

MASTER'S THESIS

Antecedents and consequences of customer service experience: the case of theme park service

Dong, Ping

Date of Award:
2010

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

**Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Service Experience
-The Case of Theme Park Service**

DONG Ping

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

Principal Supervisor: Dr. Noel Y.M.SIU

Hong Kong Baptist University

July 2010

ABSTRACT

Customer service experience has been an emerging and pivotal topic in service marketing domain. This study mainly explores the antecedents or determinants in the formation of customers' total service experience, which is argued to be the ultimate conveyor of customers' perceived value and a primary predictor of their post-experience behaviors. Research in environmental psychology and transportation theory serves as theoretical basis for the main propositions. A conceptual framework is proposed to examine the relationships among the constructs including servicescape elements, customer predisposition characteristics, total service experience, and post-experience behavioral intentions.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in this study. Respondents were local customers of the two major theme parks located in Hong Kong. To ensure the construct validity of the measurement scales, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the key constructs and the measurement model yielded an acceptable fit to the data. Then the overall structural model was assessed via path analysis to test the proposed hypotheses.

Findings add to the literature of service experience by re-conceptualizing and elucidating the concept of total service experience for experiential consumers. Specifically, we demonstrate that (1) both substantive staging of servicescape and communicative staging of servicescape positively influence customers' formation of total service experience although they exert different levels of influences; (2) two customer predisposition characteristic, namely fantastic imaginary orientation and desire for active participation, interact with servicescape elements and exert different moderating effects over the relationships between the two servicescape types and total service experience; and (3) total service experience is proved to be a substantial

indicator of customers' post-experience behavioral intentions including both experience intensification and experience extension. To the best of our knowledge, we offer the first empirical investigation of how customer's predisposition characteristics, namely fantastic imaginary orientation and desire for active participation, affect the relationship between holistic servicescape elements and the formation of customers' total service experience in a typical experiential consumption context.

Managerial implications related to servicescape design, promotion strategies as well as brand image enhancement are discussed. Firstly, although the effect of substantive staging of servicescape has been well documented in the extant service literature evidenced by Bitner (1992) and other follow up studies, we stress one critical factor in designing service settings for experiential consumption, the fantasy-evoking element, which has been overlooked in the managerial practices. Secondly, service providers are suggested to introduce more dynamic and interactive offerings which are beneficial to alert people of what and how they could enjoy in an experiential service setting so as to foster customers' favorable service experience. It is believed that customers' expectation and their psychological preparation could to some extent enhance their desire for active participation and arouse fantastic imaginary orientation before they experience the service.

Limitations of this current study and possible directions for future research were presented in the end.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Research Background	1
1.2 Significance of the Research	3
1.3 Problem Statement	5
1.4 Research Objectives	6
1.5 Outline of the Thesis	8
CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS	9
2.1 What Is Unique about Experiential Consumption?	9
2.2 Service Environment and “Stimulus- Organism- Response” Model	10
2.3 Transportation Theory	12
CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES	14
3.1 Total Service Experience	14
3.1.1 Research Background	14
3.1.2 Service Experience in the Literature	15
3.1.3 The Notion of Total Service Experience	16
3.2 Antecedents of TSE	17
3.2.1 Substantive staging of servicescape	17
3.2.2 Communicative staging of servicescape	19
3.3 The Moderating Role of Customer Predisposition	20
3.3.1 Fantastic Imaginary Orientation	22
3.3.2 Desire for active participation	24
3.4 Consequences: Post-experience Behavioral Intentions	25
3.4.1 Experience Intensification	25
3.4.2 Experience Extension	26
3.4.3 The Direct Effects of Servicescape on Post-experience Behaviors	27
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	30
4.1 Exploratory Research	30
4.1.1 In-depth Interviews	30
4.1.2 Focus Group Discussions	33
4.2 Sampling	38
4.2.1 The Population and Sampling Frame	38

4.2.2 Sampling method.....	38
4.2.3 Sample Size	39
4.3 Measures.....	40
4.4 Procedures	44
4.4.1 Survey design and Pre-test	44
4.4.2 Main Survey	45
4.5 Data Analysis	46
4.5.1 Reliability Test	46
4.5.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)	47
4.5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	48
4.5.4 Construct Validity	50
4.5.5 Hypotheses Testing	52
CHAPTER 5 DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.....	54
5.1 Respondents Profile.....	54
5.2 Assessment of the Measurement Model.....	56
5.2.1 Reliability Assessment	56
5.2.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis.....	56
5.2.3 Construct Validity Assessment by Confirmatory Factor Analysis	57
5.2.3.1 CFA for the Holistic Servicescape Model (Model 1).....	57
5.2.3.2 CFA for Overall Measurement Model (Model 2)	61
5.3 Hypotheses Testing	64
5.3.1 Structural Model Analysis.....	65
5.3.2 Test the Potential Mediating Role of Total Service Experience	74
Chapter 6 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS	77
6.1 Discussions and Interpretations of Research Findings.....	77
6.2 Theoretical Contributions.....	79
6.3 Managerial Implications.....	81
6.4 Limitations	82
6.5 Directions for Further Research	84
REFERENCES	87
APPENDICES	98
CURRICULUM VITAE	107