in a different environment, indoors or outdoors, as argued by Kolb's cycle of learning – Plan, Do, Review, Apply. In most cases, if students experience something it is most likely that this will be remembered forever (Moody, 2012).

Creating experiences also means that students who are academically challenged, will not find the learning boring and out of touch that cannot be understood or be related, so students can be engaged in the project from the start. This also indicates that within an event, students learn to trust each other, deal with different types of communication and create a team effectiveness. In order to create a memorable experience for education, there needs to be a balance of academic input and opportunities to experiment, by creating links where the learning took place and the real work challenges and situations, as well as, committing to a follow up. It is through outing students outside their comfort zone, that learning is achieved, as experimentation would come into play to make their event work. This gives them the opportunities to give feedback to each other and explore other options for working together in various ways. This is also a means of developing talent in the students that was unknown to everyone. Creativity comes into play, as the event is built, bit by bit. The learning experiences may have a huge impact on the certain students; however, it is via experiences that a student might refer to and use the technique learnt that shapes how the interaction and behaviour with others. Experience is a complete process where action and thought work hand in hand, rather than working as opposites. One might say, that learning, and experience might mean the same thing and experiential learning may be considered a tautology. However, not all events may result in experience and some painful experience may discourage future learning. The activity and interaction support most learning, but will not always result in learning, as the experience might reflect on what happened during the event. Of course, the experience is very much tied to the memory of the event and the result of the event. Generally experiential learning is gained as an insight through the conscious or unconscious internalisation of observed interactions, which build the knowledge and experience. Gibson (Gibson et al, 1985) came up with a model that can very much be absorbed in creating experiential learning for education, together with Massaro and Cowan (Massaro and Cowan, 1983) where five elements were introduced : Stimuli, the senses, the filtering process, interpretation, and responses. The stimuli may affect the external elements like objects and people around the event, as well as within the student which may include feelings such as hunger, thirst and other things. If the senses are working well, they might stimulate the sensory ranges during the event. How students feel and their reactions during the event aids or not to the learning process. It is also very important that student filter what is needed to be learnt during the event. When an experience is present, it is allowed through factors such as pervious knowledge, previous experience, emotions, self-concept of the locations and personal needs.

2.3 Understanding Experiences

In most events, experience is the main component of the purchase of goods and services in modern times. This is enhanced by the environment, delivered and experience, in matters of how participants interpret the elements of the understanding received. There are factors to consider in order to conceptualise the procedure of experience creation, but also ways and modes that give meaning to the providers and mostly importantly participants. Each experience has various ways of interpretations for every participant. Wynne(1998),argues that certain individuals use the experience preference as measures to 'climb the social position', whereby such individuals make use of such positions for personal social gain and lifestyle. Such a theory indicates that experience choice relays on the matter of communication, but also, re-affirms that interpretation results are manipulated by surrounding factors as to whether the experience is accepted or not. In order to come up with an experience result for the event, there is the planning and programming of the activity, as well as, the participation of the audience. Thus, all this, gives way in interpreting how audiences make meaning of the information given throughout this process. A very important concept in events, is experiential marketing, which aids in becoming acquainted with the consumption experience, that encapsulates the audience's positive emotions and maintain them mesmerized (Shaw, 2005). Experiences have changed to emphasis the desires and needs of the audiences and participants, who look for touching experiences to create a holistic and long lasting personal experience (Hosany & Witham, 2009), in order to aid in realising their dreams and achieve their desired lifestyle (Smith & Wheeler, 2002). Nowadays, events marketing personnel are in search for the prospective customers as decision makers and focus on product attributes, benefits of products and good quality (Hosany & Witham, 2009). On the other hand, Schmit (Schmit, 1999), argues that, audiences and participants are mostly in search of experiences that dazzle their senses, engage them personally, touch their hearts and stimulate minds. Such encounters are accomplished via experiential marketing, since theories view consumers as emotional beings and focus on giving pleasurable experiences (Williams, 2006). Picard and Robinson argue that a significant increase has been seen the customer's observation and participation in festivals and other celebratory events. This is due to participants seeking an enjoyable and memorable experiences via social interactions and performances, which gives a distraction from everyday life (Picard & Robinson, 2006).

Event experience design is aimed towards the motivation of the personas participating in the activity. Some consider experience design as a creator of memorable moments with little consideration of soundscape (Bharwani & Jauhari, 2013). Such a concept is not only applied on the day of the event, but also during the pre and post event planning. Some

studies show assumptions in what makes an event memorable, rather then what is remembered, as an imagine (Stadler, et al., 2018). A vital part of the design experience is the holistic approach of the journey for the audience. A good event design plan, must understand the character, needs and desires of the prospective attendee persona, as important knowledge is gathered for the event creation lifecycle. It is also very valuable that as the consumers expectations change and evolve constantly, the designer must keep an ongoing update on strategies to engage the audience before, during and after the activities are held. For the experience to be a positive one, audiences need must be considered on a variety of levels. However, before strategic thinking for the planning of the event, an understanding in the gain of the audience's holistic experiences must be tackled. Such thinking can be addressed as the five dimensions of the attendee experience. This process focuses on the participants' psychological, cognitive, emotional, social and environmental conditions. The psychological affects the understanding the attendee's personality, role, status and image. This reflects more on the social dimension of the individuals' position in society and how to be seen in the eyes of colleagues and peers. Cognitive reflects on the psychological aspects that impact and influence the attendees' expectations, motivations, of previous events. Such a process gives light to positive or negative memories, and expectations of pervious events as experienced by the attendees' and questions on how to enhance the positive and resolve the negative. During the emotional dimension, focuses on how the pervious stages shape the attendees' emotional needs. The social dimension gives way to reflect on all the previous factors and understands ways of how attendees are affected by other participants and vice versa. This focuses on the social relationships and the affect the factors mentioned so far. The environmental dimension relates to the physical space and requirements of the event. This last dimension encompasses the bond with the other four stages, how the environment can aid in bringing about the desired outcomes for the participants. However shared emotions can be transmitted through expressions via face, body or words, as well as the sharing can also occur without the physical proximity (Del Vicario, et al., 2016). This indicates that experiencing an event collectively can stimulate emotional contamination (Scherer & Coutinho, 2013), where a greater social meaning is created after the event has passed, mainly via memory and emotions experience during the event.

All the above emotions are shared at social extension distance either at interpersonal level, that is, amongst friends or partners, or else at a group socio cultural level. When this is experienced collectively, such memories tend to influence emotional feedback or collective experience of emotions. Being part of an event, undergoing the same type of experiences, creates social bonds and physical proximity, which gives an added value to the whole experience and new partnerships are formed.

In today's fast demanding world, events must be versatile as much as possible, in order to have a diversity of experiences for the visitors and where possible every one of them come out with different encounters. Participants have become more demanding, especially where it comes meet their needs. Visitors have become very selective in choosing what events to attend to, not only due to the nature of the event, but also by how smooth and seamless the pre attendee experience is. It is vital that the event experience is designed based on the understanding the interests and preferences of the targeted niche and using such information to create personalised communications and interactions. Attendees are always on the lookout for personalised experiences, which has become crucial to any event planner, in order to exceed the customer's expectations, as well as, have that competitive edge over other such sectors. Like all experience in life, the attendee journey is a roadmap to experience design. The whole customer experience does not materialise the moment a participant enters the event, nor does it end once the event is finished. The actual experience may begin weeks or months prior to the event. In the case of a returning attendee, the experience maybe be a continuation from a previous event. The actual experience for the customer, starts in the moment that the event is learnt about and decide to participate. Especially, if travelling is needed, this continues when boarding a plane, renting a car or checking into a hotel. The whole experiences will be staring coming to life and building itself up, once the attendees will review the events materials and begin to interact with other attendees and speakers. With that in mind, the event, will last longer than the onsite touchpoints. The event is not over until the attendees, stops participating, stops acting or until the goal of the event has been achieved. Since experiences transform into memories, audiences can talk about the event in eternum, and therefore, the event can be incurred for months or even years.

The understanding of experiences lies in a thorough journey, premeditated design that reflects all the dimensions for a complete attendee experience. This includes the mapping of the customers' journey, the vital points where a participant interacts with a company. The mapping of the participants journey gives a preview of what works during the buying cycle, where there are any shortcomings, between what the customer wants and what the event company is providing. Using such a tool to understand to the process of what the customer goes through, is vital, and most importantly, useful to get a deeper insight of the needs and desires of the attendees. In the end, what any event requires, is a to provide the best experience possible, to keep repeat guests and recommendation for a bigger and larger clientele. Part of the experience is understanding the communication between the event organisation and attendees throughout the journey. To better the experience and the quality of the event, it is crucial that a form of feedback is given. This can be obtained through a survey at the end of the event or some other kind. Technology can also lend a hand, via the postings on social media, which gives instant response. Another form of

interaction, making it part of the experience is any promotional experience taking place such as websites, registration, networking and other. All these touchpoints create and enhance the guest's journey by creating awareness, engaging participants, looking at results and building long term relationships, by forming repeated guests.

2.4 Gamification and technology to understand experience

As technology is continually evolving, event planners must be updated all the time on the latest developments in the area and how to make use of for competitive advantage. Rialty et al (2016) highlights the importance of digital technologies as experiential marketing tools to improve the experience of visitors. The very first form of encounters of technology lies in the registration process or the purchasing of tickets, and therefore such an activity needs to be as smooth as can be to start the journey of with a positive note, which gives a good basis to the start of the event. Quick process for these activities, eases out any frustrations that can be encountered by the attendee. Keeping the attendees on edge until the event, can prove to be difficult, and therefore the latest trends in create suspense is the concept of event gamification.

Applying gaming mechanics increases the popularity of the event, as well as the whole experience which is slowly building up to the day. This also proves to be engaging, keeping attendees alert and enjoying the event prior it goes live and informed. Technology also helps to display live information at real time, which can easily be done on site and be kept updated in real time. This type of communication ca be easily used on huge events, however social media also aids, as live feeds can also be updated constantly. However, such apps can also prove to be a distraction, it all depends on the nature of the event. Gamification in events bring about innovation for those visitors would like to be surprised. It is also an educational outreach for visitors and for future behaviour of the attendees. *Gamification is a design approach that introduces game elements into nongame contexts to attract participants and create gameful experiences* (Hamari & Koivisto, 2015). Scott (Scott, et al., 2009) argues that in such a manner, there is a co creation of the experience in which visitor is an active participant rather than just a passive observer, and the interaction between staff and consumer becomes of great importance.

The emotions experienced in a participant will incite a better possibility to return and less leeway to complain, as the participant considers their visit to be complete rather than still needs improvement. Egger and Bulenca (2015) explain when an experience is complete, there is more inclination to repeat a similar event and also willing to pay a higher price, while the intention to complain and spread negative comments are decreased drastically. On the other hand, if a participant feels incomplete, additional surprises could be an

option. More often than not emotions are simulated through engagement, while, it can also deter or limit the engagement (Bagozzi, et al., 1999).

 Gamification also brings about the element of fun which boosts the participants' attitudes towards learning. Prensky (Prensky, 2001), argues that fun provides indirect learning, "*It appears that the role of fun in the learning process is to create relaxation and motivation. Relaxation enables a learner to take things in more easily and motivation enables them to put forth effort without resentment*". Such an example can be that of Lego Serious Play. Even though this is a hands-on approach rather than digital, the aim is improving creative thinking and communication via the building of 3 dimensional models and tell a story about their models.

 Alsawaier (Alsawaier, 2018) explains that the fun part via gamification is the idea of solving problems and overcoming challenges as critical thinking is applied. In such environment, participants learn through play and are rewarded for developing a skill. Even though this example is used in the digital word, many events also apply this concept in real life during certain engaging events. Gamification in events is utilised as a catalyst to support the key learning points and put forward a clear message rather than the participants struggling in figure them out. Liu et al (Liu, 2017) advises that gamification design can be categorised into two, gamification objects and mechanics. Gamification objects refer to visual or non-visual digital objects, while gamification mechanics is a higher level of design that plays patterns and dynamics such a level system, point system quests, collaboration and social networking systems. Some academics came up with the concept of Funification to provide game-based learning (GBL).

Wiberg's study focused on the fun within GBL. However, Normann (Norman, 2002) (Normann, 2005) outlined a design theory-based approach to relate pleasure and emotions:

1. Visceral design: the appearance, aesthetic, and attractiveness of objects. i.e., people, places and things.
2. Behavioural design: utility of the form vs function of an object or event, i.e. ease-of-use, challenging to the subject.
3. Reflective design: personal rationalisation, sensemaking, and conceptualisation with an object or event, i.e. personal brand, self- image, self-confidence.

Such a theory gives life to how the concept of fun, through gamification gets real and influences the participant during an event. Fun can also be describing that special sparkle, a special excitement, that brings about motivation to the participant during the event. Another author Falstein (Falstein ,2005) argues that funativity is based on the ancestral

concept of our roots in hunter/gatherer societies. He describes the breakdown of fun in four categories:

1. Physical fun: situations where the subject attempts to successfully overcome threats to survival, i.e., exploration, sports, racing, casino activities, etc.
2. Social fun: dynamic, multiplayer gaming based upon tribes, teams and groups including activities associated with language skills development and storytelling.
3. Mental fun: pattern manipulation, recognition, and sensemaking, such as a game like the Rubric's Cube.
4. Blended fun: a synthesis of the three previous types of fun in a singular game.

This theory proves that gamification and funativity can be used at any instance and any time during any sort of event, to make it more interesting for the participants and the learning environment for indirect education comes through.

2.5 Motivation for Events

For events to be successful, attendance and motivation are a big part of making such an activity in events. It seems that the Maltese public lacks in motivation to participate in activities held around the island. Statistics reported by the Times of Malta in 2017 showed this. This report included attendances to sporting and other events such as concert performances, dance shows, visits to cultural heritage sites and going to the cinema. When compared to other Europe, 80% of the Maltese population failed to attend any sporting events in 2015. This was the lowest fourth percentage compared to that of other member states. Another type of data reported that 70% of the respondents did not attend any live performances at concerts, theatre, ballet, operas, open air jazz and other concerts. This compares with 58% in the rest of the EU. Another disappointing number was that of visiting cultural heritage sites, such as museum, art gallery, archaeological sites, where 74% stated such locations were never visited. Such numbers can partially indicate the attendance lack in this sector, due to the country's disposable income and priorities of expenditure. On the other hand, such statistics tell a story of how the educational system is performing.

An interest in live arts is taught at school, looked after by parents or guardians and then the experience lasts a lifetime. Clearly according to these numbers this is not occurring, and very much needs to be. Events are not only needed for educational purpose and innovation, but also act as means in developing the economy. Crompton and Mckay (Crompton & McKay, 1997) argue that participant motivation the key to sculpt the event in relation to what the audience desires and to satisfy them. Iso- Ahola (Iso-Ahola, 1982) identifies that motivations become recognised when a person identifies activities that they

could, should or might partake in, especially if there is some sort of satisfaction attained to it. Events are also viewed as tools in place marketing and destination image making and are valued for their ability to animate cities, resorts and attractions (Andersson & Getz, 2008). Festivals and special events are important key features in communities' lives sue to activities and boost economy for local outlets and enhance the local communities image (Getz, 2008) (Gursoy & Kim, 2004).

However, such theories are the prove in the pudding. When Malta's Capital city, Valletta, was European Cultural Capital of the year in 2018, more the 317,000 people attended events organised by the Valletta 18 committee. In fact, this was also quoted as the biggest year for culture since the Island's Independence. The chairman of the foundation during this time quoted that people and participants visited and took part in such occurrences, due to the changing perspective of outreach projects held by the foundation. Throughout this year, emphasis was made to give a legitimate excuse for cultural and educational bodies, to lobby for more public funding and resources to be used for educational events. However, this also becomes an obligation and responsibility of cultural and educational institutions to ensure in leaving a long-lasting legacy and bring forth cultural and intellectual development (Camilleri, M).

It possible to analyse the relationship between basic human needs and motivation to attend festivals and events. Maslow (1954) argued this in his theory of needs and suggests that once an individual is satisfied with innate needs, another one is immediately sought after. This is based on the hierarchy of needs set on five levels of physiological needs, safety, socialisation, esteem and self- actualisation. By identifying the range of integral needs outlined in this theory, it is imaginable to draw several conclusions as to why individuals may choose to attend festivals and special events. Getz argues that attending festivals and special events, it is possible to satisfy the need for social interaction and therefore fulfil the social psychological requirements on Maslow's integral hierarchy of needs.

2.5.1 Visitor motivation

Iso-Ahola (Iso-Ahola, 1982) concluded that motivation behind a visitor participating in an event is due two main reasons: self determination and sense of intrinsic motivation, together with the theory of approach and avoidance. Such theory argues that a participant is motivated by both seeking and escape motives. The seeking motivations include thrill seeking, seeking social contact or challenge seeking, whilst escaping part includes escaping from the personal or interpersonal environments, or changing routine, regulation

and normality. However, this model does not provide an exhaustive list of reasons why motives may occur.

The earliest studies done by Gillespie (1987) show that at a folk's festival in America, there were three types of visitors: the family type, the folkniks and the outlaws. The family type searched for a whole experience to engage the family. On the other hand, the outlaw where disruptive and unresponsive to the music or cultural trends, instead seeking the rustic and rural trends of the festival. On the other hand, the folkniks, involved themselves in the folk culture and music and was after informal and cultural experience (Gillespie, 1987). Much later in years, Formica and Uysal (1996), carried out a study at the Umbria Jazz Festival in Italy.

The analysis consisted of the place of origin, age gender and reasons for attending the festival. The results produced five motivational categories: excitement, thrills, socialisation, entertainment, event novelty and family togetherness. The study showed that the resident attendees, where present at the event for socialisation motives. The, visitors however attended purely for entertainment purposes. In order to create a more detailed approach in determining the motives behind visitor's participation in an event. This exercise was held in a festival at San Antonio, Mexico, were a total of 1,496 respondents were profiled. The main aim was to cross analyse motivations at different events at 60 events across a ten-day period. For each respondent, gender, age, group size, and place of origin was recorded, along with the motivation for attendance. The findings concluded six motivational dimensions: group socialisation, external interaction, cultural exploration, novelty/regression, recover equilibrium and gregariousness.

This shows similarity to other forms of study in the motives visitors and participants search for in events. Tourism researchers have explained a variety of consumer motivations within the MICE sector. Opperman and Chon (Oppermann & Chon, 1997) argues that motives consist of four factors in the decision-making process to attend such events. These include the following: personal and business factors, association and conference factors, locational factors and intervening opportunities. Most of these motives indicate that visitors and participants attend educational events to improve on their skills and knowledge, which in turn will help in their future professional development. Their major motivational factors are education, networking, career path and leadership enhancement according to Price (Price, 1997). One of the most important sectors of events in Malta is the Gastronomical events. These are important for two reasons: for economic reasons, social and environment term, as well as motivation and loyalty to visitors. In Malta such festivals are very popular as these events are based on taste, place and tradition. The Maltese public is known to be very much into food and drink and therefore such events

are always very popular and well attended. These types of events also portray local identity and permit the community to show their products (Hubbar, et al., 2005). The motivation to attend a food and drinks festivals are varied. These types of events are important as both locals and tourists, can enjoy local cuisine and have new experiences, and a way of marketing the destination. Food festivals are influenced on four types of factors to be developed. These include national culture, length of stay, age and repeat visitation. Kim et al (Kim, et al., 2009) suggests a model of local food consumption on trips is based on three different elements. This includes the search of experience, social prestige and authenticity. Also, the element of demographics is taken into account, together with the psychological factors where food neophilia and food neophobia are taken up (Lopez- Guzan & Perez Galvez, 2017).

In this case, visitors were segmented with respect to their relationship with gastronomy. Hjalager (Hjalager, 2004) splits visitors in attendance of gastronomy festivals into four: existential, experimental, diversionary and recreational. On the other hand, Lee (Lee, et al., 2004), divides participants into other segments: culture and family seekers, multipurpose seekers, escape seekers and event seekers. Visitors attending festivals and events have varies reasons for attendance and are split in different groups in order to analyse their characteristics. This basic information is crucial for event organisers and allows data to be evaluated and respondent to the varies demands participants expect (Chang & Yuan, 2011).

2.5.2 Psychology of Event organisers

Generally active participants are likely to be active due to different motives, due to higher levels of involvement in the event. The concern most like is not with the paid professional performers and elite participants but rather with other individuals who are willing to participate in the event to co create the experience. Motives for organisers usual entail the need for self-development and socialisation which are likely to be influential. When compared to an event of BASE jumping, Allman, Mittelstaedt, Martin and Goldenberg (2009), reported that both organisers and participants motivation, included an opportunity for self-development, self-actualisation and the need to transformative experiences that would contribute to their quality of life. Event planning is not an easy task. The right attitude and motivation are required to plan and execute a memorable event. All organised events are challenging, and stamina is needed to be able to make it through the pressure, especially, if the event happens to be on a large scale. For an event to be of a huge success, planners require to be organised, have good time management skills, and mostly importantly be confident in what it is being done. Generally, the success of an event is also tied to the planner's self-motivation and self-esteem. Self-motivations are driven by

the success of pervious events through the self-actualisation theory. According to Maslow's theory (the hierarchy of needs), this represents a growth of an individual toward fulfilment of the highest needs, those for meaning in life.

The values represent the meaning of the peak of an individual's psychological needs, where thoughts are turned into fulfilled actions. Maslow also describes that self actualisers are highly creative, psychologically robust individuals. So, this description fits perfectly for event organisers who portray this image to the letter. Another behaviour emerges from this type of approach, which that of dialectical behaviour. This is a type of cognitive behaviour, where the main goals include people living in the moment, coping healthily with stress, regulate emotions and improve relationships with others. This means that the thinking of most organisers reflects the viewing of issues from multiple perspectives to be able to arrive to the most economical and reasonable information given to any event.

Dialectical thinking also has also education values that have been overlooking by various researcher and educators. It is a form of thinking and reasoning that hunts knowledge and truth, in order to answer any questions and conflicts. In teaching, this is used via direct example of operating the event, known as explicit teaching. In the implicit teaching students are instructed to converse in a dialogue of salient elements of reciprocity. During this part of teaching, students ask questions to the teacher in order to learn what is needed about the event. Finally, there is the refutation text, were printed material enhances the learning process. Indirectly, dialectical thinking has also implication for teaching and learning implication and how research might be best conducted. All of this can be found within the characteristics of an event planner, whether inflicted or self-taught through experiences. The above theory aids in pushing the planner to achieve goals, feel fulfilled and improve the quality of life for both the organiser, as well as the participant. Motivation for an event planner can be categorised into four elements:

- Personal drive: achieve, desire to improve or meet certain standards
- Commitment: to personal or organisational goals
- Initiative: readiness to act on opportunities
- Optimism: the ability to keep going and pursue goals in the face of setbacks.

For organisers to be motivated in setting up an event, several factors must be taken into consideration. It is always vital to keep one's spirits high, no matter how discouraging a situation is. It is important to keep visual motivation always at hand, so there is a point of focus. By always keeping positive colleagues around, will help and support during the various stages of setting up an event.

Event planners are always exposed to learn and acquire new knowledge for the success of the operation. A most influential approach is positive self-talk. When organising events,

things are never plain sailing, and there will be always ups and downs, therefore, it is not what happens during the event planning, but how the response is in these situations that count, control of the circumstances is taken. Since event planners are under a lot of stress, begin healthy, is also part of the whole process. By exercising regularly and getting enough sleep, the brain is stimulated with new hormones and therefore more leeway to have fresh ideas. It is very important that during the event organisation period, breaks a retaken to recharge the emotional and spiritual batteries, in order to come up with new creative solutions. It is vital to self-motivate others so new heights of accomplishment can be reached. After all an event is all about motivating people and to get them to be interested in the upcoming event. All the above leaders to make an event a success, by getting individuals to participate and have a memorable experience that will linger on for a long time.

2.5.3 Motives behind Events organisers

What makes individuals involve themselves in events, and what motivates them to do so? In answering this question Getz (Getz, 2007), argues that there is a combination of two important elements. These consist of a combination of applied expertise in personality assessment and the study of social motivation. Personal assessment is the behaviour that individuals show in various situations. It produces well known profiles along such dimensions as extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism (Martin et al, 2007).

Many researchers, psychologists and practitioners, are anxious about the power of personality profiling and prefer to understand how participants perceive and approach specific contexts. This all reflects the interactionist approach developed by Mischel (Mischel 1968,1984), where the perspective is based on social motivation and values, where the needs of the individuals are examined and represented as a common factor.

This focuses on the idea of organisers being less of extraverts, but mostly to belong to a group and the desire to develop relationships and the feeling of sense of achievement. This can be traced to the role theory ideated by Biddle and Thomas, (Biddle and Thomas, 1966). This implies, that individuals have various roles in life, where each different role comes with various patterns of behaviour. Banton (Banton, 1996) states that a role is the 'expected behaviour associates with a social position'. This role, within a social system, has rights and obligations to adhere to. The theory also states, that individuals portray varied behaviours, as their social position changes (Pearce,2005).

To consolidated this argument there are key concepts that a variation in role is attributed to which includes: role conflict (clash over multiple roles) , role ambiguity (an uncertainty

on how to behave), role distance (a desire to reject core elements of a certain role) and alter casting (being forced into a role by others and accepting the position). These concepts make way of the various behaviour's organisers display compared to being at home or in a social gathering.

The idea of this theory can aid researchers into attempting to seek whether individuals may want to occupy a front or backstage role during an event. Finally, the last concepts are the emotional, performative and aesthetic labour that arises in the studies of human resources management to portray the lives of the organisers in whenever and however they entertain event audiences (Bryman, 2004, Pearce, 2008). Event's organisers provide experiences for the participants to have an opportunity of self-actualisation and enrichment in learning.

The relationship between the relative components of the event whether it is food, heritage, culture and lifestyle, manifests itself in learning. Whatever the event is, there is always an opportunity to learn and expand one's knowledge, especially if the event is an interactive one. Generally festival and event research focuses on the relationship between loyalty, service quality and customer satisfaction.

Behavioural studies (Duman and Mattila, 2005) have shown that events and festivals are perceived through value and satisfaction of the audience. Events organiser also believe that satisfaction in an event also leads to customer loyalty (Yoon and Uysal, 2005), which is normally sought out through expenditure, repeat attendance and positive word of mouth (Oliver and Burke, 1999). However, the influence of a memorable experience towards such festivals has to date not been examined. There is also the element where the event organisers and service providers get the chance to connect with customers and create brand loyalty (Charters et al., 2009) in attributes such as friendliness, courteousness, and overall service knowledge. O'Neill et al, (O'Neill et al., 2002) suggest that intangibles such as service, the ambiance of the event and experience matter more than tangibles. Moreover, Robert and Sparks, (Robert and Sparks, 2006) talk about the opportunities to interact with staff and learn about the event are crucial part of the experience.

2.6 Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework indicates measures in which theories are formulated in order to explain, predict and understand the effects of events activities within an educational sector. This gives ways to the theory found during the various articles read to explain the research problems questioned in the first chapter. Therefore, within this context, the development of concepts, together with definitions are used for this study. This broadens

the understanding of various theories and concepts for this topic in order to understand the research problem. From the different readings and journals, it became quite clear that issues are brought forward with regards to this study. It is vital that the research title and research problem are examined. Within this context is also very important to consider all the key variables within the research. In all the research, it is crucial to find out the key variables, and dimensions to focus on the what is needed from this research. Most of the social sciences theories evaluated here, give a clear indication of the type of environment and the thought of such event activities impacts on students. In such a research, a variable can be a characteristic that varies within an activity. This variable can change from person to person, or even different groups of people. There are six types of variables found within a research:

- Dependent variables – generally includes the main key activities that the researcher is looking for. This is also very dependent on the independent variables that come across within each event.

- Independent variables – include those characteristics in which the researcher has control over. It may also occur that during the event, this control can also be modifying the existing variables of instruction, or also introducing new variables within the activity settings. These variables will also affect the rapport with the dependent variables.

- Intervening variables – indicate procedures that cannot be directly observed but link both the above variables. Generally, it gives reason to explain the relationship between independent and dependent variables vis a vis each other.

- Moderator variables – can be both quantitative and qualitative in a study. This type of variable has the power to change the strength or direction affecting two other variables. It affects usually the independent and dependent variables.

- Control variables – these consist of certain variables that are held constant or neutralise in the studied, so it will not affect any other variables, therefore the name of such variables.

- Extraneous variables – are the factors on the study that can affect the dependent variables, but which are not controlled. Such variables are dangerous, as may not be valid for the study, and can be impossible to trace whether the effects were caused by the independent or moderators or extraneous variables.

Within this theoretical framework, the author has provided concepts and theories that can prove the ideology behind main problem, by researching various authors and previously published knowledge. This framework is in place to aid in the outcome of the research problem. As indicated in an earlier stage the main concept of this research primarily is to motivating students in becoming more enthusiastic towards setting up events and the learning process involved. The main concepts within this research includes the following:

- What motivates students to get involved in events?

- In what way do events bring out the best students' skills?
- How much learning is done during these types of events?
- What brings about experiential learning and in what matter?
- What makes such exposure memorable and effective in these scenarios?

The above are questions that will need to be asked during the research methodology in order to find suitable answers for them, as per research question. These questions help the author discuss the findings more clearly, in the light of existing theories. It aids in making connections with the abstract and concrete elements observed in the data collected.

The main theoretical framework within this study is based on specific goals in order to solve the main question of the research, which is that of designing cultural activities for education purpose. There are some foundations on which such a research can be based on. The most impactful are those of the event design element which includes: the site location of the activity, the emotional and learning components of both the audience and the participants, and activities and interactivity based on the five senses. This is followed by the learning from experience, as it is the vital lesson and most natural way of learning. This is due to participants and audiences thinking and reflecting on the event after the activity is over.

Generally, when there is active participation, the thinking and reflection will become an automatic process, where this would be discussed amongst the audience especially, when leaving the premises, whilst socially interact with each other. On the other hand, the learning from an experience is influenced by the personality type of the individual, any educational specialisation, the career choice, current job tasks and the most influential, the cultural influences. When organising an event, as the research focuses on student's learning, the participants are required to conceptualise, plan, fund and deliver the event all on their own, of course with the tutor's aid. Students find it very comforting to surround themselves with someone who has cultural intelligence. This means the influential models are found around them during the event, where examples can be taken into consideration on how to follow the operation and logistics, attend and imitate behaviour of the model. However, students are also given free hand in creative and uniqueness of their own styles of operation, which brings out other skills and patterns of behaviours. Having said so, it is vital that the students follow a mediation process. This includes four areas: attention, which can be taught via theoretical practice or via the various behaviour of the individual; retention, through remembering lectures and behaviours during the event; reproduction, the ability to perform during the event and under pressure, and the motivation, the eagerness to perform for the benefit of others. All of these will be beneficial for the students gain in skills, from the operational and theoretical approach, as well as belief in

their event and the needs for the audience. The main component of these beliefs are the goods and services directed towards the participating audience. At the end of the day, the event is all about the people who attend the activity and the outcome as a result of this event. The experience of both the active audience and especially that of the student participants, is interpreted differently by influential factors of the external factors and its surroundings. Generally, these are met by the needs and desires of the audience and the student participants. Mostly audiences look for a touching experience and positive emotions which will mesmerise them and remain a memory imprinted forever.

The term experience has changed the desires and needs of the audience and participants. Nowadays, there is a need to dazzle the senses, engage them personally, touch their hearts and stimulate minds. If within an event, all the above is included, the audience and participants are sure in for an enjoyable and memorable event. Together with the aid of social media, interactions and performances helps to distract from everyday life. When an event is planned, it is important that the journey of the audience is taken into consideration. This aid and facilitates the success of the event. The engagement of the audience is very important, before, during and after the activities are held.

The audience participations include various elements in order to comprehend the entire event. This comprises of the psychological, cognitive, emotional and social and environmental conditions. The smoothness of the pre event experience will determine how much the attendee will enjoy the experience. This means that before the event no hiccups are allowed, in order to give the best experience to the attendees, otherwise, the active participant will have to deal in making the event as flawless as possible for that attendee. In order to avoid the above mentioned, a journey map will help the organiser to provide a smooth transition of the experience. This mapping gives an InSite to the audience experience and aids the organiser to preamp what is to be expected. This forms part of the whole journey of the customer, which lies in the memories and can be talked about in etermun, if event and its journey are successful. At this point, of the event, it is very important that feedback is given. This becomes useful to the organisers to get a clear picture of the rights and wrongs of the event, and where improvement can be improved. The most effective measure to get such information is through surveys or social media platforms, which gives a much quicker result and reaches more individuals with today's technology.

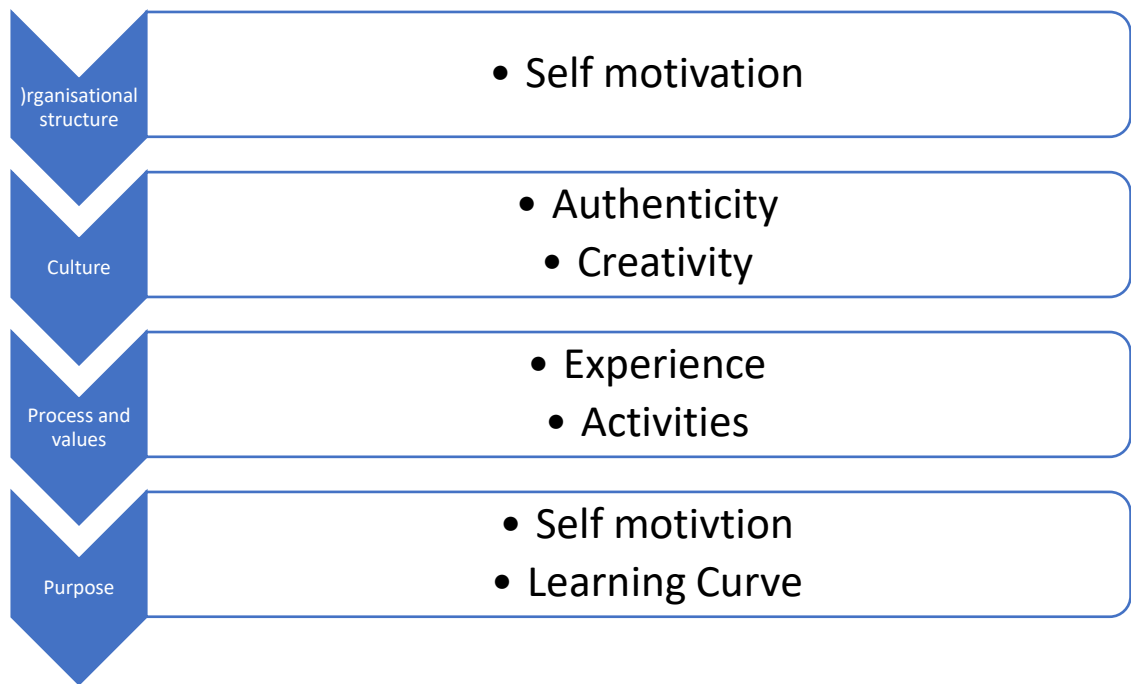|)rganisational structure | • Self motivation |
Culture	• Authenticity • Creativity
Process and values	• Experience • Activities
Purpose	• Self motivtion • Learning Curve

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

The use of technology in events operations is become more and more useful in today's world. This was demonstrated during the COVID19 pandemic, where lots of activities happened online including events and other activities. The customer's journey for an event, starts way before then the day occurrence. This journey starts from the moment the customer purchasing tickets, either online or in person at the ticketing booth. If the process is a smooth one, there is a start of communication. If game mechanics or promos are used to promote the event, there will be an increase in popularity due to curiosity from the audience. Keeping attending participants on the edge until the day of the event can be very difficult, but with such teasers the popularity of the event builds up daily. The aid of live information in real time can be done on the event site to also can be updated in real time. If positive emotions are experienced when participating in an event, this will incite a better possibility to return and less motive to complain. When using gamification to the event, it brings about the element of fun, which boosts participants towards learning.

Locally, an interest in arts are being taught at school, which is something that lasts a lifetime due to the learning of it all. Events are not only educational but are also a means to aid develop the economy. It has now become an obligation and responsibility for the local institutions to promote cultural and educational events, in order to motivate students to attend such activities. In doing so, social interactions are promoted, that plays a huge part in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Events aid in motivations for both seeking and escaping motives. In seeking, audiences search the thrill to seek social contact or challenge, while escape the personal and interpersonal environments to change routine and normality. Festivals and events are mostly influenced by national culture, length of

stay, age and repeat visits. Of course, demographics also play a part in all of this and varies in different individuals and their characteristics. In any event there is always an opportunity to learn and expand one's knowledge especially if an interactive activity going on.

In this chapter various theories and approaches are sought in order to understand better the research problem at hand. It is vital that such theories act as a support to the objectives of this study. It is also very important to understand the ideation and motivations behind events, from both the student's perspective and the audience's perspective. Here more complex understanding is explored to support the initial research question at hand. Also, variables and dimension are dominant in certain theories on which more research can be applied and reinforced in the findings chapter.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Formulating Research Design

The main objective behind this research question is motivated curiosity occurring in the everyday teachings. It is worrying when students whom have chosen to read for event organising course, are not interested in what is going on around them vis a vie events. Their main concern with events, are the once that attract clubbing and drinking, other than that no other event is of interest. Therefore, within this study, the author wants to find out, whether such students, when involved in extracurricular activities within the institute are motivated to become culturally aware through the educational system.

This thesis is researched based, as most of the data collected is based on extracurricular activities held within the institute, getting the events students involved so information can be collected. However, results are low as most of the events have been cancelled due to the COVID-19. So, in this research, a small number of participants had been questioned and observed for the purpose of the study.

Within this chapter, a clear and convincing argument for using qualitative design is given. A good picture is given of how the research is conducted, its strengths and weakness, and how the research questions are aligned for the chosen qualitative method. In a qualitative research approach, language is more important than the numerical data. A systematic language centred analysis technique is used to make sense of various types of data that are not quantifiable. The aim of the research design is to inform action; therefore, the study needs to contextualise findings with a much larger body of research. Well conducted research is very important to the success of the study. In a qualitative approach, researchers want to understand people's behaviour through the person's involvement via their values, rituals, symbols, beliefs and emotions (Nachimas & -Nachimas, 2008).

Berg (2009) argues that qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbol and descriptions of things. In such a study, the research tries to understand the phenomena under study, based on those being studied. Such a research is based on positivist belief that reality can be discovered with the suitable experimental methods. To match this type of approach, post positivists also agree with this paradigm. It is believed that the learning culture or the capacity to learn, influence reality, which brings about a huge importance in society. On the other hand, constructivist believe that not one reality occurs but depends mostly on the reality of the participants views. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research. By using this method, answers to the main question will be sought, collection of evidence via the interviews, and

produces findings that were not determined in advance prior to the event. It will also help the author to understand the research question from the perspective of the local population it involves. Most of the information gathered will consist of a combination of exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and evaluative (Saunders M, 2016). The data collection techniques used, are based on a variety of methods which includes direct observations, structured interviews and questionnaires.

3.2 Observations

Observations have been somewhat neglected as a method of research. This type of method can be very rewarding and enlightening to follow and can also give a richness in data collection. Observation primarily involves having a systematic viewing, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people's behaviour (Suanders, et al., 2016). Within the observation category, four approaches come into play: these fall under traditional and technological mediated approaches. The different types of approaches consist of the following participant, structures, internet mediated observation and videography. These are all reasonable types of observations to follow in a study research approach.

Participant observation is one approach this study will follow especially where the subjects themselves have participate in case study events organised by the institute itself. From such an approach, the researcher, learns the meanings that people attach to their actions. On the other hand, structured observation gets more concerned on the regularity of actions to understand the why of the problem. On the other hand, thanks to the technological advancement, the research can proceed to do observations that involves the internet and videography. Internet mediated observation involves data gathered from online communities, while videography records moving images onto electronic media to collect observational data. As a rule, participant and structures observation requires the researcher to collect primary data. The idea of the author was to collect data through such modes, however, since all events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the author needs to revert to other solutions, such as taking the technological observations as an option. Via the participant observation, the author has also collected some answers from respondents that were subject to the research in prior events of the last academic year. The same respondents also acted as informants, since active participation in the events was also a must due to extra curriculum activities held within the institute.

As the author is a lecturer within the institute, it was quite easy to be a fully participant observant during the said events. In this manner there is a process of immersion, where the researcher is not only observing, but gets into the frame mind of the respondents and informants participating in the event, as well as the settings of the location and how the

event came about. This is a very popular approach with the social anthropology and industrial sociology to be able to have a wider picture of what is going on. As the researcher became an active member of the community within the event, it becomes very clear to understand the thoughts and feelings of the informants and that immediate social situation.

Active participation in the observation can also be referred to the school of thought known as symbolic interactionism. This approach is used during a process where a participant incorporates a sense of identity from interaction and communication within a social aspect. Via this type of research there is more communication due to being active in the event, sharing the same experience and interacting with others. Within the participant observation category, two dimensions can be found which explain how overt and covert observation compare and differ from each other. The overt observation, the research is open about the study being conducted, while in the covert one such a phenomenon is concealed. These dimensions are categorised into four roles: complete participant, complete observation, observer as participant, participant as observer. In the events that research was present, the role taken was that of participant as observer.

 In this role, the intentions of the research become very clear, as an active participant and in revealing the purpose of the study. The fact that the other participants were students of the research aided in getting into the mind frame of the students. The events were also all planned out together, therefore getting feedback from the students participating was a simple task, a relationship of trust, loyalty and good communication had already been established throughout the academic year. All this was possible due to the role the research has in the Institute, as a senior lecturer in Events Operations, as well as, the type of modules being taught within the academic year.

Unfortunately, the time dedicated to the research was very limited, as most events planned were all cancelled due to the wide spread of the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, the number of observations, were limiting to few events, the institute organised the previous year. The data collected will take form of descriptive account, in order to give a background of the settings, the activities and the stumbling blocks found along the way. The data collected will include a narrative account, in the same way an investigative journalism occurs. However, this will not just stop there, as a framework is needed to aid understand and explain the settings of the study at hand. This means that a focused observation needs to occur, which the material relevant to the study is only analysed.

3.2.1 Features of observation

Observations have several features that need to be tackled in order to have a complete observation scenario. First, observations involve the use of the eyes, rather than the use of other senses such as ears and the voice, even though, in a participative observation it very important. A good report is one where it is seen with the researcher's eyes, so there is first-hand evidence. It is also said that an observation done with the aid of the eyes is a very trustworthy medium for making observation. Another important feature in the observation method is the aim. Such observations support scientific approaches in every minute and in a detailed manner to aid in achieving the goals required. Generally, these goals include the discovery of something, verification of the hypothesis etc. Following this, is the planning. This should be done in a phased and planned manner so the in depth understanding of the activity is captured. Following is the recording, as memory might be deceptive. As memory and things can become out of hand, it is very important to keep record of such activity. One such method, is keeping track of activities, and to write down various impressions, or and record them with today technology such as a video recorder or a voice recorder. During an observation the senses also come into play which are very critical for a study. The seeing and hearing are fundamentals to keep in mind for an in-depth analysis. Having a standardised tool of research sees more precise in the order of things occurring during the event. Observation can be considered a direct study, where a scientific method aids a lot in collecting primary information related to the study.

The observation process can have lots of advantages when used to gathered data in a study. First, it is a very direct method for collection of information, it is the best study to date for human behaviour. This is due to first-hand observation, through visual contact and being present in the moment. The data collected is also very accurate and reliable, as the observed is experiencing all. Since all of this is occurring all at once, and maybe the observation is helped with being recorded, the results are very precise. As the observation is done in person, the problem of depending on the respondents/informants is decreased. Observation done when the researcher is present, is more credible, as helps in understanding the verbal responses given during this time, as the same feeling is shared with the researcher.

 In today's technological advancements, making use of such equipment, means that the observation can be made continuously and for a larger period. This is also less demanding in nature and makes it less in working abilities. During an observation period, if a problem arises, an in-depth analysis of the problem can be looked at in order to understand it. On the other hand, during an observation, past problems cannot be studied,

as not made available during this time. Documentation regarding the event are limited whilst the event is occurring and therefore there is less evidence for the research to get data from. Controlled observations may require some special equipment which may be costly for this to work effectively. Via observations, opinions cannot be recorded in order to find the solution to the research question, as well as, the attitudes of the informants/respondents are difficult to study and get reactions. The sampling method is not compatible when using this system of data gathering. A huge drawback is observation takes a lot of time and an event must occur in order to study a particular occasion. In cases where the observer is a stranger, can be a disadvantage for the researcher to gather data, as interaction with the informants can be hostile. In a study scenario, the answer to a problem cannot be obtained by observation alone but needs another method in order to sustain the evidence.

3.3 Questionnaires

As a rule, questionnaire, are used within a survey strategy. They can also be described, as self-completed, when a person answers the question and record their own answer. However mostly, these are used when people are asked questions in a face to face method or via phone calls. For the purpose of this study, questionnaires are used as methods of data collection, where each respondent is asked the same set of questions in a predetermined order. These types of questionnaires can be done either face to face, via telephone or answered without an interviewer being present, like internet questionnaires.

Generally, questionnaires are used for descriptive or explanatory research. In this case, this will also aid the observations done, so the description will coincide with each other. On the other hand, the explanatory research will give the research the chance to examine and enlighten the relationships between the variables, between the relationships formed during the event. There are various methods how questionnaires can be used; self-completed which are usually done by the respondents on their own via internet or in person. This can occur either via a web browser using a link or else directly through a quick response code scanned into the mobile devices. An alternative way is the posting of questionnaires, but in the day and age, it is hardly done due to the advancement in technology. Interviewer completed questionnaires, can be also recorded by the interviewer on the basis each respondent's answer. Other types can occur via telephone, or the most traditional is face to face questionnaires, where the interviewer physically meets the informants and asks the questions face to face. Generally, these are structured interviews which are constructed differently from semi structures and the unstructured ones.

when choosing to use questionnaires as a mode of data collection, several factors come into play, in order to reach the objectives of the main question. These consist of the following factors:

- The characteristics of the respondents from whom you wish to collect the data
- The importance of reaching a particular person as respondent
- The importance of respondents' answers not being contaminates or distorted
- Size of sample required for analysis, considering the likely response rate
- Types of question needed to ask to collect data
- Number of questions needed to ask to collect data   (Saunders M, 2016)

However, the above might not all be reliable to the collection of data, as some respondents might have limited knowledge or experience in the area and might then guess the answer which can be renounced as uninformed response. This case might occur as respondents might believe that certain answers are socially desirable (Dillman, et al., 2014). It might occur that the respondents will discuss their answers with others and therefore, the data can be manipulated. On the other hand, structured interviews and telephone questionnaires may more likely answer to please the researcher, as there is a direct contact. The choice of questionnaires is also affected by the resources available for the researcher, most likely the:

- Time available to complete the data collection
- Financial implications of data collection and entry
- Availability interviewers and field workers to assist
- Online survey tool   (Saunders M, 2016)

Time to collect the questionnaires might be time consuming unless, this is done via internet based, which is a much quicker solution of gathering data. However, if certain programmes are used to for such a venture, there might be financial resources needed. At the end such questionnaires will be analysed by the software itself, which will aid the researcher in computing results. When self-completed questionnaires are used, the data gathered must be straight forward when they are answered, and for closed questions where answers can be selected from a given list.

This method can be very effective in order to measure the behaviour, attitudes, preferences, opinions and intentions of a huge number of responses. As argued before, if these questionnaires are done online, they can be done quickly and cheaply than other methods. A vital difference needs to be done between open ended and closed ended questions. When closed questions are used, respondents will answer via a pre decided answers. The data gathered is known as nominal data, which can be restricted to two categories: either as dichotomous (yes or no, or male or female), or including a list of

alternatives which can be chosen from (polytomous). On the other hand, closed questions can also used for ordinal data, which can be ranked. These can be classified, and an average can be taken. When making use of such questions, it can result in being very economical, as they provide large amounts of research data at low costs where a large sample can be obtained. The answers given can be very easily translated into quantitative data if necessary. Most questions are also standardised, where all respondents are asked the same questions in the same order. Such method can be very reliable and consistent due to the nature of the questionnaires. Some limitations can occur, as detail might lack since responses ae mostly fixed, and gives the respondents less motivation to reflect their true feelings. On the other hand, open ended questions allow individuals to express their feelings in their own words. It gives flexibility to answer more to one's own liking and as much detail as one wants. If the researcher needs to gather more in-depth answers these will work better. There are no pre-set options but will allow respondent to give out their opinions. However, these questions are mostly used for complex questions which might not be flexible enough to answer in a few simple questions. Most of the strengths are mostly vital due to the participants elaborate their answer. So, it is very important why the respondent holds a certain attitude. The limitations of such an approach means that this is time consuming. However, this also means that the respondents will take longer to complete open questions. This can be converted to a smaller sample size as it might take longer to answer. It can also be time consuming to analyse the data, as the researcher must go all through the answers in the various areas and tries to put them into categories which is often subjective and difficult. This will take longer for the researcher to analyse the data, as they must read the answers and put them into categories through coding, which is often subjective and difficult.

3.3.1 Pilot testing

All types of questionnaires used for research should be pilot tested, with respondents like the ones who will complete it. Reason being to refine and strengthen the questions, and in doing so, any problems in answers or recording of data can be acknowledge and changed for a smoother transition. During this process, the need for validity in the assessment is also obtained, as well as, the reliability of data that can be collected during this research. For this reason, the pilot test, is done by asking colleagues in order to be able to get feedback and rearrange some questions for the purpose of communication and structure of the questions themselves. This will aid the content validity and gives leeway to make changes prior to sending the questionnaire to the respondents. The number of individuals that the pilot test must go to, depends on the research question, the main objectives, the size of the research project and the time and money available. Since this is a student questionnaire, the minimum number is 10 for a pilot study (Fink 2013). Part of the pilot

questionnaire includes also to check each completed one, to see whether respondents had any problems in answering and understanding the questions and if the instructions where followed clearly (Fink 2013). The data gathered from such a test will indicate where reliability and suitability of the questions are structured well. For any self-completed questionnaires, more information can be gathered when giving the respondents a furthers short questionnaire. Bells and Walters (2014), suggest that during a pilot test, the researcher should find out the following information:

- How long the questionnaire took to complete
- Clarity of instructions
- If any questions were unclear or ambiguous
- If respondents felt uneasy about answering any questions
- If there were any topic omissions
- If layout was clear and attractive
- Other comments

The same should occur for any interviewer questions. This can be checked by forming an assessment for each interview. Another method is to interview any interviewers within the same employment, but since this is a school, not such individual is available. However, the respondents can be asked additional questions, so a checking system can be applied. These types of questions also need to be pilot tested in order to discover whether:

- If certain questions need the help of visual aids to be understood
- If there was any difficulty going through the questionnaire
- If recording answer correctly   (Saunders M, 2016)

Once the pilot study was tested, a thank you note should be written to the participants to thank them of the help given.

3.3.2 Internet questionnaires

Online questionnaires are a great to reach and engage the target audience, especially now, since everyone is confined at home during the COVID -19 pandemic. Using such a tool there is a higher chance of increase response rates by reaching the target audience. The market research conducted is usually very inexpensive compared to the face to face ones. It also aids in getting real time results, where answers can be quick and easy to analyse. In fact, the time spent to complete an online survey project is on average two thirds shorter than that of traditional research methods. Information is being gathered automatically, since no need to wait for handwritten questionnaires to be retrieved back. Online marketing experts argue that half of the responses are received within the first three days of the questionnaires being sent out. When using online questionnaires, it becomes less expensive as no postage and paper are used, while responses are

automatically processed, and results are accessible any time. Generally, the margin of error is reduced, as the answer go directly into the system. In normal circumstances, the responses are entered manually and that can contain human error. It very easy for the participants to respond to such a questionnaire, ask individuals can pick the best time they can answers and complete the survey. Questions that are not relevant can be particular to a participant and therefore can be answered by someone else. Such a data is easier to style but must make sure that it is easier to your own style and reach. In this case respondents are more honest as they are doing to this survey in their own time. It is also very flexible for respondents, as they are not pressure in time o answer their own opinions.

On an online survey one can pre-screen participants and allow those only who match the target profile to compete the survey. Web and mobile questionnaires are usually accessed through a web link sent to the respondents. This is usually done by displaying a hyperlink or via email. It is very important that when the Internet is used, the general operating guidelines or netiquette are used. These include that emails and postings to groups are relevant and no junk emails are sent. It also vital to remember that invitations to participate for groups over twenty, are considered as unacceptable by many net vigilantes. Multiple emails sent all at once need to be avoided, as individuals might receive multiple copies, as well as, for data protection reasons. Avoiding the used of email attachments as these can contain viruses. If this is a within organisation research, questionnaires can be easily delivered access to it emails can be used. The researcher will contact the respondents via email before hand and advise them to expect a questionnaire, then email the hyperlink to the questionnaire with a covering mail.

3.4 Interviews

Interviews are a conversation between two or more people, where a rapport is important to be established for the research to ask concise and unambiguous questions, where the interviewee needs to respond and listen carefully. In general, there are three forms of interview which a research can use: structured, semi-structed and unstructured. For the purpose of this study, structured interview will be complied. This means that the researcher asks a series of pre-determined questions which all interviewees must answer in the same order. The data collection and analysis will be more straightforward as the breakdown of the results can be compared, as different answers might be given for the same questions. During this data gathering there would be social interaction between the author and the respondent. Structured interviews can be also be referred to as quantitative research interviews. Due to the situation at hand whilst conducting the research, the interviews will be held online via video calls. On the other hand,

unstructured interviews may be less reliable from a research point of view, as they are more informal. This is due to the reason as no questions are prepared prior to the interview, and therefore data collection is steered in an informal manner. Such questions can also be associated with a form of bias, as the answers given by the various interviewees tends to be varied, since the question formulation is different every time. However, such types of interviews are used to get a more in-depth view. This is related to the fact that the interviewee can talk freely about the event, behaviour and beliefs in relation to the topic. This type of interview is also known as non-directive. This also aids in for the interviewee perceptions to guide the interview on the topic at hand. However, a respondent interview is one where the interviewer has direction over the interview, while allowing the respondents answers to come out as response is given. Lastly the semi structured interviews contain parts of both the structured and unstructured interviews. In the case the researcher prepares a set of same questions to be answered by all the interviewees. At parallel, another list of questions is prepared that might be asked during the interviews to further expand certain issues. The researcher may have a list of topics in mind and some questions to cover but may vary or omitted during the different interviews. The flow of questions may vary on the outcome of the conversation. This can also lead asking more questions to explore more the subject. Such a conversation can be also aided by recording the audio, as to ensure all the discussion is recorded. When using this type of interview technique, it also leaves space for open discussion, where a specific topic can be prompted to promote further discussion.

Using interviews as a method of data collection means that a big possibility of detailed collection of information is gathered. During this process, the interviewer can control the flow of process, and has also a chance to clarify issues raised during the process. However, this also means that there is a lengthy time required and various difficulties in setting up appointments to conduct the interviews. During interview sessions, the researcher needs to have an open mind and does not display any forms of disagreements whilst conducting the interview or contradict the interviewee. This can create some sort of bias for the interviewee and would be in serious breach of compromising the findings. This can be avoided by ensuring the interviewer does not overreact to responses of te interviewee. Generally, choosing a neutral environment and timing is also very important to let the interviewee feel comfortable during such a process. It is vital that the interviewer attempts to create a friendly, non-threating atmosphere. It is also imperative that the interviewer also gives a brief, casual introduction of the study, and stresses the importance of the person's participation and confidentiality, if possible.

3.4.1 Video Interviews

Due to the COVID-19 situation present in Malta, lockdown is required. Therefore, video interviews are the only option due to the current situation. This is also a cost-effective way of interviewing, as there is less traveling time, and the interviewees can collaborate with the researcher at their own leisure and own time. However, it is important that the interviewer is prepared to be able to communicate the value of the interview to the other party, therefore conversation is paramount. The researcher prepares oneself by practicing for the video by answering the sample interview questions on video. This is vital as it will aid in adjusting the manner of speaking, mannerism, and eye contact. It will also give an impression of on how one looks on screen. The researcher can also adjust the camera on screen to be able to look better for interviewing purposes. Video interviews need to be treated like a regular in person interviews. This preparation needs to be like a face to face interview. The researcher needs to be prepared so; one knows what topics will be covered during the interview. The interviewer needs to be one's self too. For the purpose of this interview, Microsoft team's application has been used, as a source for video conferencing. This is the latest technology indicated by the authors managers to use and the safest too, for real time communication. *Video conferencing environments allow real time communication with both audio and video* (Mann & Stewart, 2000). This is like a normal interview, with the only difference that the interviewer and the participant are found in different locations, connected via WIFI or 4g technology.

There is little literature about interviews being conducted this way. Many researchers still refer to in person, face to face interviews as being the best if data collection (McCoyd & Kerson.T, 2006). Video conferencing interviews take place in real time, using a computer, tablet or other device to communicate at the same time. In the application used, the interviewer can ask questions and the interviewee respond online just like the face to face interview. The exchange of the information can run if needed to like a normal interview. An average interview can last from thirty minutes to an hour depending on the nature of the questions asked. Most of the participants were at home during the interview, as lockdown was required. For the purpose of this study, the author is referring to one on one online interviews. Where of course one was the interviewer and one was the participant. No focus groups where used, as participant were limited for this research, as the event organisation and participation was very fairly new to the Institute of Tourism Studies. This is vital as mixed methods for qualitative methods are used for the purpose of this research. To date, there are very few studies using video conferencing, and if used such a medium is used as a back up for face to face interviews. Also, none of the articles mentioned in this study, ever required to use such a medium. This means that special logistics considerations were used. On the other hand, using video conference, aids in the

growing popularity of it, thus giving the interviewee to be in a comfortable setting of their own home and gives more leeway to participants to get integrated in the research (Hai-Jew, 2015).
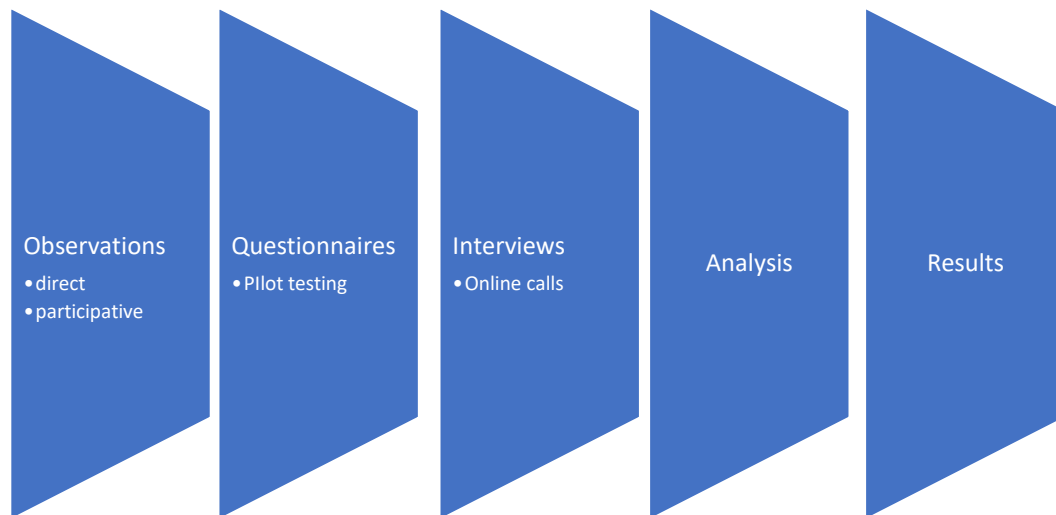
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Observations    Questionnaires    Interviews         Analysis    Results
•direct         •PIlot testing    •Online calls
•participative
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Figure 2 research methodology process

3.5 Ethical considerations

This is a vital part of the study, as the protection of human subjects needs to be taken consideration. The researcher needs to aware about certain aspects with regards to data protection for individuals taking part in this study. Firstly, it is important that for a study to occur there needs to be consent from the participants. This should be given freely, and the participants need to understand what is being asked of them. The chosen individuals need to be well informed about the study, to be able to understand the information needed and have the power of freedom of choice to decide whether to participate or decline. Usually consent is obtained after the individual is fully informed about the study and the research process. Written consent is a must to be provided by the individual participant, and informed that their participation is voluntary, and refusing to help out would not affect them in any manner. Students were also made aware that a right to withdraw from the study at any time was given, even after the consent form had been signed. Consent to record the interview was also ask, for the benefit of the researcher. During such a study it is also important to keep anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, by not revealing their names and identity in the data collection. Privacy and confidentiality need to be managed carefully, especially during the online video interviews, questionnaires and observations. Each video interview was conducted individually in a private environment, without having outsiders around.

Transcribing data collection needs to be privately done as well. This would include being done in a private room and using earphones to void any possible recordings being heard by third parties. In the findings, participants were given a pseudonym. Consent forms need to be kept in a locked cupboard with no access to anyone but the author. Such information will be destroyed in accordance with the local government laws and GPRD laws which came into effect as of last year, in all European Union countries. During this study, it very important that the researcher always needs to be honest with the participants. This includes also the in the data gathered and the results presented. Integrity is also important during this process, as participants are putting trust in the author. It is always better to be truthful then to mislead people. Also, it is vital not to exaggerate the findings. It is also very important that the researcher avoids bias in respect to the research as much as possible, during the data analysis process, interpretation and peer review. Care is taken into consideration during the research process to avoid careless mistakes. The work should be reviewed carefully and critically in order to ensure results are credible.

Data analysis should be shared along with any new tools that were developed, as this helps to further knowledge the area developed. Plagiarism is an essential part of this study. The research used is always referenced and/ or quoted, and never passed on as the author's own work. This reflects the integrity of the study. This is way other authors have always been acknowledged in their contributions in the research. The author is also concerned on the matter of confidentiality, were privacy if needed, is dealt with in keeping participants anonymous. Sensitive information must always be carefully evaluated within a study, as it might compromise people and companies. This research will also be published in order to aid other researcher, not just as an aid to advance the authors' career. The author has also the responsibility to conform to any laws and regulation held by the both the institute where the authors operates, as well as, by the university where this publication is to be submitted. Since this piece of work includes people, reducing any possible harm to a minimum is vital, and important to maximise any benefits to all participants (Shamoo & Resnik, 2015). This means that participants are not exposed more than needed to, solely to fulfil the aims of the research, including the right to privacy and autonomy.

In this chapter, the various methods of data collection have been explained, in detail and so to which suited the situation present whilst this study was carried out. All the different methods carried out have different sensitivities which need to be carried out by the author. Within this category, ethical considerations have also been made available for the purpose of the purpose of this study and research.

4 Research Findings

In this chapter, the author is giving out a picture of all the findings within the research. Here there is a mixed media of analysis which gives a wider picture of what really goes on within the event activity and those who is organising it. There is a detailed account in varies forms, from the authors point of view, as well as, the students with whom, the author collaborated to make such events are possible. Unfortunately, these events occurred before the year 2020, as during this academic year, teaching was operating via online procedures and all events were cancelled or post phoned due to COVID 19 pandemic. Here a mixed media of data collection was used, mainly the author's personal observation, questionnaires and direct interviews with the students. It must be clear, that a module within the Institute of Tourism Studies called Event Organisation, has been running for only two years, where the students must organise their own event, of course, with myself as a mentor. For the purpose of this study, students who had such a module were all interviewed to find a solution for this research.

4.1 Direct Observation

It needs to be made clear that these observations, occurred in several various events happening within two different academic years. In all these events, the author was also a direct participant and not just an observer, so for the sake of this study, more information is achieved which is directly related to initial problem at hand. Whilst observing on site, the author came across several different characteristics that were detected during, whilst and after the events had passed. Most of the time when an event is held by ITS, several cohorts of different student levels are involved in the activity. This also means that throughout the preparation, during and the dismantling of the event, each tutor or mentor are responsible for a class cohort of their choosing in organising if not the whole event, part of it. This gives the student more ownership of that task and satisfaction in doing a job right, in order to be presentable for the audience. Most of the task at hand, except for those students who are organising the logistics of the whole event, would entail in demonstrations or live cooking or assembling of beverages to be able to entertain the audience. This is bringing about another observation that is linked with the previous detail.

The author observed that when such events are held, especially those outside the ITS campus, the students collaborate more and take pride in showing off their skills and creations to the public. Such a phenomenon was observed mainly with those students who follow the culinary arts programme and who generally hide in the kitchens, where their skills are put to test. Usually, since these students are bound in the back of house areas, are rarely exposed to comment by patrons or audiences, and therefore getting

compliments and praise during such events, for them is something new. They take pride in what they are doing and producing. Even though such comments are generally given to them via their mentors, getting praise from a complete strange makes a huge difference to them.

On another note, the author also observed, that an aspect of social relationship was forged during such events. Most of these students, since they are of different cohorts, who have hardly met with other students of lower or higher level. It was noticed that especially during such events, friendships where formed and students became more social towards one another. Besides seeing this at first hand occasion, it was also noted that during the event, students posted photos of the friendships formed on the various social media platforms. These friendships also aided in giving the best outcome of the event possible for the audience, as it was noted that those students who were a bit introverts, now had more confidence in engaging with others, as well as with complete strangers such as the audiences. Of course, such a social setting, also gave rise to the fun element. Within an event, there is always a time when jokes and fun come into play. Students showed that within an activity, even though it is hard work, time for some fun was found. Speaking of hard work, during setting up, the students also appreciated the fact, that organising such an activity, was hard work and a lot of thought must go into it. This was mainly acknowledged by those students who follow other courses, such a tour guides, tourism studies students and management students, who do not really have any practical sessions with their studies, such as organising events. It is during such times, that students realise what it means to work in such environments, especially if then had never worked in such scenarios.

During an ITS event, the students are involved from the beginning of the set-up process, and during such a time a real feel of what goes on behind the scenes and appreciate all the times their mentors explained such a phenomenon. When experiencing the demand of an event set up, students learn how to value hard work and can relate to it and appreciated. It observed that such an exercise proved to bring about a deeper unity and social appreciation with the student's mentor.

Some of the events observed, were quite large to the extent of having around 300 people. This proved to be quite challenging for the students to cope with, and that is why mentors where with them all the time and came to their aid the moment, the students could not handle it. This gave raise to another observation during the event, that of crowd control. It so happened that in one of the events, the crowd was unsettling, and the students had to cope with some rowdy individuals. In reality, crowd control was out of ITS hands, as a third-party company had security on the grounds. However, it was still a good exercise for

the students to handle such a situation, as these occur in real events. In some respects, it was noted, that with the same cohort of students, both small and large events where organised. Of course, both type of events need organisation, however on large events crowd controlling must feature predominately. On another note, it was also observed, that when students are forced to participate in an event in which they are not particularly fond of, it might act as a distraction towards other students. It was observed, that students who were not liking the idea to be part of this project, acted more of a distraction and trouble making then as an aid towards the event. It seems that such students also give out negative vibes on others that are willing to make the event a success and use their skills and knowledge to learn from such an activity. On a more positive note, it was also observed, that students help out each other when extracurricular marks are given for attending such events. So, the friendships not only aided their confidence but also the fact, that if a job is done well, it was rewarded with a mark. In some instances, where a small event was organised, the students had also to market the event, thus, experiencing a new element of learning in the process.

4.2 Questionnaires

The author got a sample of a few questionnaires from students following an event organised by ITS, where the main logistics were taken care by a cohort of students following the Events Management programme. This event took place at the Esplora science centre in Kalkara, where an event called Chocolate was held. During this event, the science of chocolate and art was presented to the public. There were various activities being held such as chocolate cocktail making, assembly of chocolate sculptures, praline making, the pair of wine and chocolate, as well as the art of chocolate piping. The event was vast spread on two floors and lots of students were involved. The author took a sample of ten questionnaires to determine the main outcomes of such an event. This sample had a mixture of various cohort of students which included students attending the Events management programme and the students following the Culinary arts programme. The questionnaire also acted as the author's own post-mortem analyses for the events organisation module being taught as a result of the event. The questionnaire was sub divided into three sections to be in line with the main outcomes of this research. In the first part the questions are a produce of the reflection stage involved in setting up such an event, and how the logistics will work on the day. Then comes the conceptualising stage, where in depth thinking and focus is needed to make the event a successful one. It is mainly focusing on how the whole theme will apply on the day. Lastly is the application stage, that is the main outcome and result of the whole event and its success for the students involved and learning outcomes.

4.2.1 Reflection stage

When students were asked what was observed during the event, different answers were given. This reflected on various locations that each student was placed, and the tasks given during the event.
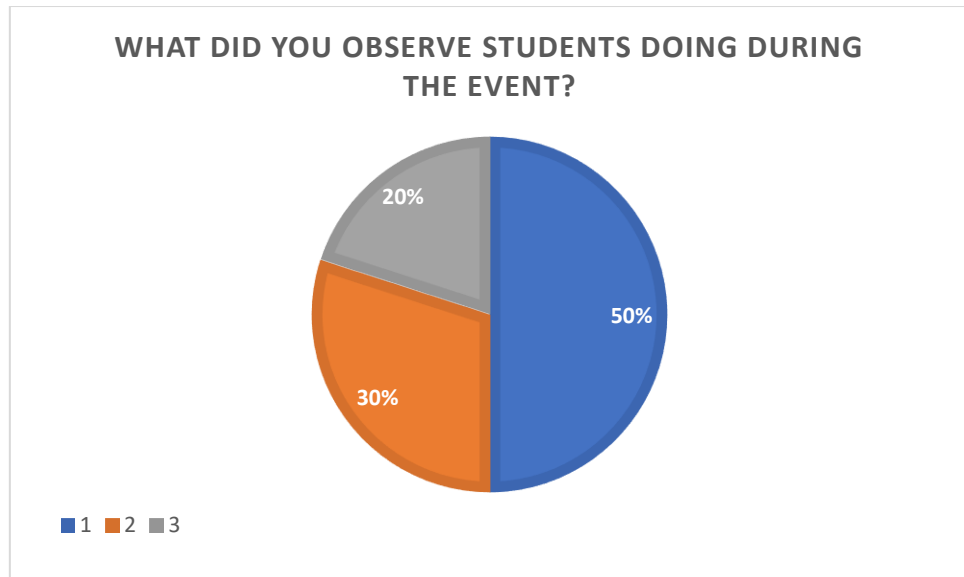

Figure 3 What did you observe students doing during the event?

As indicated in the graph above, 50% of the answers resulted that all students were given a task to conduct during the event, and mostly agreed that the main characteristic of this event was teamwork. On the other had answers for the same questions included a different approach to the question asked. 30% of the student's main concern during the observation was the low attendance shown by participants, while 20% of the students observed that the public was very interested mainly in the wine pairing event and on how chocolate is done.

Students were also asked to report on what they noticed on their own behaviour. This resulted in some mixed feelings amongst the questionnaire participants.

WHAT DID YOU NOTCE IN WHAT YOU DID DURING THE EVENT?
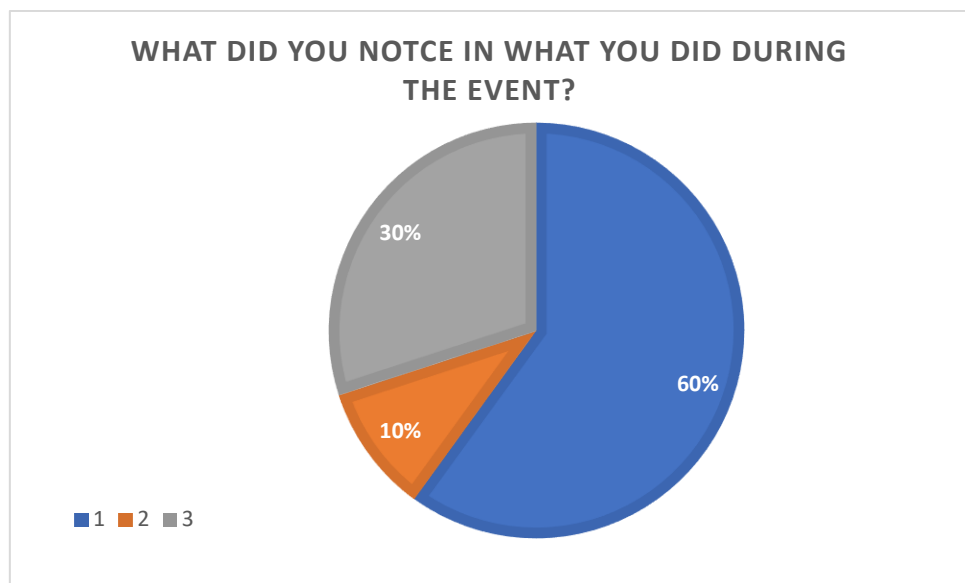
30%
10%
60%

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3

Figure 4 What did you notice you did during the event?

60% of the respondents noticed that the public was curious and interested in knowing what the students were doing in real time during the activity. 30% of them responded that since this activity was in conjunction with their studies at ITS, the students were more focused, attentive and hard working to make the event a successful one. They engaged more and participated more. 10% commented that the whole event was organised well into sections, giving the chance for all students to have particular tasks and focus on such.

As a general observation element, students were also asked to comment on what the public was doing during this event.

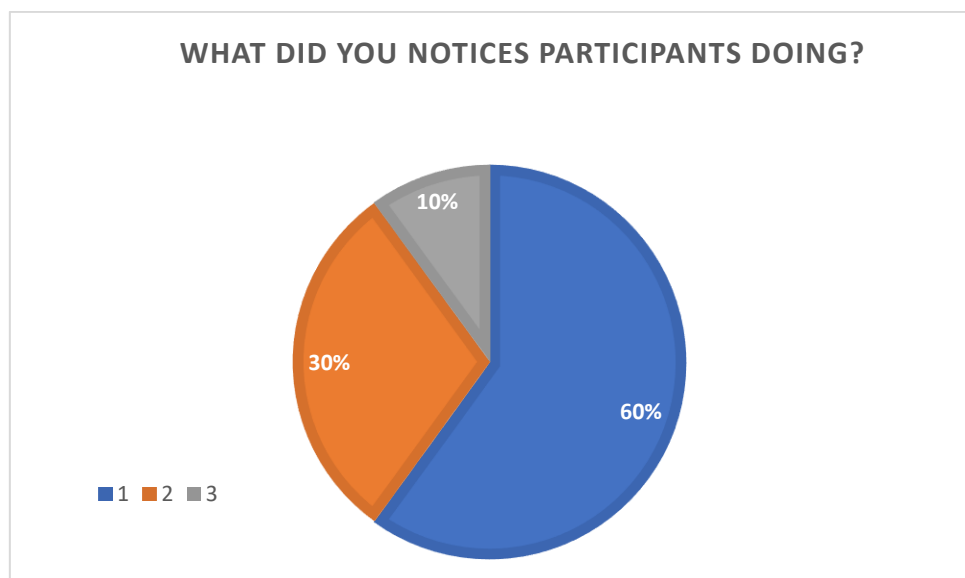**WHAT DID YOU NOTICES PARTICIPANTS DOING?**

10%
30%
60%

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3

Figure 5 What did you notices participants doing?

60% of the students observed that the public was very much enjoying getting involved in the activity and doing hands on tasks within the event. 30% observed that the public was

50

actively participating in every section of the activity and had fun in doing so, as well as, wanting to experience how chocolate is made. 10% commented that some were taking an interest in the activity but mainly roaming around and asking question about aspects on chocolate.

Students were asked to what their reaction was when asked to participate in a school event outside the campus. Such events are limited for students to participate and have an active role.
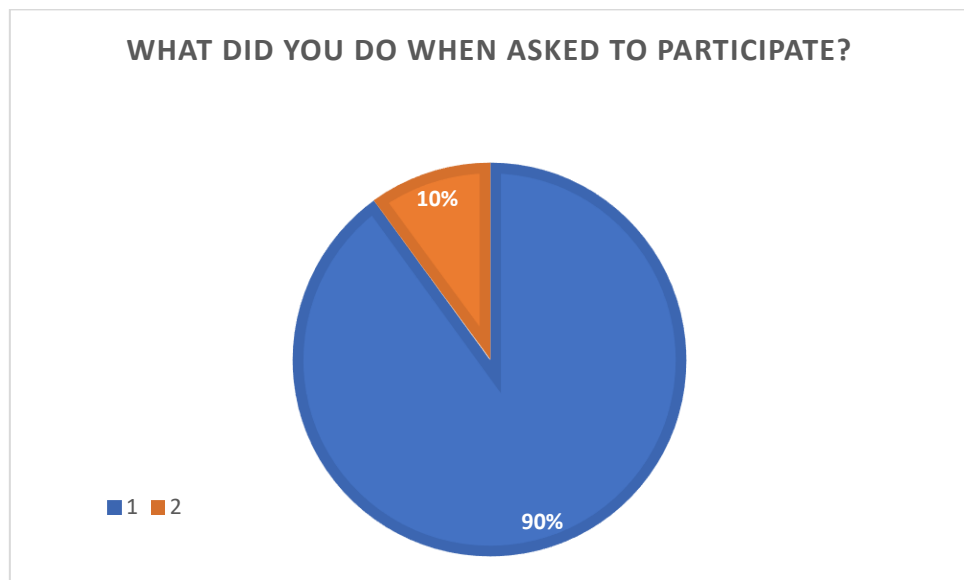

Figure 6 What did you do when asked to participate?

Without any hesitation 90% of the students were very excited to participate in such an event and started immediately together with their tutors to come up with ideas and prepare for this event. Only 10% felt a bit hesitant but still gave their input in the matter and tried to help out as much as they could.

4.2.2 Conceptualising Stage

During this stage of the questionnaire, students were asked to describe if there was any awkward behaviour during the event and if there was any intention behind it.
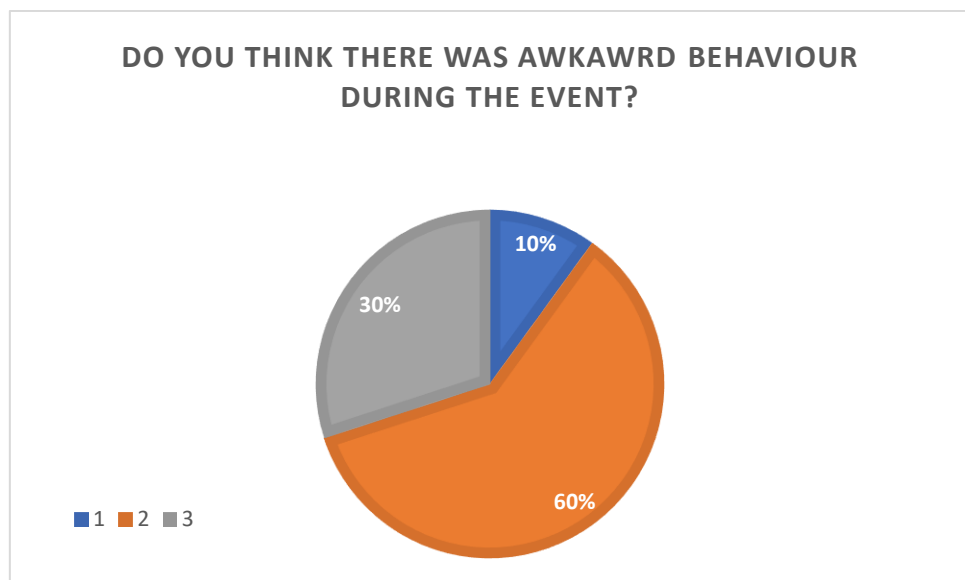
Figure 7 Do you think there was awkward behaviour during the event?

60% of the students noticed that others were acting childish and were being a distraction towards the whole event, as time was wasting in sorting them out. 30% commented that during the event energy levels were becoming low and therefore, students were not as focused as in the beginning of the event. 10% said that the team worked well together in performing and achieving the tasks as professionally as they could.

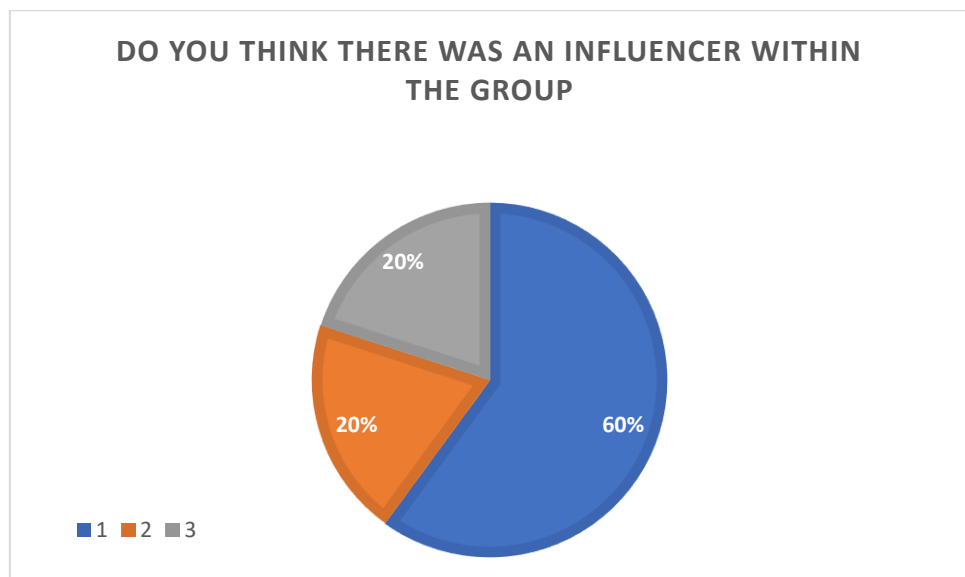It was also asked where there was an influencer/s within the group throughout the whole event.

Figure 8 Do you think there was an influencer within the group?

On another note, this is quite an interesting question which was asked to the students. Some valid answers were pointed out. 60% of them responded that there were some

students that acted out as leaders, while 20% confirmed that there were those students who had a bad influence on the whole event and caused some problems with the groups. On the other hand, 20% of the students also commented that everyone influenced each other and worked together as a group.

Students were asked on the success of the event by working together as a group. Mixed answers were given here.
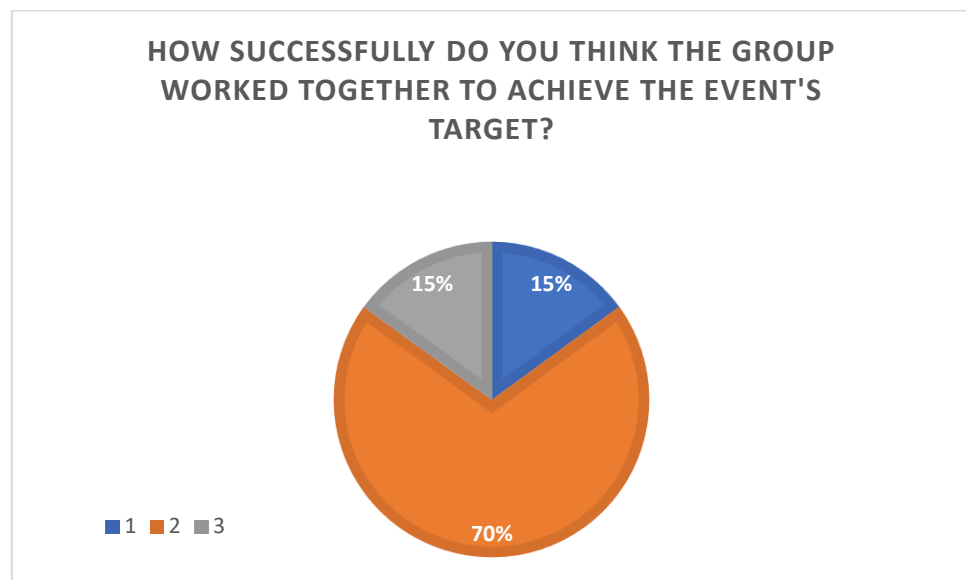

Figure 9 How successfully do you think the group worked together to achieve the event's target?

Here 70% of the students replied that worked well together as a team overall. 15% of them commented that at times the group did not agree and argued plenty of times, while the other 15% argued that for the event to be successful. More marketing needed to be done from the group's side of things.

Another question was asked to the students, with regards to what was important for them during this experience. This is a very important question that outlines of on the main research problem areas within this thesis.
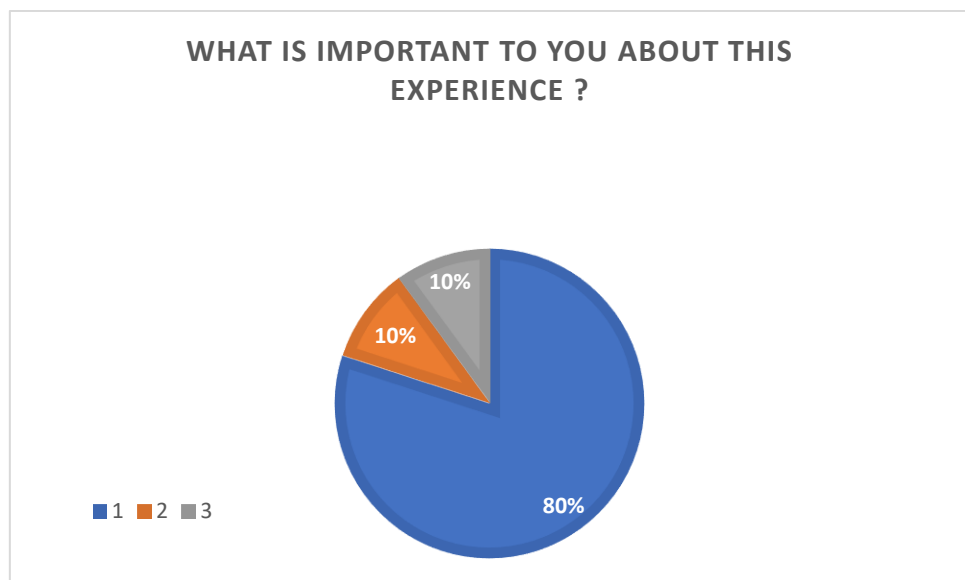
Figure 10 What is important to you about this experience?

80% of the students learnt more on what it takes to organise an event in general. 10% of them said they gained more experience on the activity and how to go about with it, and another 10% commented that everyone did their best to make it a success and enjoy the whole event procedure.

4.2.3 Application Stage

During this stage, students were given questions to reflect upon what occurred and how they will use such knowledge to their advantage. During this phase, students were asked what will stop or continue doing as a result of this experience.
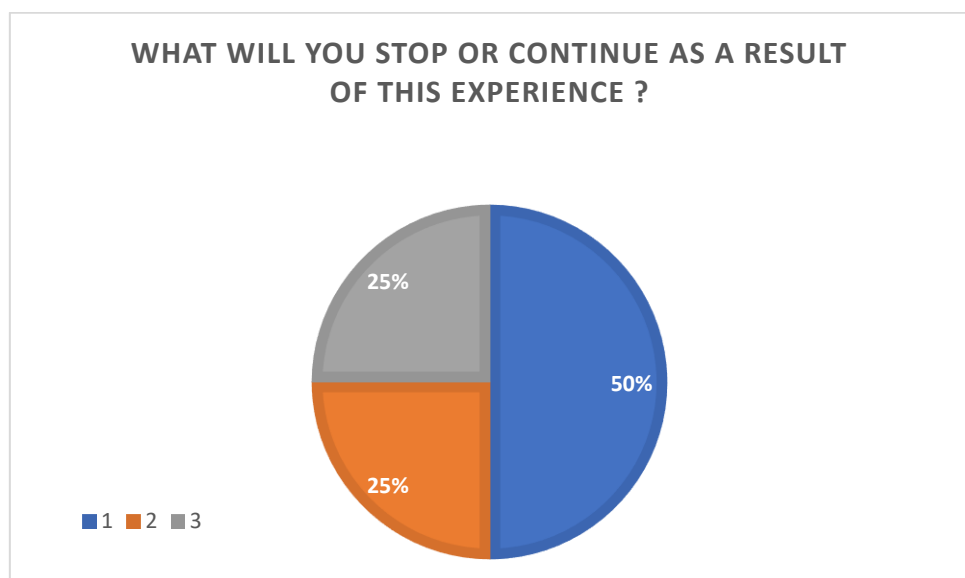

Figure 11 What will you stop or continue as a result of this experience?

50% of the students said that this experience helped them as an eye opener to further their studies on event organisation. 25% argued they would like to know more on how to organise an event. 25% commented they would like to stop doing the same mistakes and would like to continue learning on the events and chocolate section.

Students were asked if there is anything that they will try which will be a big change for them in relation to this event.

IS THERE ANYHTING YOU WILL TRY THAT WILL BE BIG
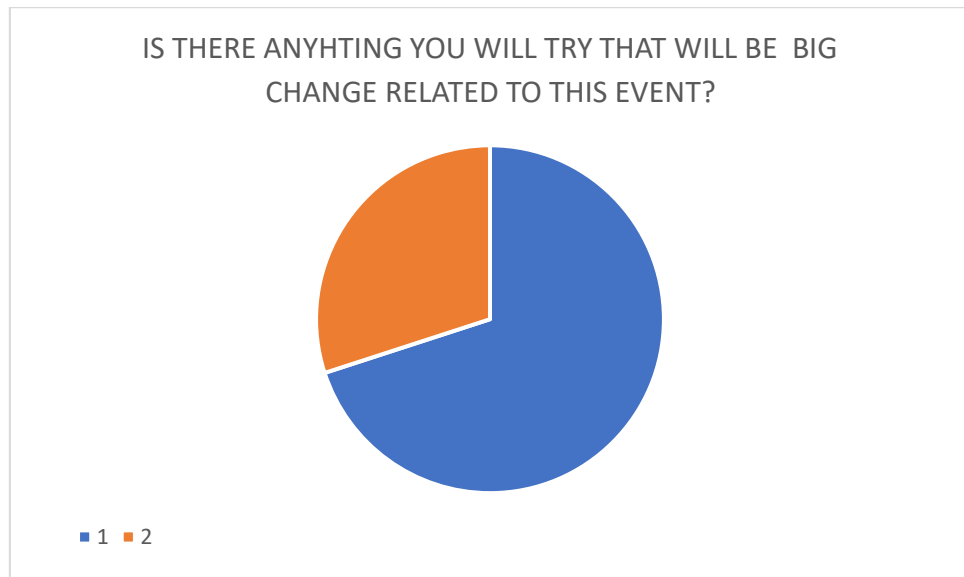CHANGE RELATED TO THIS EVENT?

■ 1 ■ 2

Figure 12 Is there anything you will try that will be a big change for you related to this event?

70% of the students argues that they are willing to get involved with more planning about how events are planned and organised in order to become more successful in their knowledge. On the other hand, students enjoyed this event so much that are willing to change their expertise in the subject and switching on to chocolate rather than the larder element.

The next questions regarded what the student will do with this new knowledge. The answers proved to be quite interesting.
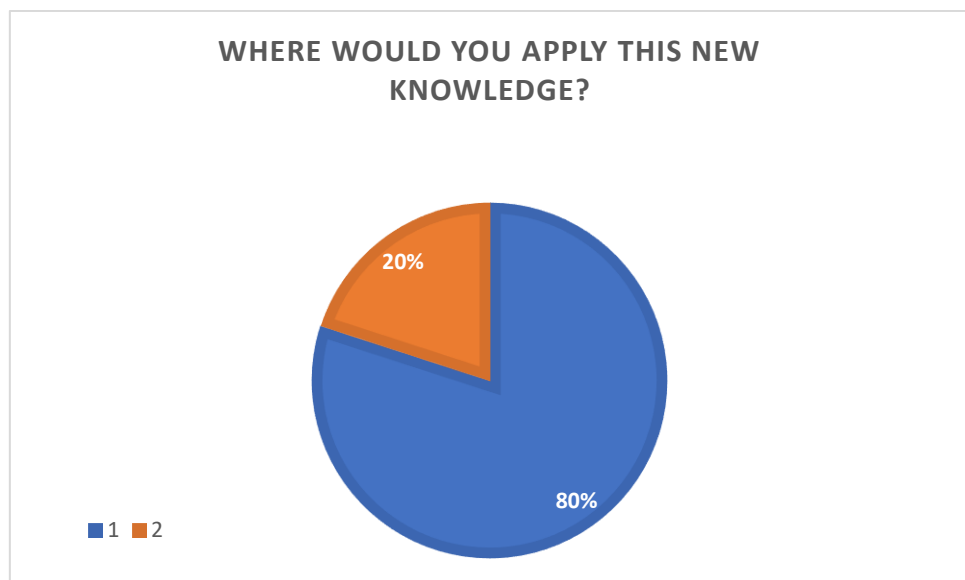
Figure 13 Where would you apply this new knowledge?

In answering this question, 80% of the students argued they would use it for their future career in event planning while the other 20% said they would use it at school or at work with guidance from their tutor.

- An important question was asked to the students, in how they would know they are currently successful. The answers were varied.
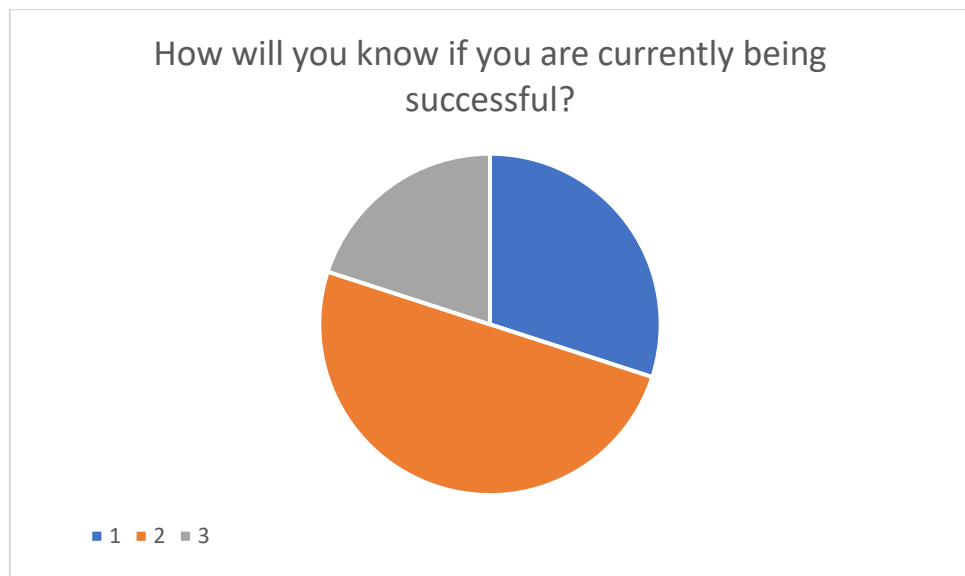
Figure 14 How will you know is you are currently being successful?

50% of the students confirmed that would know if they are successful if they can confirm with a supervisor or tutor if what they were doing was right. On the other hand, 30% of the students said that they would conduct a post-mortem on the event to check how successful this was with both the participants and their teammates. 20% of them argued that it would benefit their self-confidence on how they operated and reflected on their work.

One last question consisted on what the students would benefit from this learning.
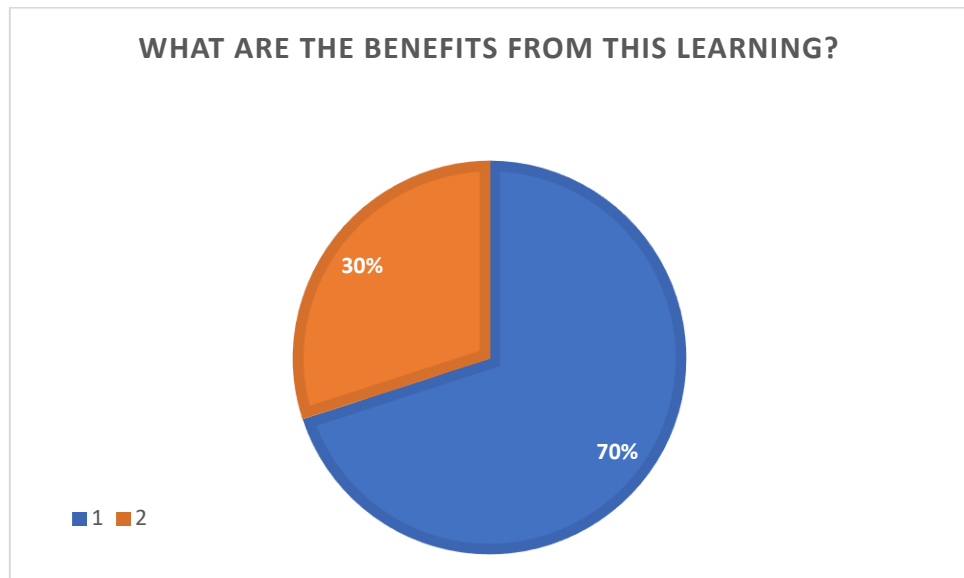

Figure 15 What are the benefits from this learning?

70% of the students said that thanks to this experience the students would be able to apply for higher positions, as they would have improved and acquired new skills. 30% said they would do better at the next given opportunity.

These are the results based on the few questionnaires that were done by the author. To follow are also interviews that will aid in the research and in the outcome of this thesis.

4.3 Interviews

In this section of the research, interviews took place with a cohort of students following the Events Management programme. Here there is a mix of students following at diploma level, as well as, higher national diploma level within the same programme. In total the author interviewed six students out of which three where at diploma level and three at higher national level. The events described by the students in these interviews are varied due to the different cohorts and events experienced, however the main aims have the same impact on the students. The idea is to as much information as the author could after these events had occurred. The interview question took a similar format to the questionnaires where it was divided into the three stages reflecting an event planning logistic.

The first interview question consisted of what the event was and why was it important. Interviewee 1 described the event as a fundraising dinner for breast cancer awareness, where also cookies and cupcakes where sold. This was important for the student not only as marks were allocated for the event but also as a boost of confidence to organise such an event and willing to help those in need. On the other hand, interviewee 2 commented

that the event was also a four-course dinner for Pink October where cupcakes and cookies where sold upon a donation. Interviewee 3 described a formal state function held for Independence Day at the Prime Minister's of Malta office in Valletta. Here events students were asked to participate in the operation of the whole event. Most people invited for this event where top governmental people like the Prime Minister, ministers' deputies, foreign VIP and many more. This was a very important function as this gave a real sense of a formal event in a stately environment and best performance was a must. Interviewee 4 defined this event as an educational experience. The event consisted of a promotional talk to form 3 to promote the events course at ITS. This was important for the student to gain experience in planning and classroom management. Interviewee 5 described the latter mentioned event as an information session for prospective students in the events career. It was beneficial as it was used as a marketing event for ITS. Interviewee 6 commented that the audience enjoyed themselves and it was important that this information session was held on the ITS campus, where prospective students could experience the campus life.

In another question, the interviewees where asked what was observed during the activity. Interviewee 1 observed three main factors occurring. The most important was that everything on the day ran smoothly from the kitchen side to the service side. The other students helping the event made sure to give their best effort in giving a professional service to the customers, and the customers response and their facial expression whilst being served. Interviewee 2 also commented that the event ran smoothly and felt different then other dinners as the student and interviewee 1 were running the event. It was very well organised and communicated well with each other, which reflected on the whole event. There was also good communication with the rest of the students that helped in running the event. Interviewee 3 observed how different a formal event is compared to others. Since this was a diplomatic event, the student observed the different attire and conversations and behaviour in such a function. It was much more pompous then any other event the student attended. Interviewee 4 noticed that all the students knew what was expected from their roles and that due to a good plan the event was successful. Interviewee 5 observed that all the participants in the event where enjoying themselves. Interviewee 6 noticed that there were quite a lot of people attending and where socialising amongst each other.

A question about how the students' behaviour changed during the event was asked. Interviewee 1 noticed that same the event proceeded, became more confident in doing a good job. The student said that once there is something lacking, it gave a boost to make it better. Interviewee 2 commented that her role was to make the operation between the service and the kitchen as smooth as possible. This meant collecting orders, delivering to

the head chef and synchronise the food coming out of the kitchen in correct order, time and manner. The student also noticed that an element of leadership came out and was able to respond to problems and queries form the rest of the staff quiet quickly. Interviewee 3 observed that the participants were having fun with the activities provided and learned loads on events. Interviewee 4 noticed how sociable she could be in events when, she is a shy person, especially with important political figures. Interviewee 5 and 6 observed that throughout the activity, the participants were very interested in the programme being marketed.

It was also asked to relate what other students and or participants were doing during the activity. Interviewee 1 detected that a few other students involved in the organisation of the event took the activity lightly, while others really worked hard to impress and tried their best to make it a success. Interviewee 2 agreed that the whole team worked together and listened and executed well to the duties and tasks given. Interviewee 3 observed that since the event was on a high scale , being a state affair, tension ran high, as well as time management, since the whole event had to be over on a 2 hour period, therefore all the food had to be served in the given time. Interviewee 4 experienced the interest of the audience in the activities being held and the willingness learn more about the subject presented. Interviewee 5 was surprised as to how many questions the audience had in relation to the presentation. Interviewee 6 observed how well the whole team worked together and how well prepared.

Students were asked if there were any changes in behaviour throughout the event. Interviewee 1 said that her confidence grew as the event progressed, and the reaction of the customers was a positive one throughout the evening. Whilst interviewee 2 and 6 did not observe any. Interviewee 3 observed that as time was progressing, more pressure was on to get all the food items out in time. Interviewee 4 only observation consisted in the number of participants for the presentation per school. Interviewee 5 noticed that at first the audience was a bit rowdy but once the presentation started, everyone clamed down and took interest in the event.

A question on how the event came about was posed on the students. Interviewee 1 and 2 replied that since they were asked to create an event and October was almost at the end, they came up with the Pink October dinner and fundraising event. The idea was to aid those who are in need and be generous. This idea also needed to go through the school board for support, aid and permission. Interviewee 3 had similar comments. She too was approached by the tutor to participate in this stately event. This is a yearly occurrent event which helps a lot to organise since there is already experience for its operation. Interviewee 4, 5 and 6 commented that the whole student cohort sat down and began to

brainstorm on various events that could occur. However, since budget was limited, it was decided to come up with an educational event where ITS would feature and promoted.

It was also asked if there were any stumbling blocks along the way, and how it was solved. Interviewee 1 replied that there were none, however said that more cookies and cupcakes could have been baked, as they were popular with the customers. Interviewee 2 said that due that the service style of the event was going to be banquet style, and a couple came an hour late for dinner, it confused a bit the sequence of service. However, with good communication with the kitchen, their order was taken and eventually caught up with the rest of the customers. Interviewee 3 remembered that the function had a small delay to commence due to the arrival of the Prime Minister, which meant service had to be quicker then anticipated, as well as, it was difficult to serve food as the room was small and the crowd quite large, but this was out of the organiser's control as was dictated by the Prime Minister which room to use. Interviewee 4 had nothing to comment about. Interviewee 5 noticed everything went according to plan, however halfway through the presentation, there was a power cut and we had to improvise the presentation. Interviewee 6 argued that whenever there was a stumbling block, was talked out between the students and solved the problem.

Students were asked to comment on the patterns of behaviour demonstrated by other students. Interviewee 1 observed that the entire team started out with a high motivation, however as the event progress, students were getting tired. Interviewee 2 replied that students were divided into teams and made sure to that each team worked well together. Interviewee 3 noticed that tutors came out to help when it was needed to have a flawless event, given the importance of the event. Interviewee 4 said that when they had a difficult behaviour, they relied on the tutor to help them out, since this was their first event. Interviewee 5 and 6 observed that everyone worked together, smart and professionally.

Another question was modelled, when an event is organised by yourself, do you think there is an element of learning and in what way. Interviewee 1 replied that there is a learning experience to this as had no help in organising it whatso ever. Interviewee 2 also agreed to the above and added that this experience aided in gaining more leadership skills and confidence. Interviewee 3 said that a great exposure was given on how to handle a high-profile event such as a state function, and how the etiquette needs to be handled. Interviewee 4 had nothing to comment. Interviewee 5 replied that since this was their first event, they learnt how to work with others, listen and share ideas. Interviewee 6 commented that this event gave him a boost, as there were things that he never knew he could handle and execute.

On another note students were asked if this event influenced them as a student and how so. Interviewee 1 argued that it made her eager to on how to learn more about events and how to improve herself in order to perform better next time. Interviewee 2 said that she saw a big change in how she operated the event from diploma to HND level. Before she used to follow instructions given to her while now, she felt more confident and lead other students. Interviewee 3 said that such a high-profile event gave her more elements to think of and be aware of any mistakes that were done so not to follow suit. Interviewee 4 obtained more experience on how to plan an event, as well as, learnt how to work within a team. Interviewee 5 said that more experience was gained in setting up this event and learnt more about the programme followed. Interviewee 6 commented that though he is still a student, it helped in improving his studies and gave him more self-confidence.

In such events, students were asked if there was teamwork to achieve success. Interviewee 1 commented that the students worked very well together, in sync, to make the event a success. Interviewee 2 also agreed however, it was also noted that at certain times in the evening, the other students needed to be pushed upon instruction to continue making the event a success. Interviewee 3 observed that this event gave her a much more detailed knowledge in how teamwork needs to be especially on a big scale event. Also commented that is was very successful. Interviewees 4,5 and 6 agreed that it helped in working together as a team to make the event a success.

In the next question, students were asked if they were culturally aware of any activities in their area. Interviewee 1 said she is quite aware, however needs to know more about them. Interviewee 2 replied that nowadays, most events are marketed on social media and therefore it would be nearly impossible not to know about them. She thinks this plays a big part in exposing these events. Interviewee 3 said she relies on her tutors to keep them informed of any events going on but does not really keep up with them unless told about them. Interviewee 4 I am culturally aware of events happening in my area. Interviewee 5 and 6 commented that not much events are held in their area.

A question was asked in what the student might do differently in the event. Interviewee 1 said that it might look for that thing that makes the customer happier. Interviewee 2 complained that the venue was quite small and felt the budget was restricted too. Should the allocation be bigger the event could have been much more a success. Interviewee 3 also complained that the even could have occurred in a larger room. Interviewee 4 said that the event could have been prolonged in time in order to have more hands-on activities. Interviewee 5 said that nothing would be changed but maybe target more local schools. Interview 6 argued that he would change the type of event done.

A question regarding what the students will stop or continue as a result of this experience was asked. Interviewee 1 explained that she will continue to believe in herself even though planning an event is hard work, as well as, continue to improve on her studies o give the maximum output within this sector. Interviewee 2 commented that she took the event very seriously leaving out enjoyment in the process. Since this was the first event that was organised by her, she felt she needed to quite strict in conducting the event. An observation was made, that in order to get everyone on board more integration with the other students involved in the event might have given a greater sense of teamwork. She also commented that to continue her education in events management in order to keep her confidence going stronger. Interviewee 3 also agreed that being part of an event helped her to identify more with her studies and would like to know more about the whole logistics. Interviewee 4 did not comment on this regard. Interviewee 5 and 6 also agreed that they will continue to follow the events programme to enrich their knowledge and skills.

Students were asked if there is anything related to this activity that might change as a result of this experience. Interviewee 1 would focus more on speaking out her thoughts and be more extrovert when it comes to communication with others and be proud of the achievements within the event. Interviewee 2 explained that she enjoyed the whole planning process that occurred before the event mostly, but also had fun in working the event. She would like to experience the planning process in her place of work, rather then being told what to do. Interviewee 3 said that now she is focusing on other things but loves to be involved in such prestigious events. Interviewee 4 did not comment. Interviewee 5 was a bit clueless and did not know they feel. Interviewee 6 said that would try and change the event to include more decorations and props in it.

What support was needed to have a complete learning curve in this event was asked. Interviewee 1 and 3 explained that the main support came from the tutor and the school management. She continued that even though the budget was limited, the tutor's support was vital as, encouragement was given all the time to deliver a strong event. Interviewee 2 complained that more flexibility and responses from the management and marketing department could have been given. She thinks more feedback from the above departments could have given them a greater experience and learnt more how events are dealt with. Interviewee 4,5 and 6 also agreed that the support of the tutor and school administration was vital for their event.

It was asked on how this new learning could be applied in the future. Interviewee 1 noted that this new learning could be applied anywhere, as in events quick thinking is needed and therefore can be applied to any situation. Interviewee 2 said that this experience was insightful as experience is irreplaceable and will aid in future endeavours. Interviewee 3

said that this new learning will come useful for any type of situation not only in a VIP situation. Interviewee 4 observed that such knowledge could be passed on to the younger cohorts within the school to help them in their journey. Interviewee 5 commented that such knowledge and skills could be used for any future events. Interviewee 6 said that due to this applied knowledge the student is eager to know more about events management and logistics.

Students were asked what benefits they see when applying this new learning. Interviewee 1 said that one of the main benefits is self-confidence. Interviewee 2 said that without the proper management, organisation and teamwork, the event would not have been a success. Interviewee 3 said the more knowledge she has the more it can be applied to the various social events in her life. Interviewee 4 noted that via such events more knowledge and experiences are gained to use in future activities. Interviewee 5 said this would be unforgettable as this was his first event.

In the final question students were asked how they will continue learning from these new experiences. Interviewee 1 argued that such an experience used not only be given for events programmes but also to every programme followed at ITS, as the learning for it is immense. Interviewee 2 felt that more feedback could have been given by management and customers to gain more knowledge to what was expected and learn from such an activity, as there is always room from improvements. Interviewee 3 argues that even if the event is a huge success to remain always humble and respectful towards your teammates. Every event has a different approach so there is a learning curve every time within an activity. Interviewee 4 had nothing to say on this matter. Interviewee 5 and 6 argued that the first experience is always memorable and will always remember the ups and downs of the whole activity, as well as, continue to learn more about the events industry.

Within this section, the analyses of both the questionnaires and the interviewees were obtained. Some answers where expectant while others came to a surprise for the author. In the next section of this research an in-depth approach will be conducted, as to clearly indicate whether the outcomes of the research questions were answered.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study, as clearly made in the beginning of this research, was boosted by issues in cultural activities in relation to interactivity. The main aim is to create different interactive scenarios which can motivate students in cultural events, and therefore enhance the learning and knowledge in an educational setting. The objective behind this study is to determine that experiential learning, involves different approaches, making the learning and motivation grasped in a unique style. Through such experiences, the learner has been exposed to a memorable, rich and effective experience for and to learn. Experiential learning also gives participants their own identity and uniqueness in creating their own events. The sub objectives of this study include:

1.Create experiential learning approaches to motivate students

2.How to create an individual experiential (observation) learning experience

3.How to analyse students to memorable, rich and effectives cultural event scenarios.

In the previous chapter an analysis of the reactions of the students interviewed was made very clearly, as to what and how they reacted to the events and activities. Most of the events the students participated in were quite important socially, as well as, for their own personal gain and experience. One of the main important points that clearly made an impact on the students' perspective. These types of events helped the students identify to communicate more with each other during these activities. Once the students realised that to set up an event, teamwork is needed, communication started flowing between them to make sure they gave the best performance. Some students also realised the importance of communication not just between the group members but, as well, with participants and customers. It became very clear to them that interacting with participants and customers is as much important as the event itself. It is here were a vital impact can occur and make an event memorable for individuals.

During the planning stage of the events, students also became acquainted with the various tasks and roles, individuals might assume in such activities. It was observed that some are natural born leaders, while others are followers. When a group of people is put in such situations, automatically, a few take on the role of the leader. This also came to as a surprise for some students whom had no idea they possessed such a quality. Activities such as this brought out new characteristics that did not know they owned. On the other hand, students who were introverts, made an effort to integrate better in the group and over come their shyness for the sake of the events. Getting involved as a team helped these students to open up, get over their weakness, and participate fully in the project at hand. From the analysis, it clearly shows that the introverts make an effort because they want to participate more in the event and have a huge interest in what is going on around

them. This acted also as an experience in self confidence for such type of students. This gave them a boost they required.

On the other hand, it was made very clear from the observations mentioned earlier, that some students took these events with a light heart. Such students were a distraction to others who took on the work with a serious and professional attitude. This was very disrespectful to those who were really working hard to make the event a success. Of course, such a behaviour created tensions within the group members and therefore it might have hindered the overall performance. This gave students a real insight of what goes on when events are planned and how to handle such situations there and then. In events planning actions and reactions must be acted quickly upon to keep the event on track. Certain events clearly indicated that there was a time management element to abide to as protocol dictated, since some events were state functions. This was also the case of the other events, however not a such restricted time frame. Here students learnt how to cater for such events and to manage the event is a short space of time. It was also noted by the students that due to their willingness to learn form this experience, they followed to suit what their tutors instructed in certain instances, especially when it came to the state function.

Teamwork was another characteristic that students talked about in their answers. It was very important for them to work well together in order to achieve a brilliant event. Once the event was going well, this initiated a big confidence boost in them, as well as, being satisfied that the event was a success and participants enjoyed it. Once they got confident, it clearly showed even with the interaction of the audience, as they were more willing to explain about the event and integrate more with them. The customers also had a different experience, as the concept was more understood and had a memorable event consequently. Students also learnt to work with time pressure, as all events had a period to be operated in. Therefore, it was an important lesson for them to work within a timeframe and be professional in their work, to get the feel for time pressure. In one of the events, there was also the issue of crowd control, where students both observed and learnt how to go about controlling the crowd in these types of events. They experienced the logistics in such a control, can be obtained with the aid of other companies such a security company. This experience gave them knowledge how difficult it is to control crowds, especially if it is in a confined space.

On a different scenario, students also learnt on how to market the event. Since the events where organised by them, a marketing strategy was also needed to be part of the planning of the events. Audience and customers needed to know about such activities and had to be attracted towards the event. In order to do this the events, need to have

something to appeal towards them. So, with this exercise they learnt the value that marketing has and how events are promoted on small and large scales, since some events where bigger than others. They also learnt the value of thinking ahead in time in order to get the crowds needed for these events, so participants can plan, in order, to be able to attend these events. On another note, students being the organisers of the event also learnt how to be flexible with certain things and find logical solutions on the spot when where problems raised. it gave them a unique opportunity in which, common sense and smartness had to used in order to come up with workable solutions for the problems at hand. Also, another valuable lesson came across, that one must work with the things available at hand. In these types of events it is very important to be inventive with what you have and use it to your advantage. In such cases students learnt to think outside the norm and be flexible.

Motivation in planning and operating these events ran high throughout, not just for the sake of getting a pass or for setting up and organising the event, but also due to the excitement of organising something on their own. Such motivations ran even higher on the day of the event and were all super hyper and difficult to control on enthusiasm. However, as the event went along, their motivation and enthusiasm were becoming low. They got tired at the end and their will to clear down was not so great and became difficult to control them. Since they are still students, they did still relay on their tutors for support and help in this whole organisation, since these events are still a learning experience for them. In some events students also pointed out that the art of etiquette was also learnt, especially in those events that feature in state affairs. Certain modules that were learnt at ITS came handy when dealing with this type of audiences.

Students have also confided that in such events, they discovered skills and knowledge and talents that never knew they had. They found their artistic talents when setting up and operating these types of events, especially in events which had to be originated from their ideas and own skills. These were a discovery made in the process, which got the students by surprise and aided in developing their self confidence too. In such circumstances they also learnt to perform better under stress and pressure, which is also a contributing factor in the learning and experience process. They had first-hand experiences were mistakes were made and realised that better solutions or performance could have been a better contribution towards the event. Another important factor that occurred during these events and was highly noted and observed, is the fact that, there was a change in the students' behaviour. The main characteristic that followed consisted of being able to follow an instruction to leaded the events. Some students were not aware that they had a leadership trait in them, but thanks to organising these events, skills and talents started to emerge and make an impact on the event and their peers.

It was noticed during the events, the students work in synchronisation, and in teamwork. This was a very good experience for them, as they got to know each other well, formed deep friendships and shared memories together. The author also noticed that these friendships and bonding continued after the event, were it made things much easier for them to work together in other circumstances. Their friendships grew so much that it also went beyond the schooling hours and meet outside to socialise together. With such friendships, the students pushed each other in doing their best in the event and being the support for one another. This was an indirect motivation for each student to do better on the task given. Unfortunately, being given the opportunity of organising events, did not really flag the importance to getting to know what is going on around the island. Unless being told about the events by their tutor, students are still not interested in the cultural activities held on the island.

During these activities' students realised how much satisfaction they got in making customers and participants happy. Some of the students involved in these events, were following the culinary arts programme, and therefore never really experienced the face to face dealings with customers. It was ideal for them as they got to see the reactions of the people when tasting and dealing with the food and products made with love and skills gained from the training school. It gave them a boost in confidence gave them that sense of pride that most of the time students lack due to ungiven feedback. Having said so, it was also an experience getting to perform an event outside of the school campus and utilise much more bigger spaces. This was a challenge in many ways for both for the students, tutors and participants. Since the event was spread on several areas, the logistics of it needed much more attention, on how to attract participants in all the various areas included in the event. For the organising students, it was a very good exercise to be involved in such planning, as it gave a wider know how on bigger events and make the best of the allocated space given. As organisers they learnt how to deal with a widespread event and be in control as much as possible all the time. They learnt how to deal with pressure and stress, as well as, having to be a quick thinker to solve on the spot solutions.

Most importantly a huge lesson was learnt, that after all that hard work, the event was enjoyed too. If there is no enjoyment in it, the activity becomes dull, boring and unmotivating. They got to experience the excitement of it all, and experience a memorable event, which will forever be in their hearts and mind, as being something unique that was learnt by being involved in it. This aided in making students believe in themselves, together with the enriched knowledge of the planning and manning of it all. Students themselves commented that these activities will be forever imprinted in their memories. Such involvement also helped students who were a bit shy to open up and speak up more with their teammates and also the audience.

As part of the whole activity, students found out they it was very enjoyable and challenged to plan these events and gave them an opportunity to do some practical work after all the theory lectures taught about events planning. There were opportunities to think outside the box, as well as, how to present the activity in a more creative way by including props and drops to make the event more realistic to the audience or participants who attend. It involved use a lot more communication with the various departments involved and a lot more negotiation to come up with the perfect solution for the event. This meant that more support was also needed by the tutor and the school management on certain things. Another type of knowledge was learnt, on how to market the event successfully. In some cases, the event was a success, but students were not familiar with marketing plans, and therefore, new knowledge was instilled in them, as for the sake of the event, this had to be done in order to attract the audiences' attention. They became accustomed on how to use certain social media platforms for their advantage in order to promote the event. It is important to note, that students did their best to market the event with the little resources they had but made a very good use of such resources.

As mentioned before, getting involved in organising events aided students in many ways. This brought about confidence, leadership skills, organisational skills, knowledge. These characteristics can be passed on to future generations, via their jobs, pep talks and leading by example. Now students know how to apply the knowledge gained from such experiences to future activities they might be involved in. Every occasion in life is an opportunity to learn and to save unforgettable moments in time to share or learn form them. Students also recommended that such involvement show be given to all cohorts within the programmes at ITS, as the memory and teaching is immensely valuable. Students commented when experiencing this, one must remain humble and respectful towards his peers and tutors. One experience does not make you a professional but will guide you in the right direction towards a right future. Every activity has a learning curve which will aid the student to gain more knowledge and a memorable experience for the rest of their life.

As a conclusion the study showed that students do learn whilst having a working experience and gain skills and knowledge that was previously taught just in theory, has now become a reality and could understand better what was described in class. Living the entire event experience proved to be challenging for them and brought about a huge motivation for the students to prove that they can do it and give their best output in the activity. Thus, bringing about more interest in the execution of the entire event.

5.1 Limitations of the Study

Overall the study has achieved its overall objectives. It provided an array of knowledge in which organising events aided the learning and knowledge of students following mostly the events management course. These research findings can be of value to the Institute of Tourism Studies lecturers and management in view of the dynamics within the events organisation market. It will aid in perfecting the module for future student generations, in order to find unique ways in which to bring about memorable experiences and creating such activities, for students to benefit from such knowledge.

This study had some limitations:

1. There was not enough student participation since this module has only been running for the past two years.
2. Since there was the COVID 19 pandemic, all events including the academic year was cut short. Lectures were still held online, but mass events could not be held due to the spreading of the virus.
3. None of the events held were the same, therefore some responses could be a little bit ambiguous.

These limitations might have altered some of the results of this research. However most results are still applicable to the research question asked, and gave a huge insight to the author.

5.2 Conclusion

This research aided the author in various ways, as it gave real information on how organising events applies to the study for the students. The author does not see any other study that can be applied to such a study. This study showed in its true manner how can events be applied to students who are still learning the trade and hoe they might gain experience and memorable activities to forge their future within this industry. The research findings and results may also be of interest to other researchers. This study can be beneficial to the management of the Institute of Tourism Studies in obtaining a better result in their curriculum for future generations of prospective students.

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Questions for interview

Issue / Dimension / Factor / ?	Variable (when known)	Question
		1. What happened during the event? Why was it important?
		2. What did you observe during the activity?
		3. What did you notice about what you did during the event?
		4. What did you notice about other people during the event?
		5. Did you notice anything that changed during the event?
		6. How was the decision made for the event to happen?
		7. When stumbling blocks occurred during the event, what happened? How was this solved?
		8. Were you aware of any patterns in the behaviour demonstrated by other students?
		9. When organizing an event, yourself, do you think there is an element of learning in this process? In what way?

		10. Do you think that this event influenced you as a student? How so?
		11. How successfully do you think the students team worked together to achieve the event's target?
		12. How culturally aware are you of activities being held in your area?
		13. What might you do differently if you were to do this activity again?
		14. What will you stop, start or continue as a result of this experience?
		15. What support was needed for this event to be a complete learning curve?
		16. Is there anything you will try as a result of this activity that might be a change for you? How do you feel about that?
		17. In what situations would it be useful to apply this new learning? Where, when and with whom?
		18. What benefits do you see when applying this learning?
		19. How will you continue to learn from the new

		experiences you will undoubted have as you implement these changes?

1. What happened during the event? Why was it important?
2. What did you observe during the activity?
3. What did you notice about what you did during the event?
4. What did you notice about other people during the event?
5. Did you notice anything that changed during the event?
6. How was the decision made for the event to happen?
7. When stumbling blocks occurred during the event, what happened? How was this solved?
8. Were you aware of any patterns in the behaviour demonstrated by other students?
9. When organizing an event, yourself, do you think there is an element of learning in this process? In what way?
10. Do you think that this event influenced you as a student? How so?
11. How successfully do you think the students team worked together to achieve the event's target?
12. How culturally aware are you of activities being held in your area?
13. What might you do differently if you were to do this activity again?
14. What will you stop, start or continue as a result of this experience?
15. Is there anything you will try as a result of this activity that might be a change for you? How do you feel about that?
16. What support was needed for this event to be a complete learning curve?
17. In what situations would it be useful to apply this new learning? Where, when and with whom?
18. What benefits do you see when applying this learning?
19. How will you continue to learn from the new experiences you will undoubted have as you implement these changes?