



Voyage to Vietnam

Remedial/Summative Report Addendum

Children's Discovery Museum San Jose
Fall 2015



Table of Contents

Overview	3
Methods	4
Results	6
Enjoyment	7
Engagement	9
Perceived Value of the Exhibition	13
Response from Vietnamese Community Advisors	16
Conclusions	20
References	22
Appendices	24

Credits
All photos:
Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose
except pp. 6, 12, 20, and 22:
Garibay Group

Overview

The Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose (CDM) contracted Garibay Group to conduct an evaluation of the *Voyage to Vietnam: Celebrating the Tết Festival* exhibition. This addendum discusses summative findings regarding the project's secondary audience of Vietnamese families.

Voyage to Vietnam: Celebrating the Tết Festival was designed to help children ages 3–10 and their families engage with the traditions of Tết and learn more about Vietnam in general through fun, exciting experiences and immersive environments. *Voyage to Vietnam* is part of the Freeman Foundation Asian Culture Exhibit Series, a multi-year initiative whose goal is promote Asian cultural understanding in U.S. children.

Voyage to Vietnam consisted of 13 key areas/components. It's overall goal was to provide an opportunity for American children to gain an understanding, appreciation, and respect for the customs, traditions, rituals, values, and daily experiences of people who live in Vietnam, discovering similarities and differences between their lives and the lives of children in Vietnam.

Garibay Group conducted a remedial/summative evaluation assessing exhibition outcomes for the stated primary audience (Garibay Group, 2015).

Given CDM's important and on-going work and relationship with the Vietnamese community, however, the CDM exhibition and Garibay Group teams wanted to ensure some evaluation was conducted with the local Vietnamese community.

Therefore, Garibay Group conducted a smaller, secondary study to gauge the impact of the exhibition on the local Vietnamese community. More specifically, we sought to learn about Vietnamese families' experiences with and responses to the exhibition. Additionally, through Vietnamese community advisors who were involved in the exhibition process, we hoped to further deepen our understanding of the value and impact of the exhibition for advisors and for the local Vietnamese community more generally.

Evaluation Focus for the Vietnamese Audience

- How do Vietnamese families respond to the exhibition in general? To what extent and in what ways do they connect to the exhibition?
- To what extent and in what ways do parents value the exhibition for themselves and their children?
- How do community advisors respond to the exhibition? What insights do they provide about the value of the exhibition for them personally and for the local Vietnamese community?

Methods, cont'd.

Methods

This evaluation of *Voyage to Vietnam* used a mixed-methods approach involving both qualitative and quantitative methods (Greene & Caracelli, 2003). Methods used included exit surveys, observations, intercept interviews, and a focus group.

Exit Surveys

Exit surveys were used to gather feedback from Vietnamese families regarding their enjoyment of the exhibition as well as their views about the relevance of the exhibition and their connection to it.

Exit surveys were collected during CDM's annual Vietnamese community celebration, *Children of the Dragon* (April 25–26, 2015) in order to ensure we obtained a high sample of families who identified as Vietnamese. As families left *Voyage to Vietnam*, CDM staff intercepted them and asked them to complete a self-administered survey. We collected a total of 49 surveys. Of these surveys, 20% were completed in Vietnamese.

Observations with Intercept Interviews

Observations and interviews were undertaken to help us understand how families engaged with the *Voyage to Vietnam* exhibition, the nature of their experience in the exhibition, and what was successful and what was less so. A bilingual (Vietnamese/English) researcher approached families as they entered the exhibition, invited them to participate in the study, and—with their consent—followed the family throughout their visit to *Voyage to Vietnam*. Using a systematic method, the researcher observed the families and recorded details of their behaviors, interactions, modes of engagement, and conversations.

Following each observation, the researcher conducted a short structured intercept interview. These interviews were intended to deepen our understanding of visitors' experiences as well as to provide additional data about respondents' enjoyment with the exhibition; the ways in which they reflected on their experiences in the exhibition; and how they connected to the exhibition.

Data were gathered on the *Children of the Dragon* weekend. Researchers conducted 10 observations and interviews.

Focus Group with Vietnamese Advisors

Garibay Group staff conducted a focus group with CDM's Vietnamese community advisors to obtain their feedback on the exhibition, learn about their personal responses and experiences with the exhibition, and gain insights about the value of the exhibition for the local Vietnamese community in San Jose.

The focus group was conducted in the Spring of 2015. A total of eight advisors participated in the hour-long conversation.

Sampling Strategy

We used a random sampling strategy (Babbie, 1998) for exit survey data collection. We used purposive sampling to select respondents for observations and interviews (Babbie, 1998). In purposive sampling, each respondent is selected based on characteristics identified as most useful or appropriate for the study. In addition to selecting for Vietnamese families, the main criterion was a range of children's ages.

Methods, cont'd.

Data Analysis

Basic descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative components of the data and are summarized in tables and histograms. Exit survey data is presented in percentages (some percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding). Where appropriate, the actual number of responses (n) is provided.

Researchers coded qualitative data from surveys, interviews, and observations to identify emergent patterns and themes in the data without the limitations imposed by predetermined categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Patton, 1990). As patterns and themes were identified, researchers teased out the strength of these patterns and themes (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Limitations

Because Vietnamese families comprised the secondary audience for the evaluation and the study was at a smaller scale, the main limitation of this evaluation was small sample sizes.



Families watch the Lion Dance at the *Children of the Dragon* celebration. This weekend was used to gather data from families identifying as Vietnamese because of the large number of Vietnamese community members attending this event.

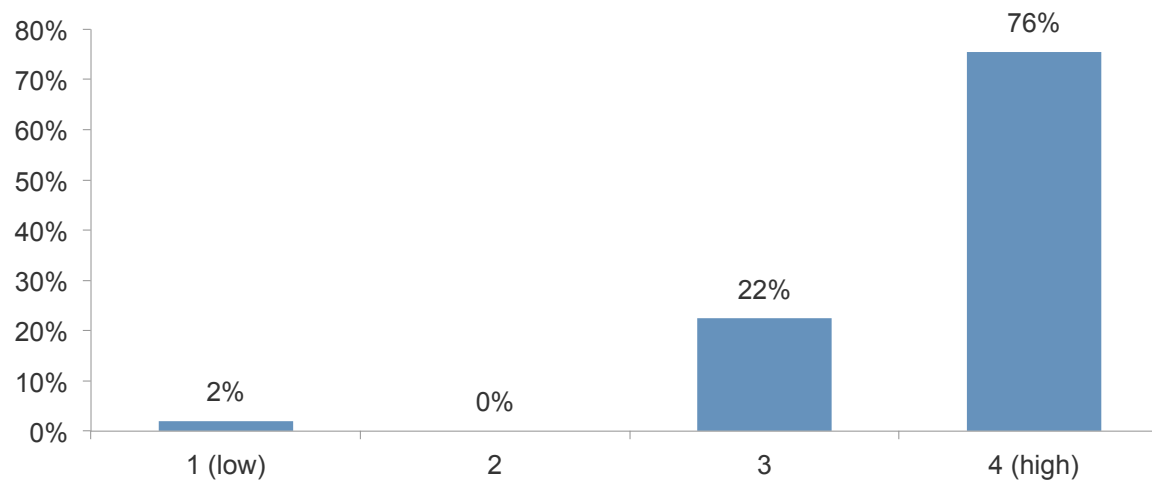
Results



Enjoyment

Vietnamese families highly enjoyed their experiences in *Voyage to Vietnam*. When asked to rate their family's enjoyment of the exhibition on a 1–4 scale (with 1 being “very low” and 4 being “very high”), 98% of respondents rated their enjoyment a “3” or “4.” Vietnamese families had higher enjoyment ratings than did primary audience members (76% of Vietnamese families rated it a “4” while 53% of other families rated it a “4”).

Rate your family's overall enjoyment of the exhibit:



N = 49

What did you enjoy most about this exhibit?

The Bamboo Bridge. It's fun to walk on. It's the first time I've seen such a big bamboo trunk!
—Child

The musical instruments. The shapes and sounds are different, some have many strings, some only have one string. They are very unique!
—Child

The Lion Dance. This is the first time I can touch and try on the lion's head.
—Child

The Lion Dance. It is big and cool. The video gives sounds of a real performance.
—Child

The Scooter. My father used to drive the whole family on this kind of scooter. I stood in the front. My younger brother sat between my mom and dad.
—Adult

The picture of a marketplace on the wall. My mom used to sell produce at a market place to support the whole family.
—Adult

Clay stoves. My mom cooked good meals with those...and the Altar, where I was supposed to put the incense on the altar on every full moon day and the first day of lunar months.
—Adult

Enjoyment, cont'd.

When families were asked what they enjoyed most about the exhibition during intercept interviews, children tended to mention highly interactive components such as the Lion Dance, Interactive Map, Bamboo Bridge, and Music Pavilion.

Adults, on the other hand, often mentioned components that made them recall childhood memories. These components included the Scooter, the Ancestor Altar, the Marketplace, the Kitchen, and Outdoor Cooktop.

While most respondents enjoyed the exhibition and did not have many recommendations for improvement, the most common suggestion was to include more photos and videos of landmarks, geographical features, and cultural activities in Vietnam.

There were some indications that newer immigrants to the United States (those here fewer than five years) felt that the exhibition was not as authentic as those who had been in the United States longer. A number of visitors, for example, said that the Bamboo Bridge needed a handrail in order to be authentic.



A child enjoys pretending to cook on the stove. Vietnamese families enjoyed and engaged with the exhibition in very similar ways to families observed in the primary audience evaluation. Children engaged in imaginative play, touched and used objects, and often directed where the families, as a whole, went in the exhibition.

I'd love to see pictures or videos of the games I used to play during childhood days: Hide and Seek, Tag, Hopscotch, Spinning Top, Chopsticks & Ball; kids in the countryside had more games because they could find more materials.

[Have a] big picture of Vietnam on the wall with some famous geographic features such as cities, rivers, lakes, [and] temples in the three regions: northern, central and southern Vietnam.

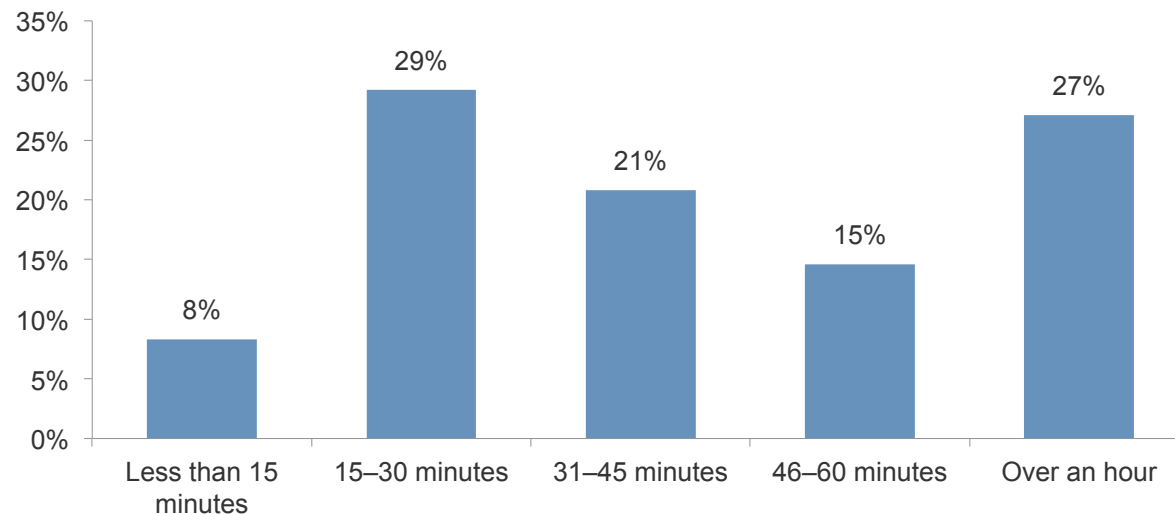
It'd be nice if there is a video that shows popular forms of music performance in the three regions of the country such as dan ca, quan ho (Northern Vietnam), ho Hue (Central Vietnam), and cai luong or ho (Southern Vietnam).

We want to see pictures of street food by the café and more videos and pictures of cultural activities in Vietnam.

Engagement

Nearly all exit survey respondents (92%) reported their family spent 15 minutes or more in *Voyage to Vietnam*, with more than a third (42%) spending 45 minutes or longer. Time spent in the exhibition reported by Vietnamese families was considerably longer than that reported by families who comprised the primary audience for the exhibition.

Time Spent in Exhibit



N = 48

Only 8% of Vietnamese families said they spent fewer than 15 minutes in *Voyage to Vietnam*, compared to 33% of non-Vietnamese families participating in evaluation.

Furthermore, only 1% of families in the primary audience spent more than an hour in the exhibition compared with 27% of the Vietnamese families.

Engagement, cont'd.

Vietnamese families in this study engaged physically with the exhibition in much the same ways as non-Vietnamese families. The major difference between these two audiences was in the nature of their conversations. In all Vietnamese families who participated, we observed significant adult-to-child conversations where caregivers offered explanations about customs and cultural practices and shared personal memories and stories about other family members living or who had lived in Vietnam.

Observation data indicated that families, particularly children, physically engaged with the *Voyage to Vietnam* exhibition. For example, children sat on the Scooter, played with the Marketplace fruits, walked across the Bamboo Bridge, and pretended to cook in the Kitchen. These interactions were much the same as those observed in families who did not identify as Vietnamese.

Caregivers in Vietnamese families also took the same roles as the caregivers we observed in the primary audience. Caregivers usually acted as facilitators of their children's experience during their visit to *Voyage to Vietnam*. For example, caregivers read labels to their children, called their attention to a component, or explained to their children how to do an activity.

Caregivers also took on the role of “photographer,” documenting their families' experiences at the exhibition. More than half the caregivers in Vietnamese families were observed taking photographs at some point in the exhibition. The most-often photographed exhibit component was the Scooter.

Caregivers also took on the more passive role of supervisor during at least one point in their *Voyage to Vietnam* visit. They ensured that their children interacted appropriately and safely with the exhibition.

Finally, caregivers in Vietnamese families participating in this study sometimes acted as playmates with the children in the exhibition. These caregivers, along with their children, were observed playing *Bầu Cua Cá Cọp*, pretending to shop for fruit in the Marketplace, and interacting with the Lion Dance.

While many of the interactions in the exhibition were the same for all families, the nature of conversations differed. Vietnamese families were much more likely to have conversations where caregivers explained specific Vietnamese cultural practices and customs to their children as they engaged in the exhibition.

Caregivers quite often drew from their own experiences to provide more detail or to help their children make cultural connections with what their children were seeing or doing at the exhibition.

Oh yeah, we see these [instruments] on Vietnamese music shows on TV and videos. This is so cool! They have everything in here!
— Child

This is a bamboo bridge, a kind of bridge that only appears in the countryside, where there were many small rivers and people just need to cross those rivers to go to somewhere else. They could not build the brick bridges because there are too many!... These bamboo bridges usually have a handrail so you don't fall into the river. — Adult

This is how rice cakes are folded. They use banana leaves to wrap up meat, and sweet rice and mung beans. After that, they cook the cakes for six hours. — Adult

This is the altar. You have to bow! — Adult

When you see the altar, you need to bow. Look at the fruits and flowers—are they beautiful? That's what we do for the New Year, arrange the altar with fresh flowers and fruits to worship our ancestors—to pay respect to them. — Adult

This is a map of our country, Vietnam. Let's touch the screen to see what it has. This is a river. This is our hometown, Mui Ne. Want to touch the screen? — Adult

Engagement, cont'd.

For example, Vietnamese caregivers were heard explaining to their children how to use chopsticks, how to fold *bahn chung*, how to use a cook stove, pronouncing the names of fruit in Vietnamese, and explaining the significance of the household altar for ancestors. Some even used the exhibition as a way to have their children practice speaking Vietnamese. For instance, at the Market, one parent named the fruits in both Vietnamese and English, and then asked her children to repeat the names in Vietnamese.

We also documented conversations where families discussed cultural values (not just traditions), such as the importance of honoring elders or being together with family during important holidays.

In a sense, caregivers became “cultural brokers” for their family, using the exhibit to help their children explore and better understand the specifics of their cultural heritage—learning the names of objects, how to use certain objects, and appropriate ways of behaving (e.g., bowing whenever you encounter an altar).

Voyage to Vietnam also triggered many childhood memories for caregivers, and most shared these memories with their children while in the exhibition. They recounted, for example, what it was like to ride on a Vespa scooter in a Vietnamese city, celebrating Lunar New Years in Vietnam with their family, and the games they played with their friends in Vietnam.

We also observed many instances where caregivers told stories about other family members as their family engaged in the exhibition. At the Scooter, for example, adults told stories to their children about how their grandfathers drove a scooter through traffic, often smiling or laughing at the thought of those events.



A mother calls her son's attention to a detail on the Altar. The Altar was an area that adults not only explained to children, but where they also told stories of their memories of Vietnam and their family there.

This is the scooter that looks exactly like the one Grandpa used to drive me and Grandma around in Vietnam. Grandpa would start the engine like this, and then I stood right here in the front, and Grandma would sit behind him. We went everywhere. We'd go shopping, visiting your great grandparents, and Grandpa also drove me to school, and Grandma to the market.

Let's move to the Kitchen. I'll show you the clay stoves, the same kind of stoves that Grandma used to cook on when I was there. We used wood, coal, or rice straw to cook.

Grandpa used to drive me on this kind of scooter. I would stand in the front to watch the streets and people. Your uncle sat behind Grandpa, on Grandma's lap. It's pretty cool standing in the front, the wind would blow your hair and you could see everything on both sides of the street.

This doesn't look like the Bàu Cua Cá Cọp that we played in Vietnam. Maybe the museum made it more complex, improved it with a little bit of technology so parents don't think their kids learn how to gamble! — Adult

Mother: *This is the altar. Compare it with the one we have at home. Do they look the same?*

Girl: *No, our altar is higher and on top of the cabinet. Why?*

Mother: *It's convenient that way, but it's the same arrangement. We worship our ancestors, and that is the main purpose.*

Engagement, cont'd.

Another example of caregivers' memories comes from the The Kitchen area where caregivers often helped children remember details about how their (the children's) grandmothers' cooked delicious Vietnamese meals. Likewise, the Altar was an area that caregivers linked to their own families. For example, caregivers often related how their own mothers maintained the household altar.

We observed these kinds of conversations throughout the exhibition and all areas elicited this type of sharing. Of particular note was the obvious emotion—often laughter or joy or surprise—as caregivers talked with their children.

Use of Labels

All observed groups used the exhibition labels at some point during their visit. Half of the groups used both the Vietnamese and English labels while the other half used only Vietnamese labels.

Respondents said they used the labels both to explain things to their children and to learn things themselves. In particular, a couple of respondents noted that they read the labels about the water puppets because they were unfamiliar with them. (One respondent said she found the label type and photos on the labels too small.)

We also observed a few caregivers who used the labels for older children to see and “practice” their Vietnamese. This was mostly focused on a word or phrase.

Participants responded positively to the labels, including the translation. Some shared that having the labels in both Vietnamese and English was appropriate given the exhibition's focus. A couple of individuals also noted that the labels were in three languages and shared that this was very appropriate given the diversity within San Jose.



A wall label in *Voyage to Vietnam* showing the trilingual approach. Observations with Vietnamese families confirmed that the information presented was useful and appropriate.

It's nice to have the labels in English and Vietnamese. If we don't know English, we can read Vietnamese.

The labels helped me explain the exhibits to my kid, and may help him to recognize the importance of knowing his mother language.

Having the labels in Vietnamese is good because there are many other languages. CDM shows that they want to reach out to the [Vietnamese] community.

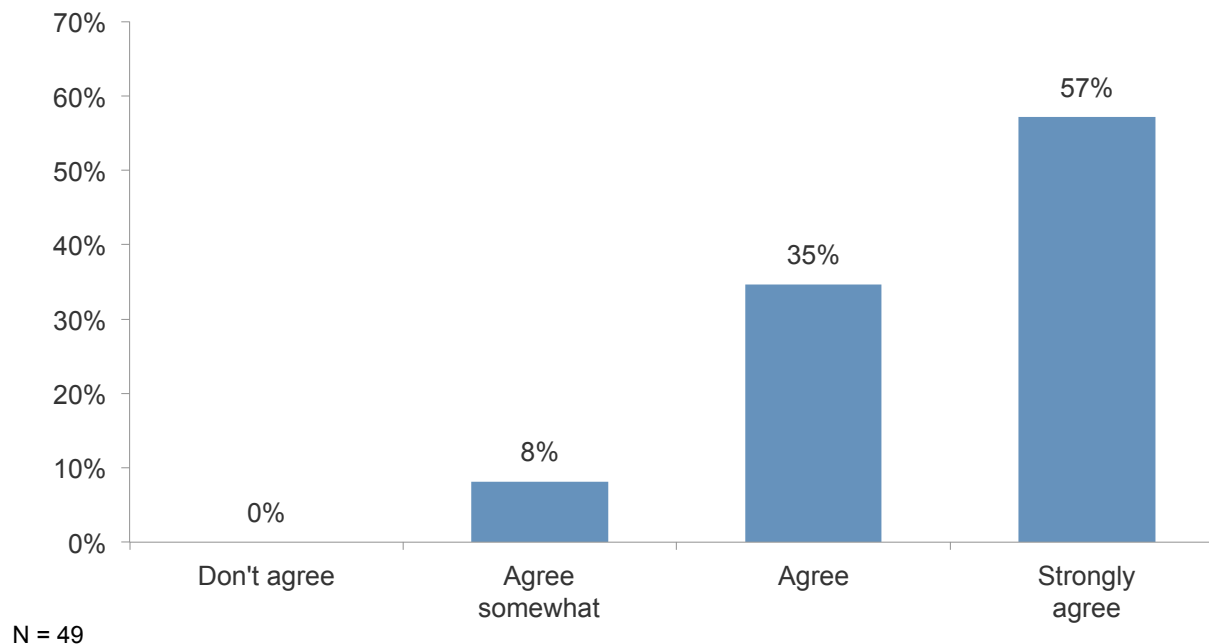
[After reading the Water Puppets label in Vietnamese] This puppet show is performed in the water. I didn't know that!

[The labels are] good for Vietnamese [individuals] who don't know English.

Perceived Value of the Exhibition

Overall, caregivers valued *Voyage to Vietnam* for the opportunities it provided their families to learn about Vietnam and Vietnamese culture, to explore and feel connected to their own Vietnamese heritage, and because the experience was hands-on and fun. All respondents agreed that the exhibition was educational for their children, with more than half than strongly agreeing that it was educational.

Rate your level of agreement with the following statement:
I felt the exhibit was educational for my children.



[My children are getting] a clearer picture of Vietnamese culture. And a chance to see and listen to the sounds of many kinds of musical instruments, and learn new things.

My child learned names of some of the fruits.

They learned about activities that happen during New Year.

She learned about the S-shape of Vietnam and what part of the country our family is from.

[My children learned about] the outdoor stove. They can see it was a lot of work. Especially if you had a big family.

The hands-on activities make kids remember their experiences with the exhibit.

It helps me learn more about my culture too.

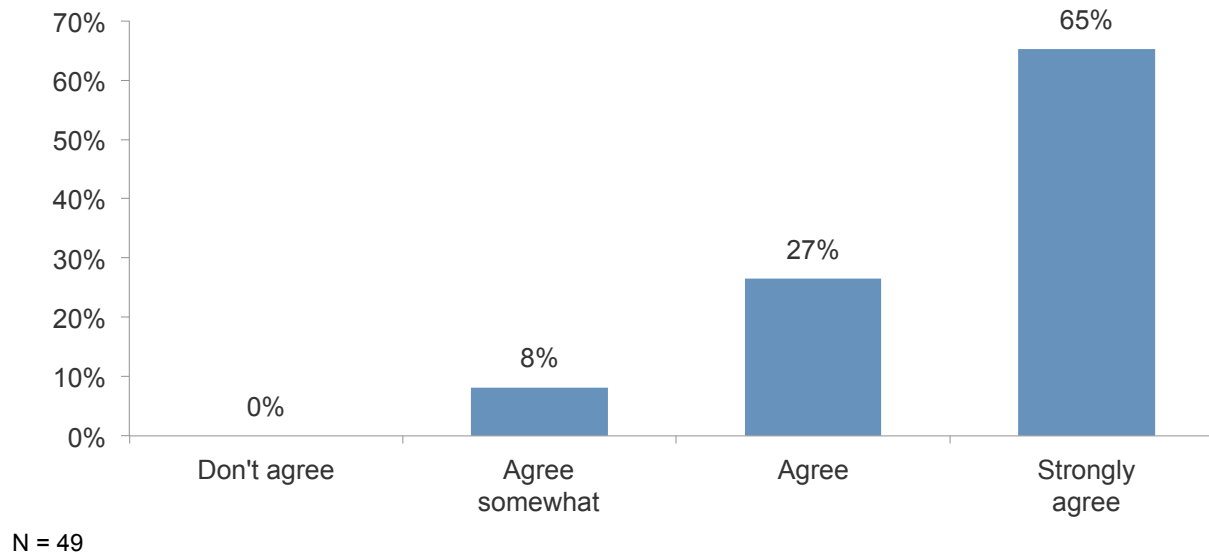
Caregivers interviewed shared that the exhibition provided many opportunities for their children to learn concretely about Vietnam—including what it looks and feels like—as well as about specific cultural objects and traditions.

Many participants named specific areas or components of the exhibition, such as the Market, the Altar, and the Kitchen, where they felt their children took away new ideas or learned something new. A few second-generation participants also shared that they learned new things in the exhibit as well.

Perceived Value of the Exhibition, cont'd.

Caregivers also strongly believed that the exhibition helped their children become more aware of or connect more with their Vietnamese heritage. When asked to rate their level of agreement with a statement about whether the exhibition facilitated awareness/connections with Vietnamese culture, 92% “agreed” or “strongly agreed.”

Rate your level of agreement with the following statement: *The exhibit helped my children become more aware of/connect more with Vietnamese culture.*



In addition to learning about specific cultural objects and traditions, caregivers stressed that the exhibition helped their children learn about and connect more to Vietnamese cultural values, which they appreciated. As previously noted, we observed that families had conversations where caregivers talked with children about cultural values.

[It is] A place where I can take my child to show him and talk to him about our traditional culture and customs, these things will stay with him forever.

It's a good place to educate kids about Vietnamese culture, traditional values.

It is helping my children/grandchildren understand more about Vietnam.

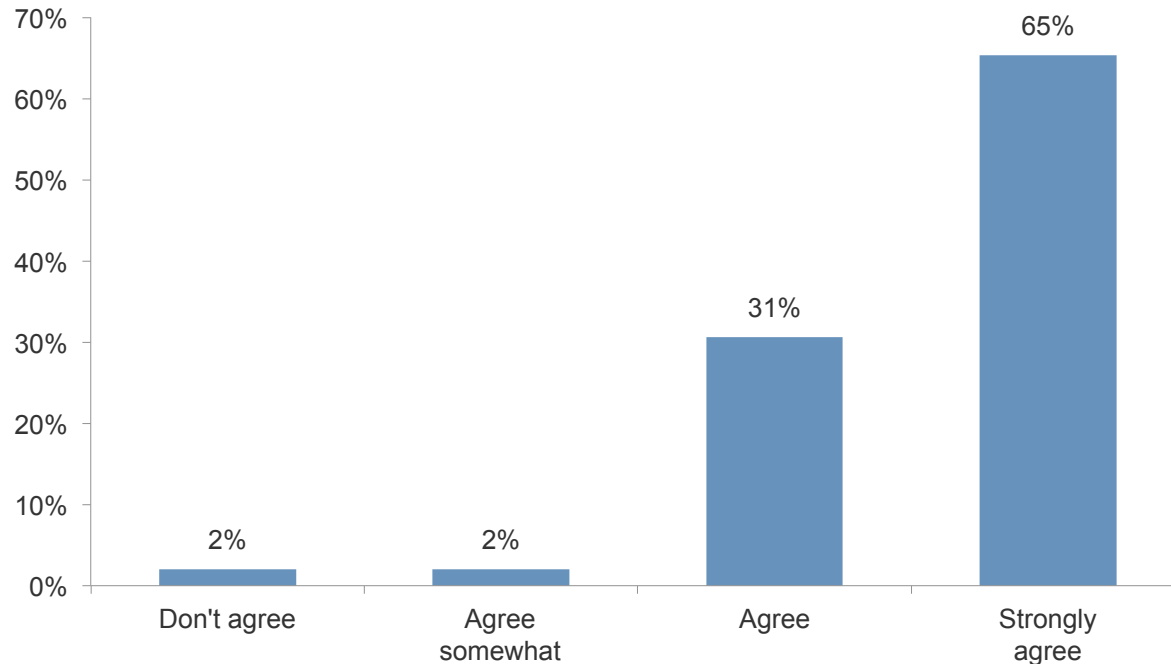
The exhibit reminds Vietnamese people of the value of traditional customs and culture, patriotism, and respect to adults (parent, grandparents, ancestors). They should maintain and hand down these values to the next generation.

Our family has visited Vietnam three times, so the kids know a lot about the country. The [exhibition] experience reminds them the value of traditional custom, respect to grandparents, and ancestors. They should be proud of their roots and of their cultural heritage.

Perceived Value of the Exhibition, cont'd.

The large majority (98%) of Vietnamese respondents said the exhibition felt relevant to their families. Moreover, 65% “strongly agreed” that the exhibit was relevant. Families, especially caregivers, saw many points of personal connection and relevance. For instance, families recognized objects in the exhibition, told stories about their own families, and shared personal memories.

Rate your level of agreement with the following statement: *The exhibit felt relevant to me/my family.*



N = 49

[This exhibit was a] valuable experience for my kids before going to Vietnam this summer. They learned more about Vietnamese culture and traditional New Year. Pictures and objects at this exhibit complete my stories about my family. The clay stoves! I miss my mom so much, they bring up so many family memories, stories my mom told, the meals we cooked together, the nights my siblings and I stayed up all night to watch our “banh chung” for the New Year.

The gas stove! [There are so many] family memories, stories [my mom] told, her advice, her cooking skills—even life experiences that she taught me, they happened around these stoves. I’ll never forget!

The picture of a woman who’s selling produce at a marketplace [was especially powerful]. My mom is living with us in the U.S., but I’ll never forget the hardship she had to go through to raise me and my siblings.

The objects and features describe almost exactly what we used to have or live with in Vietnam (clay stoves, scooters, bamboo bridges, the fruits, altars, flat wooden beds).

Response from Vietnamese Community Advisors

Vietnamese community advisors echoed many of the sentiments and responses of Vietnamese families at the exhibition. They all saw *Voyage to Vietnam* as an authentic depiction of Vietnam that gave Vietnamese families many opportunities to learn about and connect with their cultural heritage. Advisors also saw the exhibit as providing opportunities to foster positive ethnic identity. The graphic below illustrates words advisors used to describe the exhibition.



Response from Vietnamese Community Advisors, cont'd.

Design & Authenticity

Community advisors were very pleased with *Voyage to Vietnam*. They appreciated all the design details and the way the exhibition, overall, captured the “look and feel” of Vietnam. They shared that different areas, varied experiences and even objects (e.g., kitchen utensils) provided an authentic depiction of Vietnam that resonated with them and which they believed would also resonate with Vietnamese families.

Advisors also appreciated the thought and work that CDM put into developing the exhibition. They mentioned that while the exhibition could not comprehensively represent every dimension of Vietnamese culture, the exhibition successfully included experiences that could give families (both Vietnamese and those from other cultures) a sense of Vietnamese culture and traditions. Some noted that the exhibition struck a balance between depicting city life and the countryside and successfully recreated quintessential Vietnamese places such as the Market.

The hands-on nature of the experience was also mentioned as an important aspect because it provided families—children especially—opportunities to have direct contact with actual cultural objects. They also saw these interactive qualities as a great way to engage children in learning about culture in fun ways.

Value to the Community

Advisors believed the exhibition was an educational experience for all families who visited CDM.

Advisors saw *Voyage to Vietnam* as an opportunity for all families to learn more about Vietnam and Vietnamese culture and traditions. Some advisors added that the exhibition had universal appeal because, while it focused on Vietnam, also dealt with broad ideas relevant to every child and family. For example, they noted that all cultures have their own traditions, dress, and food, and that all children like to have fun, hands-on experiences.

Advisors also believed the exhibition provided Vietnamese families—especially children—opportunities to learn about Vietnamese culture and traditions. For this audience, however, they stressed that this learning was important because it was a way for children to connect with their own cultural heritage.

They also stressed the personal relevance of the exhibition for Vietnamese families, noting the many points of connection. For example, they saw the exhibition as a place where families (including grandparents) could discuss their traditions and customs and share their stories and memories.

The kitchen—with the clay stove, the bamboo utensils, and even the broom—it's very authentic.

[CDM] really created a truly Vietnamese cultural experience. If the team weren't careful from the beginning, it could [have] come [out] looking too old or too modern.

It provides the actual 3D physical image of what you'd see in books. So having something like that you can see in real life [is better].

It has universal appeal. All children like to have fun, have family traditions, special food and dress.

It's educational to remind them that this is your culture, your roots. Please don't forget. As much as you are American, these are still your roots.

For the younger generation, they grew up with some things from Vietnamese culture, but those things are blurry for them or are taken for granted. This helps them experience Vietnamese culture in a new light. And for the older generation, it gives a sense of nostalgia and [it's] also reaffirming that we have a Vietnamese community and our culture is alive.

For the Vietnamese younger generation, they can learn a lot about their roots. They can learn and love Vietnamese culture.

I took my nephew, who is one-and-a-half, and he looked at the altar here. And then when he went to my mom's house he saw her altar and pointed to it. It's about that connection.

It sends the message that our culture has not been forgotten. And to be remembered. It's a reminder that our culture still exists. All cultures should have that.

Response from Vietnamese Community Advisors, cont'd.

Some advisors also pointed out that the exhibition had many things older generations could connect with that would remind them of home and childhood. They added that the exhibition was valuable for everyone in the Vietnamese community.

From advisors' perspectives, the power and value of *Voyage to Vietnam* went beyond learning and cultural connection. They believed the exhibition sent a strong message to families (and children especially) that their Vietnamese culture mattered. Advisors expected that the exhibition would make families proud of their heritage and foster positive cultural identity and a sense of empowerment in Vietnamese children.

Some advisors also mentioned that because CDM developed this exhibition—which was also traveling around the U.S.—it sent a message to families (again, especially children) that their culture was important and valued. One advisor, for example, shared that:

My daughter and her friend felt [after seeing the exhibit] they could be proud of being Vietnamese. This is about them. It filled them with pride. Sometimes Vietnamese kids who grew up here don't always feel proud. They were happy. They could see themselves [reflected] in the Museum.

Transformation

One of the most powerful aspects of *Voyage to Vietnam* was its impact on the advisors. The team was involved in many aspects of the exhibition from conception through development. They saw the exhibition with family and friends. Their experiences and participation in creating *Voyage to Vietnam* stirred up feelings of pride in their culture, nostalgia for their home country and family, sadness and a sense of loss, and also moments of fun and joy as they recalled memories or reflected on the how well the exhibition turned out.

All advisors shared personal stories and memories—particularly from their childhoods—including specific moments such as rituals in which they participated in preparations for Tết, visiting family, favorite foods they used to eat or games they played. As advisors shared these moments with us during the focus group, the depth of emotion was quite palpable. Some shared how thankful they were to have been part of the experience developing the exhibition and how much it had had personally meant to them.

One advisor, for example, described it as healing; it allowed her to revisit and make peace with so many of the hardships experienced as a result of the war in Vietnam. Another spoke of this healing in terms transforming loss, where one can honor

It builds positive identity and self-esteem just showing this.

It sends the message that there are people who actual care and value our culture enough to build an exhibit about it.

The whole exhibit sends a strong message to the next generation that it doesn't matter that you were born here. You still have a beautiful culture you're part of....It makes our generation feel much better that although we lost, we are leaving a legacy for future generations.

When I saw that Vespa, I remembered how my father used to take me on one. And I was so tiny. At that time I thought the Vespa was so big, but I see it's not. And then I saw a family with two kids getting on and—oh, it just brought back all those memories for me with my father.

For me when I saw that watermelon... I remembered the markets in Vietnam. And how vendors would let us taste the watermelon before we would buy it. And I got to select the the largest, roundest one for Tết so that we could place it [at home] for seven days. I'm the oldest daughter so my grandmother—who passed away—always took me with her to the market. So that reminded me a lot about her.

Stepping into the exhibit, it was the same feeling I had when my mom first took us [back] to Vietnam. It was a moment that I was like, "Wow!" This is a culture you were born [into] but I wasn't exposed to [because I was so young when I left Vietnam].

Response from Vietnamese Community Advisors, cont'd.

the past, but can also look toward the future:

The exhibit is a milestone. It's been 40 years [since the fall of Saigon]. And I think about endurance and—we survived a lot. But we can also celebrate and think about the 40 years to come.... And we can [through the exhibit] have a voyage to Vietnam. But for the Vietnamese community, we also had a voyage to America...and [a voyage] to freedom. I'm so happy to share all this....We can remember where we were and also where we are. And we also now have a history here [in America] and we can celebrate.

Collaboration

CDM's process of involving advisors in the exhibition's development is also noteworthy. Staff essentially adopted a co-creation model; advisors were collaborators who participated in the visioning and development of exhibition. They were not simply a committee that provided input about cultural issues. Many ideas for experiences and issues to focus on emerged from the advisor team.

This process was important not only because it resulted in a successful exhibition, but also because it deepened and further CDM's goals of creating meaningful and relevant experiences that authentically engage the

local Vietnamese community. Advisors shared that they felt listened to and valued and appreciated CDM staff's hard work and efforts in involving the Vietnamese community in the development of *Voyage to Vietnam*, and their efforts to serve Vietnamese families.

The altar reminded me—back in my country I remember the month before Tết my grandparents would have me clean the [objects] to get them shiny. And we'd clean up the house, shop, and set up the flowers on the altar. All those memories—it was really special.

I had mixed feelings of sadness and happiness when I walked in the exhibit. Mixed feelings because suddenly when I walked into this exhibit, I'd forgotten—what I left behind 40 years [ago]. I can't express enough—I almost want to cry—time passes, you don't realize that you left behind your homeland for 40 years. This exhibit—I appreciate it very much. It takes a lot of work and a lot of emotions and for [CDM staff] to study a culture, to [reconstruct] it is not easy. And I can see all the details [in the exhibit] that are perfect. So my memories are about my mom who I left behind and who passed away before she could come here. And my childhood. It's mixed feelings of sadness and happiness. And after 40 years to [walk in] and see a complete picture of my country. I say complete because [CDM] did a really good job of painting a picture of Vietnam. You can't put everything in, but this is perfect. Thank you.



Vietnamese Community Advisors and CDM staff gather at the Opening Night event for *Voyage to Vietnam*. The Advisors were close collaborative partners in the development of the exhibition.

The kitchen immediately brought me back of memories in the countryside. And in the city the signs [like on the café], it brought back memories of all the people who [I knew] that lived there.

When I first walked into the exhibit I was just so happy. I just smiled and smiled.

It's also a great PR opportunity for CDM because [the exhibit] shows the museum is willing to listen and to respect and to cooperate. That's really good community outreach.

Conclusions



Conclusions

Overall, Vietnamese families found the exhibition to be enjoyable, educational, relevant, and valuable for their children and themselves. Advisors' experiences also illustrate the powerful and potentially transformative aspects of engaging community in authentic ways.

Nearly all Vietnamese families surveyed and interviewed responded favorably to the exhibition, with 98% rating their enjoyment as “3” or “4” on a scale of 1–4 with 1 being “very low” and 4 being “very high.” Families identifying as Vietnamese tended to rate their enjoyment of the exhibition higher than those in the primary evaluation.

Nearly all Vietnamese families (92%) surveyed spent more than 15 minutes in the exhibition, with a third spending over 45 minutes or more.

Caregiver considered the exhibition a place where their children could learn about and connect with their own culture. Caregivers surveyed agreed that the exhibition was educational for their children, with more than half (57%) strongly agreeing that it helped their children become more aware of/connect more with Vietnamese culture. The exhibition also felt relevant the large majority (98%) of these families.

Vietnamese families engaged with the exhibition in very similar ways to families in the primary study. Children, for example, engaged in imaginative play, touched and used objects, and often directed where families, as a whole, went in the exhibition.

Caregivers in Vietnamese families, moreover, took the same roles as did those in non-Vietnamese families. The most prevalent role was as facilitator, supporting their children's learning and experiences at the exhibition.

The nature of conversations, however, differed. Vietnamese families, tended to have more adult–child conversations where caregivers explained cultural practices, shared memories, and told stories about family members who lived in Vietnam. Not surprisingly, caregivers often drew on their own experiences and conversations often extended well beyond what was at the exhibition. In a sense, the exhibit served as a springboard for families to talk about and explore their heritage and cultural identity.

Caregivers valued *Voyage to Vietnam* because of the opportunities it provided their families to learn about Vietnam, to feel connected to Vietnamese culture, and to have fun while experiencing the exhibition.

Furthermore, Vietnamese families regarded *Voyage to Vietnam* as an indication that CDM welcomed them and that the Museum cared about reaching the Vietnamese community.

Vietnamese community advisors echoed many of the sentiments of Vietnamese families who participated in this study. They saw the exhibition as a valuable place where Vietnamese families—especially children—can learn about and connect to their roots. Furthermore, they believed the exhibit could engender a sense of pride and foster positive cultural identity.

Additionally, advisors' own stories and experiences collaborating on the exhibition illuminated the positive outcomes that can come from authentically engaging community. Not only was the collaboration successful in developing an exhibition that engaged all families (regardless of their cultural background), but it also facilitated healing and transformation for advisors.

Overall, there were many indications that *Voyage to Vietnam* was important and relevant for the local Vietnamese community.

References



References

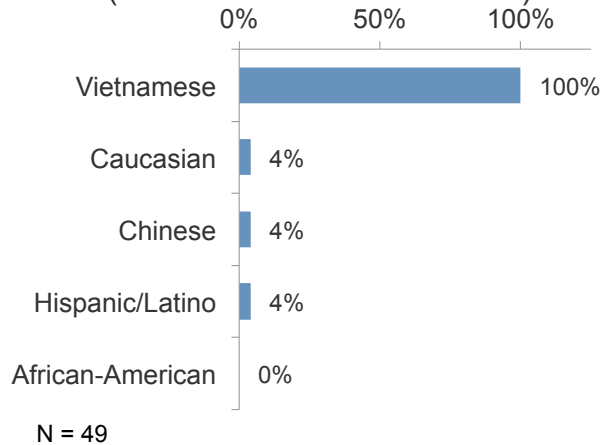
- Babbie, E. (1998). *The practice of social research*. Albany, New York: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Garibay Group. (2015). *Voyage to Vietnam* Remedial/Summative Report. Children's Museum of San Jose.
- Greene, J.C. & Caracelli, V.J. (2003). Making paradigmatic sense of mixed methods practice. In A.Tashakkori & C.Teddlue (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*, (pp. 91-110). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*, 2nd ed. London: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*, 2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Appendices

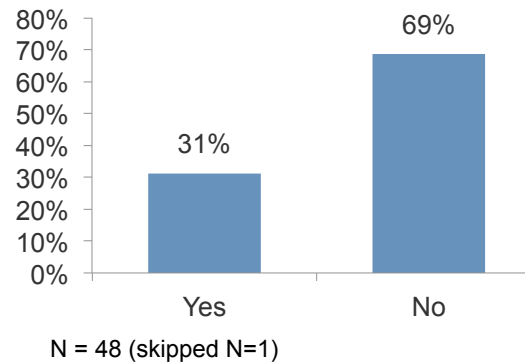


Appendix A: Exit Survey Respondent Profile

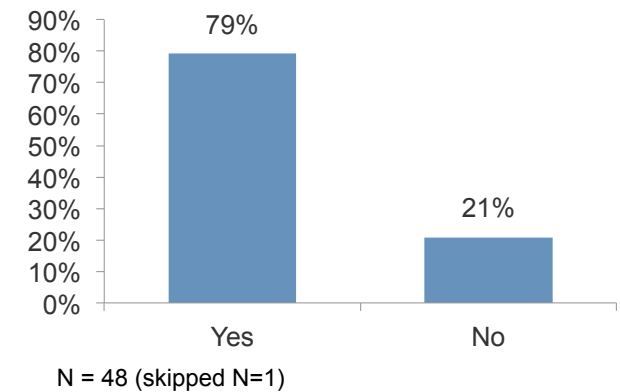
What is your ethnic origin?
(could choose more than one)



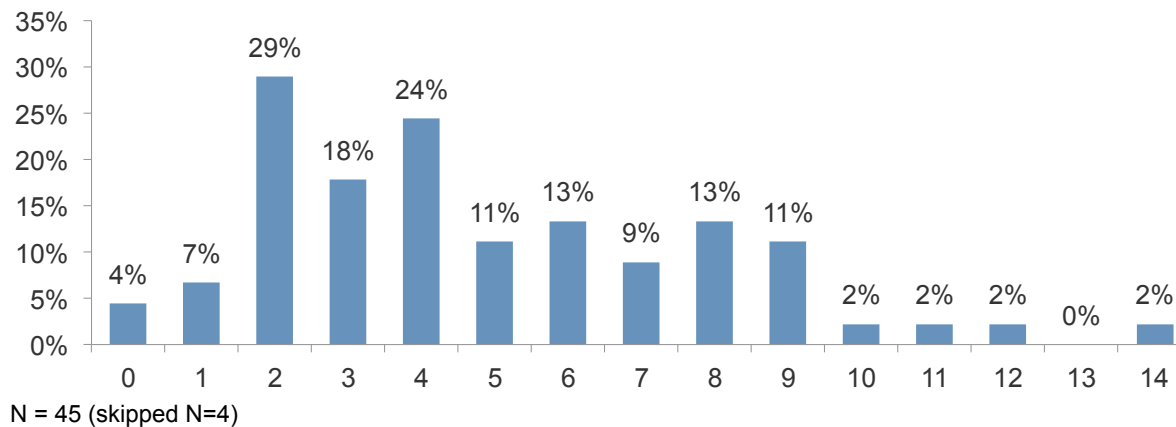
Is this your family's first visit to the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose?



Is this your family's first visit to the exhibit?



What are the ages of your children with you today?

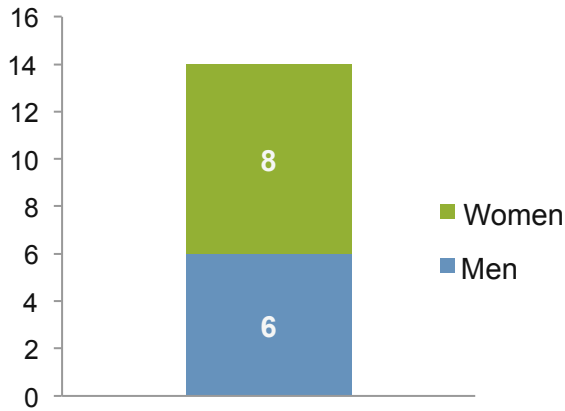


Residence

Area	% of families (N = 49)
City of San Jose	76%
California (Outside San Jose)	24%
Out of State	0%

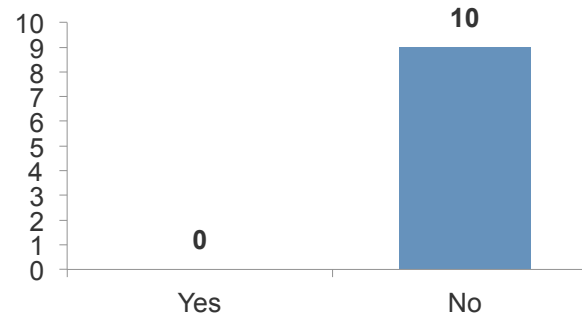
Appendix B: Observation & Interview Respondent Profile

Number of Adults by Gender



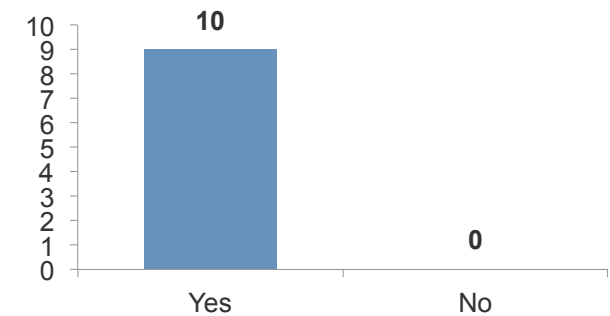
N = 14

Is this your family's first visit to the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose?



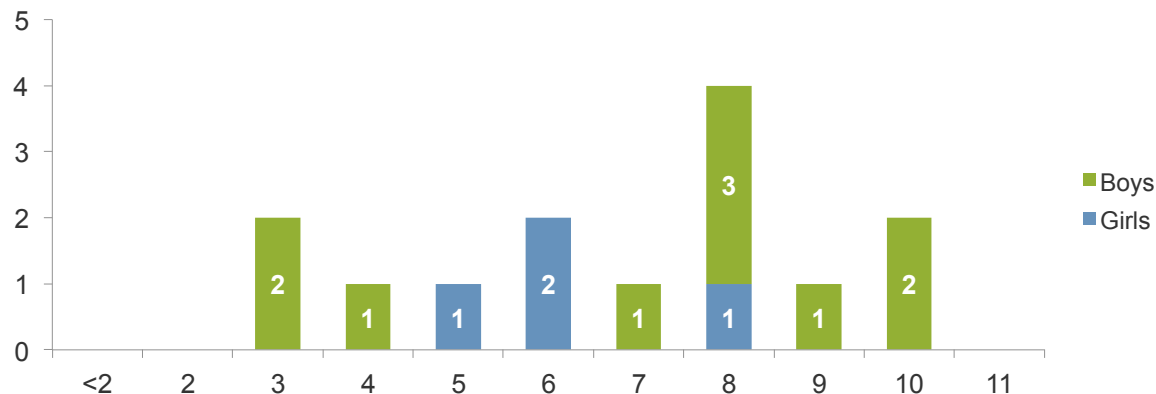
N = 10

Is this your first visit to the exhibit?



N = 10

What are the ages of the children with you today?



N = 14

Residence

Area	# of families (N = 10)
City of San Jose	6
California (Outside San Jose)	4
Out of State	0