Study on Relationships among Recreational Attractions, Satisfaction, and Loyalty -Using Wushulin Recreation Park as an Example

Hsien-Ta Lin[†], Meng-Long Shih ^{††}, Ben-Yuh Liao ^{†††} Yu-Ze Tsai^{††††}

[†]Department of business Administration, TransWorld University, Taiwan, R.O.C.

^{††}Department of Social Studies Education, National Taitung University, Taiwan.

^{†††}Corresponding Author, Department of Education, National Taitung University, Taiwan , R.O.C

^{††††} Graduate Study at the Graduate School of Somatics & Sports Leisure Industry, National Taitung University, Taiwan.

Summary

This study explores the Wushulin Recreation Park of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation and attempts to determine if the planning of Wushulin Recreation Park reveals recreational attraction and to recognize the visitors' satisfaction and loyalty after visiting the park. There are 400 questionnaires are distributed with 398 returns, for a return rate of 99.5% and a valid questionnaire rate of 92.21%. The results of the investigation show that marital status, residential locations, and visiting frequency reveal significant differences on loyalty, while information sources, recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty show significant differences. In addition, there is significant and positive relationship among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Key words:

recreational attraction, satisfaction, loyalty, Wushulin Recreation Park

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Motives

Since the implementation of the two-day weekend, recreational activities have been valued by people in Taiwan. With the improvement of living quality, increased incomes, prevalence of transportation, and enhancement of economic conditions, more and more people are spending time on outdoor recreational activities. According to the latest study of World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), in 2009, in spite of the impact from the global financial tsunami, 235 million jobs related to travel were provided [27], which demonstrates that the demand for the tourism industry continues to grow, and the tourism industry becomes more important.

The economy in Taiwan gradually turns from agriculture, industry, and business to the service industry, thus, highly developed agricultural industries of the past have declined. How to accomplish sustainable corporate operations for industrial transformation is an extremely important issue. Using the Taiwan

Sugar Corporation as an example, due to the declination of sugar production and manufacturing, the firm is forced to turn to refined, recreational, and diverse operational model. How to effectively use current resources, namely, the sugar manufacturing area and land, to become the priority of corporate operations. With prevalence and development of recreational activities, the Taiwan Sugar Corporation turns to refined and recreational operations, for instance, the establishment of a recreation and tourism sugar plant is new for the declined area. The Wushulin Recreation Park is the former sugar plant of Wushulin, in Sinying, Tainan. With the changed structure of the sugar industry, the Taiwan Sugar Corporation is transformed. In 1983, due to the concerns of operations, the sugar manufacturing activities of the Wushulin sugar plant were ended, which also ended the industrial and air pollution generated by the plant, rendering it suitable for the growth of orchids and ornamental plants, and in 1989, the Agriculture Business Division was established to cultivate Butterfly Orchids. The Wushulin Recreation Park became a cultural park upon ROT (Rehabilitate Operation Transfer). In the park, there are diverse facilities, such as a recreational museum, insect museum, earthquake museum, camping, BBQ, shopping, etc. It was successfully transformed with railway industry. In times of high recreational consciousness and attention to quality, it is necessary to not only provide recreational areas, but also consider the planning of services and locations, where both tangible and intangible services must be valued.

This study treats the Wushulin Recreation Park of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation as an example and probes into the relationships among recreational attractions, tourists' satisfaction and loyalty of the visitors to the park, and attempts to determine if the facilities and services, which are the key operations of the recreational and cultural park, can satisfy tourists,. Therefore, the research motives are as shown below:

- To recognize the relationships among recreational attractions, satisfaction, and loyalty of visitors of different backgrounds for Wushulin Recreation Park.
- (2) To determine if there is significant correlation among recreational attractions, satisfaction, and loyalty of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors.

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1.2 Research purposes

For the concern of sustainable operations, the value of tourists and consumers becomes critical for business operations. Highquality software, environment, and service can satisfy tourists; therefore, in the severely competitive tourism market, it is important to recognize attraction factors and satisfaction of tourists. Tourists' maximum satisfaction will result in positive promotion of the park, which attracts potential visitors. However, a high degree of satisfaction cannot completely result in maximum profits for firms. Giffin suggested that the main reason for a firm's inability to retain customers with a high degree of satisfaction was that they lacked loyal customers as the main source of maximum corporate profits[18]. Therefore, increased service quality and the value of customers' needs are key for the enhancement of tourists' satisfaction, as it demonstrates close relationships among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty for the park.

This study treats Wushulin Recreation Park of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation as the subject in order to learn the relationships among recreational attractions, satisfaction, and loyalty of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors, which can serve as reference for the operation of the park. Research purposes are as shown below:

- (1) To probe into the differences of tourists' backgrounds on recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.
- (2) To recognize and analyze the current situation of tourists' recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.
- (3) To analyze the relationships among tourists' attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies related to recreational attraction

Cheng suggested that recreational attraction consists of human resources, natural resources, and artificial landscape resources to attract visitors[4]. Attraction is human creation, and through management and creativity, it combines and constructs successful skills and strategies to attract tourists[24]. Regarding recreational travel, recreational attraction is intended to draw tourists' individual purposes in destinations, and is divided into travel locations and fixed point locations[14].

Guiver, Lumsdon, Weston, & Richard suggested that recreational attraction is significantly influential for tourists, including the measures to approach such destinations[13]. Chou indicated that recreational attraction is the force that move tourists to the destinations, and the factors of attraction include tourists' travel motives and the cognitive value they intended to obtain from destinations[6]. According to Su & Shih, recreational attraction is the travel draw before visitors arrive at the destinations, which is based upon previous travel experiences and characteristics of the destinations. Characteristics of travel include local landscape, facilities, and psychological needs [26].

Therefore, recreational attraction is the draw of resources of tourism locations. Based on the above, this study defines recreational attraction as the draw for tourists to travel to the destinations, and includes human landscapes, recreational activities, facilities, and concern for health. Attraction is the driving force for tourists to approach the locations.

2.2 Studies related to satisfaction

Cardozo first suggested the concept "customer satisfaction", and indicated that customers' satisfaction would influence customers' repurchase behavior[1]. Higher customer satisfaction leads to higher repurchase intent. Contrarily, customers will purchase other products. Engel, Blackwell, and Mininard defined satisfaction as the gap between products after being experienced by consumers and the expectations prior to consumers purchasing the products. If the products meet expectations, customers will be satisfied with products [10]. When the gap between the expectation and actual experience is significant, there will be negative feelings. Hui, Wan, & Ho indicated that satisfaction is the key factor of tourists' revisiting destinations [16]. In highly competitive environments, customer satisfaction is critical for firms to create and maintain corporate competitiveness [11]. Jiang, Shang, & Liu probed into customers' maximum satisfaction through online recommendation systems, and conducted an empirical study by a creative correlation classification model in order to recognize customers' potential views. The finding demonstrated that, when firms could provide an online personalized service recommendation system, it would enhance customers' satisfaction after use [17].

In current studies, the application of satisfaction is broad. Research on tourists' satisfaction mostly refers to hostels, recreational areas, recreational and cultural activities, and tourism locations. Shen and Yang divided satisfaction into satisfaction with the overall situation, facilities, services, personnel, and environments [25]. Lin, Lin, and Huang indicated that satisfaction is tourists' comments and reactions to products or services provided by an amusement park[]In a study of service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction on the Xitou Nature Education Area, Chuang, Chen, and Chen defined tourists' satisfaction as perceived pleasure or disappointment after tourists experienced the products or services of travel destinations [7]. Chiu, Lin, Tsai, and Chan divided satisfaction into natural resources, public facilities, recreational facilities, explanation facilities, and overall satisfaction [5].

Based on the above, this study defines satisfaction as tourists' satisfaction and feelings after experiencing the services of Wushulin Recreation Park, such as environment, facilities, railway experience, public facilities, and overall environment.

2.3 Studies related to loyalty

Loyalty refers to the intention to repurchase the products and services of firms, recommend the firms to others, thus, becoming part of the promotion of the said products and services [22]. Chien defined loyalty as the customers' preference and behavioral reactions toward products or services. Most studies on tourists' loyalty treated revisit intentions and recommendations to others as measures. Tourists' satisfaction is the most significant factor of loyalty [9].

Yoon and Uysal measured tourists' loyalty by recommendation to relatives and the revisit rate. Therefore, revisit and repurchase intentions are important variables to measure customers' loyalty [28]. Lin, Yen, and Lifound that, the main factors of tourists' loyalty include satisfaction with natural environments, social environments, facilities, operations, and management, as well as current residential locations and revisiting [21].

This study defines loyalty as tourists' revisiting intentions and recommendation intentions after visiting the park to determine if the services provided by the park can lead to tourists' positive satisfaction in order to attract more tourists.

2.4 Studies related to recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty

Fornell suggested that customers' satisfaction with products would positively, directly, and significantly influence loyalty [12]. Satisfied customers would have positive word of mouth. Liu, Tu, Chen, Chang, and Chang suggested that after tourists' trip, different levels of satisfaction would significantly influence tourists' revisit intentions [23]. Li and Chen constructed the influence model of recreational attraction, service quality, tourists' satisfaction, and loyalty to mountain trails, and found that recreational attraction significantly and positively affect loyalty; service quality positively and significantly influenced recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty [20]. It demonstrated that service quality is an important condition of recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty. Li defined satisfaction as overall satisfaction with festivals and activities [19]. The findings showed that tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' loyalty. Therefore, tourists' satisfaction significantly influences tourists' revisit intentions.

According to studies on recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty, there is close and mutual influence. Recreational attraction positively influences satisfaction and loyalty. Thus, recreational attraction and satisfaction are keys to tourists' revisit and recommendation intentions. Therefore, this study assumes that, for Wushulin Recreation Park visitors, there is a positive correlation among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research structure and hypothesis

3.1.1 Research structure

This study discussed the relationships between the backgrounds of tourists of Wushulin Recreation Park, recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty by conducting difference and correlation analysis. According to research purposes and empirical studies of related literature, the research framework is as shown in Figure 3-1:



Figure 3-1 Research structure

Source: this study

3.1.2 Research hypotheses

According to research framework, literature review, and empirical study, three hypotheses are indicated, as below: H1:There is positive correlation between recreational attractions

of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors and satisfaction. H2:There is positive correlation between recreational attractions

of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors and loyalty.

H3: There is positive correlation between Wushulin Recreation Park visitors' satisfaction and loyalty.

3.2 Research subjects and sampling method

This study treated visitors of Wushulin Recreation Park as subjects, and adopted convenience random sampling. Questionnaire survey was conducted from March 21 to 27, 2011 (7 days), with 400 questionnaires distributed.

3.3 Data analysis

SPSS 12.0 was used to examine the distribution of items in the sample structure. Cronbach's α was adopted to examine the

consistency and stability of items in the questionnaire. Data were analyzed with descriptive Statistics, one-way ANOVA, and correlation analysis, as detailed below:

3.1.1 Descriptive statistics:

Descriptive statistics mean the descriptive analysis on demographic variables in the questionnaires in order to recognize basic information and the distribution of demographic variables of the returned samples. Regarding the background of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors, the distribution of basic information and descriptive data is shown by frequency distribution and percentage, including gender, age, marital status, educational level, occupation, residential locations, visiting frequency, companions, stay duration, information sources, etc.

3.1.2 One-way ANOVA:

One-way ANOVA is adopted to examine age, marital status, educational level, occupation, residential locations, visiting frequency, companions, stay duration, and information sources of Wushulin Recreation Park visitors. Recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty do not reveal significant differences.

3.1.3 Pearson correlation analysis

Pearson correlation analysis is the indicator to show the correlation between two variables, allowing this study to recognize the relationships among Wushulin Recreation Park visitors' recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.

3.4 Questionnaire design

Research subjects were visitors at Wushulin Recreation Park, and the questionnaire was designed according to the research framework and hypotheses, as well as related foreign and domestic studies. The questionnaire includes four parts: recreational attraction, tourist satisfaction, loyalty, basic information, and travel characteristics. The references of the questionnaire are as shown in Table 3-1:

Table 3-1 Number of items in questionnaire, variables, and dimensions

Variables	Dimensions	Number of items	References		
	Recreational environment	a1-a5			
	Activity selected	a6-a10	Lin, Lin and Huang (2007); Chang and		
Recreational attraction	Facilities	a11-a15	Lin(2007)[2]; Chou(2008); Li and		
	Concern for health	a16-a19	Chen(2009)		
	Self-growth	a20-a23			
	Environment	b1-b4			
	Facility experience in museums	b5-b10	Shen and Yang(2006); Chang and Lin(2007		
Satisfaction	Railway experience b11-b15		Lin, Lin and Huang(2007); Li(2010); Chiu		
	Public facilities	b16-b20	Lin, Tsai and Chan(2010)		
	Overall satisfaction	b21-b25	_		
T L	Revisit intention	c1-c2			
Loyalty	Recommendation intention	c3-c5	Lin, Lin and Huang(2007); Li(2010)		
Basic information and travel Basic information		d1-d6	Hsu(2008)[15]; Chou(2008); Li(2010)		
characteristics	Travel characteristics	d7-d10			

In order to objectively and precisely measure the visitors' views and satisfaction with Wushulin Recreation Park, regarding recreation experience, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty, the researcher adopts a Likert 5-point scale. "Strongly agree/strongly satisfied", "agree/satisfied", "normal", "disagree/dissatisfied" and "strongly disagree/strongly dissatisfied" refer to $5\sim1$, respectively.

4. Research Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of tourists' basic characteristics

According to the statistics of visitors' characteristics in Table 4-1, Wushulin Recreation Park tourists are mostly female (50.8%). However, the difference between males and females is insignificant. Most of the subjects are visitors between $21\sim30$ years old (30%), followed by $31\sim40$ years old (29.7%). As to educational level, the subjects mostly graduated from senior high and vocational schools, and second is college and university (31.6% and 22.9%), respectively. Regarding occupation, most of the subjects are from the service industry (18%); as to marital status, most are married with children (51.2%). As to

residential locations, most live in southern Taiwan (32.7%). The second is northern Taiwan, then local

residents (22.% and 21.8%), respectively.

Table 4-1 Statistics of tourists' characteristics

	Item	Number of people	%		Item	Number of people	%
Gender	Male	179	49.2		Below elementary school	9	2.5
	Female	185	50.8		Junior high school	53	14.4
	Below (including) 20 years old	51	13.9	Educational level	Senior high school and vocational school	116	31.6
	21-20 years old	110	30.0	-	College	84	22.9
Age	31-40 years old	109	29.7	_	University	84	22.9
	41-50 years old	51	13.9	-	Above graduate school	19	5.2
	51-60 years old	36	9.8		Unmarried	134	36.7
	61 years old and above	10	2.7	_	Married with children	187	51.2
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery and Animal Husbandry	16	4.4	Marital status	Married without children	35	9.6
	Military, public servants, teachers and police	35	9.5	-	Others	9	2.5
	Business	48	13.1		Tainan City (local residents)	80	21.8
Occupation	Labor	44	12.0	-	Northern	82	22.3
	Housekeeping	30	8.2	- Residential	Central	66	18.0
	Students	52	14.2	locations	Southern	120	32.7
	Service industry	66	18.0	_	Eastern	14	3.8
	Free industry	25	6.8		Others	4	1.1
	None (including retirement)	13	3.5				
	Others	38	10.4				

Source: compiled by this study

4.2 Analysis of travel characteristics

As to travel, according to Table 4-2, which demonstrates tourists' travel characteristics regarding visiting frequency, most tourists are visiting the park for the first time (45.2%), followed by visiting for the second time (33.2%). Regarding information sources, relatives' and friends' introduction is the most (23.7%),

followed by is on the way (18.3%). As to companions, most tourists go with families and relatives (48.2%), followed by is friends and classmates (25.1%). Regarding stay duration, most tourists stay for $2\sim3$ hours, followed by $1\sim2$ hours (30.5% and 30%), respectively.

	Item	Number of people	%		Item	Number of people	%
	Once	166	45.2		Friends and classmates	92	25.1
Visiting frequency	Twice	122	33.2	Companions	Family, relatives, and friends	177	48.2
	Three times	45	12.3		Group	57	15.5
	Above four times	33	9.0	_	Alone	11	3.0
	Internet	32	8.7		Others	26	7.1
	Relatives' and friends' introduction	87	23.7		Within 1 hour	45	12.3
Information	mass media	46	12.5	Stay	1-2 hours	110	30.0
sources	Travel magazine	52	14.2	duration	2-3 hours	112	30.5
	On the way	67	18.3	_	Half day	67	18.3
	Local residents	35	9.5	_	One day	30	8.2
	Others	46	12.5				

Table 4-2 Statistics of tourists' travel characteristics

Source: compiled by this study

4.3 Reliability test

The design is based on the studies of related foreign and domestic literature. After reliability test, reliabilities of recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty of this study are 0.838, 0.877, and 0.896, respectively, as shown in Table 4-3, which meets the standard that reliability must be above 0.7.

Table 4-3 Reliability test for variables of dimensions

Variables	Recreational attraction	Satisfaction	Loyalty				
Cronbach's a	0.838	0.877	0.896				
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Source: compiled by this study

4.4 Analysis of recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty

According to Table 4-4, as to recreational attraction, concern for health is the most critical attraction factor, followed by self-growth. Means are 3.975 and 3.949, respectively; regarding satisfaction, the most satisfying item is environment, followed by facility experience in museums. Means are 3.899 and 3.717,

respectively; regarding loyalty, tourists are more loyal to recommendation intention, with a mean of 3.997. It shows that for tourists of Wushulin Recreation Park, concern for health is the most important attraction. They are mostly satisfied with the environment of Wushulin Recreation Park, and have higher recommendation intentions.

4.5 Difference analysis of different backgrounds on recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty

This study conducted difference analysis of different backgrounds on recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty, and treated One-way ANOVA as the statistical method. According to Table 4-5, age, educational level, occupation, companions, and stay duration do not reveal significant differences. Regarding recreational attraction, information sources, and recreational attraction of tourists obtaining information from the internet is higher than tourists on the way. As to satisfaction, attraction for tourists obtaining information from other sources is higher than tourists on the way. As to loyalty, marital status, residential locations, visiting frequency, and information sources reveal significant differences.

Variables	Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation	Order
	Recreational environment	3.938	0.634	3
	Activity selected	3.465	0.653	5
Recreational attraction	Facilities	3.751	0.599	4
	Concern for health	3.975	0.669	1
	Self-growth	3.949	0.584	2
	Environment	3.899	0.627	1
	Facility experience in museums	3.717	0.662	2
Satisfaction	Railway experience	3.712	0.670	3
	Public facilities	3.518	0.687	5
	Overall satisfaction	3.700	0.677	4
T14	Revisit intention	3.847	0.666	2
Loyalty	Recommendation intention	3.997	0.681	1

Table 4-4 Order of important factors of recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty

Source: compiled by this study

Table 4-5 General analysis of differences of differences	ent backgrounds on recrea	ational attraction, satisfaction	and lovalty

Dimensions	Recre	ational attraction		Satisfaction		Loyalty
	F value	Post hoc Comparison	F value	Post hoc Comparison	F value	Post hoc Comparison
Age	.472	n.s	.626	n.s	1.401	n.s
Marital status	2.457*	n.s	.473	n.s	8.059***	Others>unmarried Married with children>unmarried Others>married with children
Educational level	.865	n.s	.782	n.s	.599	n.s
Occupation	1.217	n.s	.450	n.s	1.642	n.s
Residential locations	1.025	n.s	.108	n.s	3.582***	Tainan City >others Eastern Taiwan>others
Visiting frequency	.837	n.s	2.028	n.s	9.581***	Twice>once Three times>once Four times>once
Companions	1.326	n.s	1.040	n.s	1.301	n.s
Stay duration	.104	n.s	.258	n.s	1.357	n.s
Information sources	5.198***	Internet >on the way others>on the way	3.384***	Others>on the way	5.323***	Internet >on the way relatives' and friends' introduction >on the way mass media >on the way

n.s indicates it does not reach a significant level; *<.1; **<.05; ***<.001 Source: compiled by this study 4.6 Correlation analysis

Table 4-7 indicates the correlation among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty. According to the table, there are positive and significant relationships among them, which show the mutual influences among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Table 4-7 Correlation coefficient matrix of recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty

Dimensions	imensions Recreational attraction		Loyalty
Recreational attraction	1		
Satisfaction	.745***	1	
Loyalty	.517***	.396***	1
***<<.001	11 41 41		

Source: compiled by this study

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

Good operational planning is the key of sustainable operation of firms. Complete service and planning that attract tourists will increase the customers of firms. Wushulin Recreation Park is transformed from a sugar corporation, provides diverse recreations, and combines the functions of environment, historical, cultural, and recreational. Therefore, how to enhance service quality of the park, increase customers' satisfaction, as well as their revisit and recommendation intentions, are important issues for management.

According to the findings of this study, there are significant and positive relationships among recreational attraction, satisfaction, and loyalty. As to recreational attraction, the most popular items are concern for health and self-growth. Activity selected is the item with the lowest attraction. Therefore, the management should not only maintain items of high attraction, but also value the arrangement of activities. For instance, they can introduce multiple experiential plans to increase recreational attraction for tourists. As to satisfaction, satisfaction with environment is the most significant, which demonstrates that visitors are mostly satisfied with the Wushulin Recreation Park of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation. However, satisfaction with public facilities is the lowest. Therefore, management should consider providing complete public facilities and flow planning for the improvement. Finally, as to loyalty, although tourists' recommendation intentions are higher than revisit intentions, the difference is insignificant. Thus, the firm can construct revisit plans to enhance tourists' revisit rate.

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