A Study of Attributes for Taiwanese Seniors' Selections of Leisure Parks

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Abstract

The paper studies attributes seniors consider when selecting a leisure park to visit. Six attributes were derived from factor analyzing 265 acceptable sample returns: "environmental safety", "good image", "price", "service quality", "self-fulfillment", and "personal relationship". Several demographic significances were identified from analysis of variance. Most notably, female seniors view "environmental safety" and "good image" significantly higher than their male counterparts do when selecting a leisure park. Senior without a marital partner tend to value "good image" and "price" more than those with a marital partner do when deciding on a leisure part for visitation. Seniors aged 71-75 would value "personal relationship" significantly more than seniors of other age groups do. Seniors who walk as their primary transportation also weigh "personal relationship" significantly more than seniors using other transportation do. Seniors receiving more monthly pension tend to regard "self-fulfillment" higher than those receiving less monthly pension, which coincide with the popular belief that people with higher financial resources tend to seek out more spiritual fulfillment than those with less financial resources. Only one demographic profile, by educational level, did not render demographic significance among the six attributes of leisure park selection.

Keywords: Environmental safety, Good image, Price, Service quality, Self-fulfillment, Personal relationship

1. Introduction

The concept of economic value has gradually shifted toward experiences from traditional commodities, goods, and services (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Similarly, the marketplace has also progressed from functions or packages to a focus on experiences (Schmitt, 1999). Hence, when consumers purchase a product, they may not just purchase its functions or problem-solving but also for the joy or pleasure it entails (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In other words, the act of buying by consumers no longer represents only a rational behavior.

According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), although consumers make purchasing decisions on the basis of rational or logical thinking, their decision-making process may also be driven by effect. For example, consumers may have feelings and needs for fun that propel them to purse excitement, sensory pleasures, or fantasies. As people live longer nowadays due to better medical technology, prolonged

lifespan of the senior population has shifted the attention of the leisure industry. Since seniors tend to have more savings than younger people, theoretically, seniors should have more spending power on leisure activities. However, seniors may not have spent as much as their younger counterparts on leisure activities for various reasons. Seniors may be more conservative in their spending behavior and many types of leisure activities may not be suitable for the senior population. Hence, attributes that seniors choose to visit a leisure park is the topic of interest in the paper.

2. Literature Review

The existing literature on leisure parks is scant, knowledge about the oriental markets are even less available. On top of that, the leisure market is undergoing a process of change in which the growth of the aging population demands the necessity to approach an elder group of visitors and to satisfy the needs and wants of this adult non-family group (Lo & Leung, 2015). Wong and Cheung (1999) categorized leisure parks into seven groups where each group has its unique attributes. For example, "adventure" type of a park may be exciting with lots of actions, frightening, and mysterious; "futurism" type may be scientific with advanced technology. Other types are: "International", "nature", "fantasy", "history and culture", and "movie'.

Visitors tend to perceive leisure parks in terms of hedonic experience rather than just commercial service offerings, and they respond more to emotional contents than the utility of tourism service provisions (Johns & Gyimothy, 2002). Theme park experiential consumption dimensions may be evaluated by an individual's sense, feel, think, and act (Tasci & Milman, 2017). More specifically, visitors' pleasure and arousal predominately impact their emotions which strongly influence their satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Bigne et al., 2005). Another emotionally-related hedonic consumption, delight, can also be characterized as aroused positive affect in a cognitive appraisal theory for leisure park experiences (Ma et al., 2013). However, contrary articles have found facilities and entertainment to be the main determinants for predicting satisfaction and behavioral intention of theme park visitation from a group of Malay scholars (Ahmad et al., 2014).

Key attributes of guest experience at a leisure park may include: entertainment variety and quality, courtesy, cleanliness, safety/security, food variety, value for money, quality of theming and design, availability and variety of family-oriented activities, quality and variety of attractions

(Milman, 2009). Thach and Axinn (1994) identified cleanliness, the presence of nice scenery, and an un-crowded family atmosphere as primary attributes of a leisure park. Perception of a leisure park may often be determined by the provided service quality, including assurance, responsiveness, reliability, empathy, tangibles, price, and perceived value (Li & Song, 2011; Aziz et al., 2012; Tsang et al., 2012; Dong & Siu, 2013; Astari et al., 2020). Perception of food products (quality, price/value, and variety) and services strongly impact visitors' evaluations of theme parks (Geissler & Rucks, 2011).

Scholars often use choice-based conjoint analysis to determine preference variations, be it preferences over time (Kemperman et al., 2000) or best-worst case scenarios (Pan et al., 2018). Kemperman et al. (2000) identified individuals' choice of theme parks by seasonality effects and variety-seeking behavior. Pan et al. (2018) identified online reviews to be much more influential of selecting a theme park than factors such as price, children friendly, distance from accommodation, and similar others. Milman et al. (2012) found staff's knowledge of the park to be highly important attributes of guests' perceived experience, followed by safety, security, and price. Echoed by a later study, Wu et al. (2018) also identified park employees' knowledge and interactions with visitors to be important experiential quality of guests. Other attributes may also include: ambience, equipment, waiting time, valence, tangibles, convenient location, information, and destination (Wu et al., 2018).

Cognitive and affective image of a leisure park plays an important role on the decision-making of potential visitors, where natural characteristics, amenities, and infrastructure are cognitive, whereas arousal, pleasant, excitement, and relaxation are affective (Lin et al., 2007). Image attributes of a leisure park may include theme, space design, personnel, range of activities, road signs, signs inside, transportation, restaurant, information, tick price, and value for money (Haahti & Yavas, 2004). Physical environment, interactions with staff and other customers may significantly impact visitors' delight and satisfaction (Ali et al., 2018).

3. Methodology

The literature review paved the construction of the questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire contains 18 items for respondents to rate their opinion (agreement level) on each item as follows: (1) the park is well-known; (2) excellent word-of-mouth; (3) the park has good image; (4) to enhance relationship with family or friends; (5) to bring others together; (6) the park offers a variety of sightseeing spots; (7) to increase my knowledge; (8) park entry price is acceptable; (9) food price in the park is acceptable; (10) souvenir price is acceptable; (11) quality of the public facility is acceptable; (12) quality of the service center is acceptable; (13) direction in the park is clear; (14) personal security is not a concern; (15) facility safety is not a concern; (16) food hygiene is not a concern; (17) the park has good landscape; and (18) the park has good horticulture. A 5-point Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = tend to disagree; 3 = neural; 4 = tend to agree; 5 = strongly agree) as used to rate respondents' opinion of each item.

The second part of the questionnaire asked respondents to render their personal information regarding gender, marriage (partnership), age, education, daily transportation means, and monthly income. Only seniors at least 65 years or older were asked to participate in the survey. The survey took place within the Aowanda Forest Park in Nantou County of Taiwan. Figure 1 illustrates information regarding its various recreational areas and trails. The Park is one of twelve designated National Forests in Taiwan. It covers a massive area of nearly 2,800 hectares and is situated in Ren'ai Township in the north-central part of Nantou County within the heart of Taiwan's Central Mountain Range. In the Atayal language, "Ao-" means going deep and entering, hence "Ao-wanda" means "going deep into Wanda". "Wanda" is in reference to the name of the river that runs through the Park. This nationally protected area is famous for its remoteness, diversity of experiences and its beautiful maple leaves. Its uniqueness truly has different faces during different seasons. Hence, the study conducted the survey throughout the year to eliminate any seasonal effect.

A total of 265 acceptable responses were collected. As shown in Table 1, demographic profile of the respondents indicated 50.94% (n = 135) of the sample were female seniors, while male respondents represented 49.05% (n =130). Majority of the sample are in a partnered relationship (64.53%, n = 171), and only 33.47% (n = 94) of the respondents live without a partner. Seniors visiting Aowanda Forest Park tend to belong in the younger bracket of 65-70 years-old (54.34%, n = 144), where as only 22.64% (n = 60) fall within the 71-75 years-old group, 13.58% (n = 36) in the 76-80 years-old group, and 9.43% (n = 25) of the sample are 81 years-old or older. Slightly more respondents (36.60%, n =97) have less than a high school education, while 32.08% (n = 85) of the sample have a high school education and 31.32% (n = 83). More senior use a bike or scooter (33.96%, n = 90) as their daily means of transportation than those with other transportation means, 28.68% (n = 76) by walk, 17.74% (n =47) by automobile, and 19.62% (n = 52) by public transportation via bus/MRT. Slightly more seniors receive monthly pension between NT\$10k - NT\$20k (29.43\%, n =78) than those of other income groups (26.42%, n = 70receiving more than NT30k monthly, 24.91%, n = 66 in the group of NT\$20k - NT\$30k, and 19.25%, n = 51 receiving less than NT\$10k monthly).

4. Results and Discussion

The collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS 20.0 for Windows. The 18-items questionnaire received a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.851, which indicates good reliability for exceeding 0.70. Among the eighteen items, Q7 ("to increase my knowledge") received the highest agreement (M=4.52) while Q10 ("souvenir price is acceptable") received the lowest mean (M=3.14), as shown in Table 2. At the same time, Q10 ("souvenir price is acceptable") also exhibited the greatest discrepancy (standard deviation at 1.126) among the responses while Q4 ("to enhance relationship with family or friends") possessed the least discrepancy (i.e. the lowest standard deviation among all items at 0.743). It was expected that people tend to have a

much wider range of regards towards the value of cost; hence, Q10 (acceptable souvenir price) resulted the highest standard deviation (i.e. much wider range of opinion).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was found at 0.765, while the Bartlett's test of sphericity also showed significant values ($\chi^2 = 852.904$, d.f. = 153, and $p = .000^{***}$). These figures suggested that the use of factor analysis was appropriate for the study. The exploratory factor analysis identified six factors that seniors weigh highly of during their decision-making process for the selection of a leisure park for visitation. These six attributes are: "environmental safety", "good image", "price", "service quality", "self-fulfillment", and "personal relationship", as shown in Table 3. These factors would account 64.3% of the total variance. The eigenvalues range from 1.269 to 2.469, which exceed the minimum requirement of 1.0. The factor loadings would range from 0.408 to 0.905 across the 18 items which exceed the requirement of 0.4 or higher.

Whether there are significant demographic differences among the six identified attributes can be determined from performing one-way analysis-of-variance (ANOVA). The results of one-way ANOVA are shown in Table 4 (gender), Table 5 (marriage/partnership), Table 6 (age group), Table 7 (education), Table 8 (transportation), and Table 9 (pension). By gender, it was found that female seniors value "environmental safety" and "good image" much higher than their male counterparts do when selecting a leisure park for visitation. By marital (or partnership) status, it was found that seniors without a partnered-relationship would value "good image" and "price" much higher than those engaging in a partnership do when selecting a leisure park for visitation.

By age group, seniors aged 71-75 years-old value "personal relationship" much more than their counterparts of other age groups for the selection criteria of a leisure park. Those aged 76-80 would value "personal relationship" more then those 81 or older. Those aged 65-70 value "personal relationship" the least as a selection criteria of a leisure park. By visitors' educational level, demographic insignificance was identified for all six attributes of leisure park selection, be it "environmental safety", "good image", "price", "service quality", "self-fulfillment", and "personal relationship".

By transportation, seniors who walk as their primary daily transportation mean also weighed "personal relationship" much more than their counterparts with other transportation methods, followed by those who use bus/MRT, scooter, and automobile. By the group of monthly pension, the ANOVA results showed that seniors receiving more monthly pension tend to regard "self-fulfillment" higher than those receiving less monthly pension when deciding on a leisure park visitation. This is a very reasonable finding in that people with higher income tend to have higher spiritual demand. Hence, seniors with higher monthly pension would consider "self-fulfillment" much more important than those with less financial resources.

5. Conclusions

The study has identified six attributes seniors consider when deciding on a leisure park to visit. It appears that "environmental safety" is their priority concern, followed by:

"good image", "price", "service quality", "self-fulfillment", and "personal relationship". The study showed female seniors tend to weigh environmental safety and good image of a leisure park significantly more than their male counterparts do. Seniors without a partnered-relationship would value "good image" and "price" much higher than those with a marital partner. Seniors aged 71-75 would value personal relationship significantly more than seniors of other age groups do. Seniors who walk as their primary transportation would also weigh personal relationship significantly more than seniors who use other transportations. Seniors with more monthly income via pension would regard "self-fulfillment" higher than those with lower income. People with higher financial resources tend to have higher spiritual demand than poor individuals. The study suggests leisure park industry to pay more attention to the identified attributes in order to attract more visitors.

6. References

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7. Figures and Tables



Figure 1 Aowanda Forest Park

Table 1 Demographic characteristics (N = 265)

Demographics	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	130	49.05%
Female	135	50.94%
Partnership		
No partner (divorced or widowed)	94	35.47%
With partner	171	64,53%
Age		
65-70 years-old	144	54.34%
71-75 years-old	60	22.64%
76-80 years-old	36	13.58%
81 years-old or older	25	9.43%
Education level		
Less than high school	97	36.60%
High school or equivalent vocational school	85	32.08%
College or more	83	31.32%
Routine transportation		
Walk	76	28.68%
Bike or scooter	90	33.96%
Automobile	47	17.74%
Public transportation (bus/MRT)	52	19.62%
Monthly pension income		
Less than NT\$10,000	51	19.25%
NT\$10,000 - NT\$20,000	78	29.43%
NT\$20,000 - NT\$30,000	66	24.91%
More than NT\$30,000	70	26.42%

Table 2 Park visit reasons, itemized mean, and standard deviation

Reasons for visiting the park	Merc	hants
reasons for visiting the park	Mean	S.D.
Q1. The park is well-known	3.98	0.911
Q2. Excellent word-of-mouth	3.88	0.955
Q3. The park has good image	3.76	0.908
Q4. To enhance relationship with family or friends	4.15	0.743
Q5. To bring others together	3.79	1.014
Q6. The park offers a variety of sightseeing spots	4.38	0.671
Q7. To increase my knowledge	4.52	0.650
Q8. Park entry price is acceptable	3.48	1.071
Q9. Food price in the park is acceptable	3.25	1.031
Q10. Souvenir price is acceptable	3.14	1.126
Q11. Quality of the public facility is acceptable	4.07	0.854
Q12. Quality of the service center is acceptable	3.96	0.922
Q13. Direction in the park is clear	3.97	0.905
Q14. Personal security is not a concern	3.94	0.823
Q15. Facility safety is not a concern	3.83	0.941
Q16. Food hygiene is not a concern	3.76	0.931
Q17. The park has good landscape	4.07	0.878
O18. The park has good horticulture	3.88	0.898

Table 3 Factor analysis of attributes to visit a leisure park

Attributes			Factor lo			
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Factor 1: Mean = 3.896						
15. Facility safety	.797	1	.129			
16. Food hygiene	.770		.150	.128		
14. Personal Security	.666	.158	.229	.205		.155
18. Horticulture	.480	.291	.231	.264	.120	
17. Landscape	.408	.249	.110	.355	.180	
Factor 2: Mean = 3.873						
2. Word-of-mouth	.123	.885	I			
3. Image	.266	.728	.305		.128	
1. Well known	.102	.654			.216	.258
Factor 3: Mean = 3.290						
10. Souvenir price	217	105	.853	1		
9. Food price	.324		.711	.186		
8. Park entry price			.695	.363	168	
Factor 4: Mean = 4.000						
13. Clear direction	.206			.747	1	
12. Service center quality	.156	.112		.666		
11. Public facility quality	.142	.227		.645	.224	
Factor 5: Mean = 4 450					•	
7. To increase knowledge		.263		.175	.843	1
6. Sightseeing variety	.122	.203		.175	.795	
Factor 6: Mean = 3 970						,
5. To bring others		124				.905
To oring omers Enhance family relationship	.179	107		252	.155	.538
Eigenvalues	2.469	2.114	2.094	2.058	1.569	1.269
Variance (%)	13.714	11.747	11.636	11.436	8.718	7.052
Cumulative variance (%)	13.714	25.462	37.097	48.533	57.251	64.303

Table 4 Demographic significance of park visit factors (gender)

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	Male	130	3.7486	0.8735	4.202	.021*
	Female	135	4.0193	0.9514		
Good image	Male	130	3.6901	1.1802	4.518	.013*
	Female	135	4.1712	0.8843		
Price	Male	130	3.2398	1.2134	0.286	.752
	Female	135	3.3784	1.1748		
Service quality	Male	130	3.9883	0.8360	0.105	.900
	Female	135	4.0090	0.9749		
Self-fulfillment	Male	130	4.4035	1.0265	0.696	.501
	Female	135	4.5000	1.1267		
Personal relationship	Male	130	4.0088	0.8872	0.194	.824
	Female	135	3.9054	1.0654		

p < .05; p < .01; p < .001; p < .001

Table 5 Demographic significance of park visit factors (marital or partnership)

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	With Without	94 171	3.7756 3.9960	1.1326 0.5510	0.790	.503
Good image	With Without	94 171	3.6579 4.0316	0.4053 0.9733	3.781	.022*
Price	With Without	94 171	3.1766 3.5482	1.0329 1.0423	3.662	.023
Service quality	With Without	94 171	3.9837 4.0119	1.0738 0.6089	0.830	.481
Self-fulfillment	With Without	94 171	4.3902 4.4891	0.7190 1.1333	1.119	.346
Personal relationship	With Without	94 171	3.9146 4.0108	1.0166 0.9009	0.455	.714

p < .05; p < .01; p < .01; p < .001

Table 6 Demographic significance of park visit factors (age)

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	3.8538 3.9935 3.8000 3.9500	1.2577 0.6094 0.8868 1.2291	0.424	.737
Good image	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	3.7308 4.0430 3.8077 3.8889	0.6090 0.2013 0.9584 0.6174	0.779	.509
Price	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	3.1795 3.4946 3.2308 3.1389	0.4639 0.8690 1.5198 0.3203	0.736	.553
Service quality	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	4.0112 3.9565 3.9850 3.9778	1.5488 0.9724 1.0083 0.9019	0.060	.981
Self-fulfillment	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	4.3462 4.5161 4.4231 4.5417	0.9114 0.9997 1.1880 0.7369	0.474	.701
Personal relationship	Aged 65-70 Aged 71-75 Aged 76-80 81 or older	144 60 36 25	3.6538 4.2581 4.0192 3.7917	1.2444 1.0734 1.2440 1.6432	3.289	.024*

^{*}p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table 7 Demographic significance of park visit factors (education

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	3.7778 3.9288 4.0444	0.6187 1.1317 1.0206	0.667	.516
Good image	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	3.6914 3.9096 4.1852	1.0117 0.5513 0.9288	1.427	.245
Price	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	3.2593 3.2938 3.3704	1.5687 0.9625 0.5924	0.046	.955
Service quality	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	4.0123 3.9605 4.2212	0.9892 1.4836 0.6647	0.471	.626
Self-fulfillment	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	4.5556 4.4153 4.3234	0.6683 1.2505 0.8644	0.663	.518
Personal relationship	Below high school High school College	97 85 83	3.8323 4.0102 4.1667	0.6276 1.0521 0.9319	0.737	.481

p < .05; p < .01; p < .01; 001



Table 8 Demographic significance of park visit factors (transportation)

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	Walk	76	3.9827	1.6976	1.344	.265
_	Scooter	90	3.7714	0.8575		
	Automobile	47	4.0692	0.9219		
	Bus/MRT	52	3.8467	0.7006		
Good image	Walk	76	4.0115	0.6630	0.913	.438
_	Scooter	90	3.8476	1.0036		
	Automobile	47	3.7436	0.7186		
	Bus/MRT	52	3.9444	1.0102		
Price	Walk	76	3.4952	0.9760	1.488	.223
	Scooter	90	3.1810	0.6820		
	Automobile	47	3.2051	1.2777		
	Bus/MRT	52	3.3778	0.8489		
Service quality	Wa1k	76	3.9887	0.6650	0.018	.997
• •	Scooter	90	4.0112	0.8545		
	Automobile	47	3.9979	1.1101		
	Bus/MRT	52	4.0103	0.9632		
Self-fulfillment	Walk	76	4.2213	1.0999	0.690	.560
	Scooter	90	4.5143	0.8710		
	Automobile	47	4.3269	0.8570		
	Bus/MRT	52	4.4000	1.6513		
Personal relationship	Walk	76	4.5613	1.1189	3.641	.016
•	Scooter	90	4.0951	0.9004		
	Automobile	47	3.1810	1.0577		
	Bus/MRT	52	4.1106	0.9561		

^{*}p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table 9 Demographic significance of park visit factors (pension)

Attitude construct		N	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig.
Environmental safety	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	3.9114 3.8489 3.9310 3.9833	0.8658 0.8856 0.8176 0.9328	0.156	.925
Good image	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	3.8519 3.9121 3.7586 4.0278	1.1343 0.6975 0.7929 0.6713	0.368	.776
Price	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	2.8519 3.4074 3.2644 3.2506	0.8937 1.4463 0.7838 1.3102	0.891	.449
Service quality	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	4.1481 4.0444 3.8621 4.0556	1.0541 1.1759 0.9369 1.4850	0.506	.679
Self-fulfillment	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	4.2075 4.4172 4.5502 4.8920	0.8378 1.1410 0.9451 1.2823	4.476	.015*
Personal relationship	Under NT\$1k NT\$1k-2k NT\$2k-3k NT\$3k or more	51 78 66 70	3.7222 3.8667 4.1724 4.0417	1.2746 0.6482 0.7469 0.7298	1.256	.294

^{*}p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

台灣銀髮族選擇休閒園區因素之研究

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摘要

該論文研究了老年人在選擇休閒園區旅遊時考慮的 準則。針對 265 份被接受的樣本回報進行因子分析得出六 個屬性: "環境安全"、"良好形象"、"價格"、"服 務質量"、"自我實現"和"人際關係"。從分析中確定了許多人口統計學上具顯著的發現,最值得注意的是人好。 選擇休閒園區時,女性老年人對"環境安全"和"良好形象"的看法明顯高於男性老年的觀點。沒有婚姻伴侶的老年人在決定休閒園區時往往比那些有配偶者更看重"良好形象"和"價格"。71-75歲的老年人對於"人際關係"的重視程度明顯高於其他年齡組的老年人。以步行為主要交通工具的老年人對於"人際關係"的重視程度也顯著高於使用其他交通工具的老年人。相信擁有較高財力的人更傾向於尋求精神上的滿足。在休閒公園選擇的六大屬性中,只有一個人口統計資料(教育水平)沒有體現人口統計學意義。

關鍵詞:環境安全、良好形象、價格、服務品質、 自我實現、人際關係