

The Correlation between Factors in Festival Marketing Activities, Visitors' Value Perception and Post-Purchase Feelings

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Abstract

Marketing activities represent one of the drivers of regional industrial development. Festival marketing activities, in particular, have been widely adopted by local governments and business owners as marketing strategies to attract tourists and investors, thus boosting local economic development. How should the festival marketing activities be conducted in association with other relevant factors, in order to be distinctive and effective in local development is the topic to be discussed in this paper. This study aims to investigate the influence of factors, including festival marketing, regional image, infrastructure and local characteristics on tourists' value perception, post-travel feelings and revisit willingness. The results showed that festival marketing activities are most effective in enhancing tourists' value perception, followed by local characteristics and infrastructure. The social and hedonic values perceived by the tourists could enhance their satisfaction, thus further elevate their revisit willingness. Local governments and business owners should thus attach more importance on whether the content of festival marketing activities could highlight the local characteristics and infrastructure, thus drawing better results from these activities.

Keywords: festival marketing, value perception, post-travel feelings

1. Introduction

In recent years, many local governments and business owners have been aggressively promoting festival-themed marketing activities with the hope to attract tourists and enhance the visibility of the region with festivals and local cultural characteristics. Festival marketing has thus become the best option for developing tourism. Festive events that combine local resources and cultures can strengthen regional image, attract tourists, and contribute to the development of local economy (Uysal et al., 1993). Various festive events have thus become an important strategy for tourism development of many countries, and an impressive and popular trend for tourism (Burr, 1997; Cunningham, 1995). Thus, how to achieve good publicity outcome from festive events has become an important issue for the local governments. In Taiwan, among the numerous festivals, there are Yilan International Children's Folklore & Folkgame Festival, Taipei Film Festival, Sky Lantern Festival in Pingxi District, New Taipei City, Tainan Baihe Lotus Festival, Pingtung Donggang Bluefin Tuna Cultural Festival, etc. However, whether the investments by local governments and business owners into these events could yield effective results is yet to be discussed. Hence, how to differentiate the festivals with limited resources, increase the visibility of the festival is important. Besides promoting the festive events, the coordination of regional image, infrastructure and local characteristics is to be considered by local governments and business owners.

Regional image can trigger tourists' curiosity toward the region, and arouse their emotions, thus regional image is an intangible asset. Regional infrastructure includes transportation planning, landscape, surrounding natural environment, etc., which also influence tourists' emotional responses, and affect their behaviors and decision-making (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). When geographical resources, history and culture, and traditional skills can be integrated into local characteristics, they can become an influential force to attract tourists. Hence, these factors are indispensable. Whether for festive events, infrastructure, or local characteristics, only actual experiences can enhance tourists' value perception. If those factors could meet the demands of the tourists, their impression toward the region and value perception would be improved, as well as satisfaction and commitment (McLuhan, 2000).

To sum up, factors such as festival activities, regional image, infrastructure and local characteristics all affect

tourists' value perception, post-travel feelings and future intention. However, past studies only discussed this topic from limited dimensions and rarely dealt with it from the above dimensions. Hence, this study aims to investigate the influences of the above factors, and establish a structural model of the relationship between the factors and marketing outcomes. The findings can provide a more complete conceptual framework and practical data, in order to help local governments and business owners to formulate suitable marketing strategies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Festival Marketing

Activity marketing refers to the one-time or irregular special event beyond routine activities conducted with the support of organizational operations and contributions (Getz, 1989). Activity marketing is thus a special activity that calls for detailed planning and designing, with the aim to bring the participants joyfulness. It is the course of special events (Jackson, 1997). Festival marketing is a one-time or regular marketing activity featuring a certain festival theme. Festival marketing campaigns are held to attract tourist participation, provide the main drivers of starting a travel, and stimulate tourists to participate in other local activities (Veres, Clark, & Golbourne, 2008). Local activities and festivals not only can attract tourists, but also serve as the most direct and specific promotional channels of local culture, and demonstrate the cultural characteristics explicitly (Hinch, 1996). Organizing local festivals through activities marketing can thus help preserve historical heritage and culture. In addition, festival marketing campaigns can attract more tourists and shape the regional image effectively.

2.2 Regional Image

The concept of perceived image has been extensively studied in the marketing literature and its linkages with post-purchase feelings and perceived value have been identified (Ansari & Riasi, 2016). Regional image is the combination of a tourist's overall belief, idea, impression and feeling toward a destination (Crompton, 1979), specifically, his/her impression and feeling toward a destination before the trip (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). It is also a tourist's expectation of a destination that contributes in the decision making (Leisen, 2001). Regional image, hence, is the long-term belief of a person toward an area and the comprehensive evaluation of the place based on their perspective and attitude. Without a unique image, any region without great potentials may be ignored or left unknown. According to the concept of brand image developed by Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis (1986), regional image can be divided into three constructs, namely functional, symbolic and experiential images, as the parameters in measuring regional image.

2.3 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is fundamental to the development of a region and plays a significant role in regional marketing (Kotler et al., 2002). Infrastructure is comprised mainly of public facilities and established to provide facilities that cater for the demands of users and the market by improving basic elements, such as buildings, roads, transportation system, environment quality, tourist services and telecommunication networks. Infrastructure is one of the significant factors that influence tourists' behaviors. It also covers the specific external space environment where tourists perform activities, such as architectural style, decorations and signs (Baker, 1986). Canter (1983) suggested that the most important role of infrastructure is to convey main ideas to people through visible designs or planning (e.g., leisure facilities, environmental safety and destination planning), thus shaping tourists' overall perception and influencing their emotions (Beerli & Martín, 2004). As tourists tend to evaluate the value of a tourist destination upon the infrastructure and tourism quality, and rely on these factors to determine whether to revisit the destination in the future (Baker, Grewal, Parasuraman, & Voss, 2002). Therefore, infrastructure is an important source of tourists' perceived values.

2.4 Local Characteristics

Local characteristics refer to the unique historical and cultural economic activities of townships, towns and cities. They are developed upon local climate, resources, historical relics, and folk customs. With One Town One Product (OTOP) as the goal of development, Small and Medium Enterprise Administration (SMEA), Ministry of Economic Affairs is working to explore products and industries with strong local characteristics and consolidate the distinctive image of each region, in order to attract tourists for visits and consumption. With its complicated and varied natural and cultural landscape, Taiwan is rich in tourism resources. There are also numerous characteristics unique to each region. These should be the precious and important focus for local governments to develop tourism. Hence, designing events and themes based on the geographical resources or cultural features unique to the region could enhance tourism, consumption, and investment, thus promoting local development.

2.5 Social Value

Social value refers to the interpersonal interaction between customers and other social groups through

consumption. Social value comes from the connections between one or several social groups, and their interaction with the existing regional, economic, cultural and hierarchical groups (Holbrook, 1994). When deciding whether to participate in a festival marketing activity, the social value perceived by the visitor is very important, as the consumption behavior is a group decision. If customers could improve self-image, social status, sense of belonging or recognition by participating in a festival marketing activity, their social value could be enhanced (Sheth et al., 1991). Therefore, when customers realize that the participation in a certain festival marketing activity will not be accepted by the reference group that they belong to or look forward to, their intention to participate would decline. Since social value often involves the influences from interpersonal interactions (Mort & Drennan, 2005), the social value in this study is defined as the feeling of a greater attachment between a person and his/her friends and family members in the festival marketing activity due to the good interaction, as well as self-improvement and social recognition.

2.6 Hedonic Value

When tourists participate in a festival marketing activity, they tend to pursue a sense of joyfulness. Hence, it is important for such activities to have hedonic value. It is too narrow and incomplete if the value of consumption is only evaluated through the price or features of a product; enjoyment should be included to reflect the recreational and emotional value of the customer experience (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). When customers feel satisfied with a product during consumption, the joyfulness cannot be measured by money (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 1996). Therefore, if customers could gain positive sensorial feelings, a good mood, aesthetic experience or feeling of dream coming true from the consumption process, they are considered to have received hedonic value (Babin et al., 1994; Langrehr, 1991). Hence, hedonic value is entertainment-oriented and represents the multiple feelings and imagination of the customers. It is also the measurement of the recreational nature of the consumption experience (Babin et al., 1994).

2.7 Satisfaction

Satisfaction refers to the customer's post-purchase feelings and responses, and comes mainly from the degree of surprise that the customers receive from the consumption experience (Oliver, 1981). Solomon (1991) suggested that satisfaction is the overall feeling of an individual toward the product or service that he/she purchased, namely the gap between their expectation before and actual experience after the purchase. In terms of festival marketing campaigns, satisfaction refers to the actual feelings of the tourists after participating in the event, and comes from the psychological impressions and emotional status after interacting with the destination (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Satisfaction is often related to pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences. When tourists have a sense of satisfaction after comparing the two, they feel satisfied (Reisinger & Turner, 2003). Tourist satisfaction is measured by the tourists' overall degree of pleasure. It refers to a comparison between their expectations, value of the trip and experience from past festival events (Lee, Graefe, & Burns, 2004; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Satisfaction is thus an emotional response from an individual when evaluating the overall experience in a festival marketing campaign (Anselmsson, 2006; Wu & Lin, 2014).

2.8 Commitment

Wilson (1995) suggested that commitment represents the degree of relationship between business partners, as well as their desire to continue this relationship in the future. Moreover, it is the continuous intention to maintain the relationship with another party, including friends, social groups or business partners (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Garbarino & Johnson (1999) treated commitment as a customer's admiration and recognition of an enterprise, and an emotional and psychological dependence. This relationship is established and continued based on love, sense of belonging, recognition and mutual intention. Gronholdt, Martensen, & Kristensen (2000) proposed four constructs of tourists' commitment to a destination: intention to revisit, intention to recommend, price tolerance, word-of-mouth. In terms of festival marketing campaigns, commitment could be measured with multiple constructs, such as continuous commitment, which refers to the extent to which tourists think the participation of the festival marketing activity as worthwhile (White & Schneider, 2000); and emotional commitment, which refers to the extent to which that tourists are willing to connect to the activity in their behavior or attitude (Harrison-Walker, 2001).

3. Research Hypothesis Establishment

3.1 Relationship between Festival Marketing and Social Value/Hedonic Value

Festival marketing serves the purposes of entertaining the tourists, increasing local job opportunities, enhancing visibility of destination, promoting local development, and attracting more tourists (Watt, 1998). Tourists, on the other hand, could enhance such social values as their self-image, social status and group recognition by participating in festival marketing campaigns. During their participation of these activities, they could feel

interested and entertained, thus triggering their positive sensorial feelings and giving them pleasure, aesthetic or other sensorial experience, in turn, form the hedonic value.

Festival marketing information can be promoted from an educational and promotional approach. After being exposed to and experiencing the festivals, tourists could develop greater perceived value. In the short term, festival marketing campaigns can attract tourists, facilitate participation in the activities, and cause a greater perception of the products. In the long term, they could help establish regional image and recognition for the activity, thus attracting tourists, changing their preferences, and influencing their participation behaviors (Button, 2003). Festival marketing campaigns thus could arouse tourists' sense of participation and affection toward the region, in addition to enhancing their perceived value. Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Festival marketing campaigns can positively, significantly enhance tourists' perceived social values.

H2: Festival marketing campaigns can positively, significantly enhance tourists' perceived hedonic values.

3.2 Relationship between Regional Image and Social Value/Hedonic Value

Tourists usually hope to gain some values from a trip, in turn, generating positive impressions toward the destination. Their expectation is from the regional image and their sense of satisfaction from travel experiences. In other words, regional image influences tourists' expectations the destination, and their choice and decision-making on the destination (Birgit, 2001). Grewal et al. (1998) found that regional image is positively correlated with tourists' perceived quality and values of a region. For a destination with more positive regional image, tourists would have a high opinion of it (Bigne et al., 2001), as well as better perceived value (Wu & Zheng, 2014). A better region image means to have better environment, greater service and, reliable quality. A positive regional image could increase tourists' perceived value and reduce perceived social risks, thus further affecting their intention to visit the region (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2003). It is thus clear that regional image could affect tourists' perceived quality, in turn, enhance their perceived values (Agarwal & Teas, 2004). Festival marketing campaigns may create consumption experience, improve regional image and enhance the values perceived by the tourists. Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H3: A good regional image can positively, significantly enhance tourists' perceived social values.

H4: A good regional image can positively, significantly enhance tourists' perceived hedonic values.

3.3 Relationship between Infrastructure and Social Value/Hedonic Value

The overall impression on the tourist destination and festival events, if meeting tourists' expectations, can enhance their perceived values and sense of satisfaction (Wirtz & Bateson, 1999). In other words, the infrastructure of a tourist destination can influence tourists' perceived values (Harrell, Hutt, & Anderson, 1980), making it one of the factors of perceived value during travel. Moreover, the environment also influences tourists' sensorial and subjective judgment (Baker, Grewal, Parasuraman, & Voss, 2002), thus, a well-designed spatial environment can bring visitors a good mood and enhance their perceived value, in turn, affect their consumption behaviors (Babin et al., 1994). According to the dramaturgical theory, in a physical environment, music, lighting, scents and settings, among other factors, strengthen diminish audiences' behaviors (Wu & Huang, 2015). In a positive interaction with the surrounding environment, the audiences generate positive perceived value. This shows that good physical infrastructure and comprehensive city planning could bring tourists a positive perceived value (Baker, 2006). Good infrastructure, thus, has a positive influence on tourists' feelings; better the infrastructure has more influences. Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H5: Good infrastructure can positively, significantly enhance tourist' perceived social values.

H6: Good infrastructure can positively, significantly enhance tourist' perceived hedonic values.

3.4 Relationship between Local Characteristics and Social Value/Hedonic Value

Information on the local characteristics can influence visitors' knowledge of the service providers, in turn, affect their consumption behaviors (Bitner, Barnes, & Ward, 1992). Natural landscape, historical relics, among other factors of local characteristics, can influence customers' emotions and behaviors (Bitner, 1992). Baker et al. (2002) suggested that environment may influence customers' perception, thus further affect their subjective judgment. Booms & Bitner (1981) argued that the unique local historical and cultural features would help to establish a good image and shape the intangible services, thereby affecting visitors' expectations. As natural landscape is able to change tourists' emotional responses and affect their satisfaction with the experience, different environmental features can result in different recreational experiences. The distinctive culture promoted by the region can stimulate visitors' perceived values, further affecting their behaviors (Babin, Darden, & Griffin,

1994). In other words, unique local characteristics can better attract tourists and enhance their social and hedonic values perceived. Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H7: Local characteristics can positively, significantly enhance tourist' perceived social values.

H8: Local characteristics can positively, significantly enhance tourist' perceived hedonic values.

3.5 Relationship between Social Value/Hedonic Value and Satisfaction

All consumer values, regardless of types, can positively influence their satisfaction (Lee & Overby, 2004). When consumers believe that the products and services meet their demands, they feel a positive sense of value toward the company, in turn, develop greater satisfaction and even commitment to future consumption (Wang et al., 2004). Similarly, when visitors perceive greater values a festival, their post-travel satisfaction is higher. Mattila (2001) demonstrated the correlation between social values and customer satisfaction. Travel experience can allow tourists to win recognition from friends and peers, and demonstrate a good social image. In other words, the social values generated from the travel can enhance tourists' satisfaction. Travel experience also contributes to hedonic values. Feelings like fun, interest and novelty can enhance tourists' hedonic values, thus strengthening the pleasant feelings from travel (Voss, Spangenberg, & Grohmann, 2003). Tourists would expect the trip to smooth, look forward to have enjoyment, which has a positive influence on their satisfaction (Chitturi, Raghunathan, & Mahajan, 2008; Ha & Jang, 2010). Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H9: The social values perceived by the tourists can positively, significantly influence tourists' satisfaction.

H10: The hedonic values perceived by the tourists can positively, significantly influence tourists' satisfaction.

3.6 Relationship between Satisfaction and Commitment

Customer satisfaction not only directly influences loyalty, commitment, market share and corporate image, but also positively influences corporate profitability. Customer satisfaction thus is the most meaningful competitive edge (Muller, 1991). The core principle in business operation is to meet the demands of customers, as customer satisfaction is the best indicator of customer commitment and future corporate profits (Kotler, 1994). Many empirical studies have shown that customer satisfaction can positively influence commitment and that a high degree of satisfaction positively affects commitment (Bansal, Irving, & Taylor, 2004; Lewis & Soureli, 2006). Greater satisfaction hence strengthens customers' commitment to long-term transactions (Wu & Huang, 2015). When applied to festival marketing campaigns, this concept means that if tourists enjoy the travel experience, they would feel satisfied and generate stronger commitment (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wu & Zheng, 2014). Based on the above, this paper proposes the following hypotheses:

H11: Tourists' satisfaction can positively, significantly influence their commitment.

4. Research Design

4.1 Research Framework

Based on the literature review, the research hypotheses and research structure of this study were established. A qualitative study, questionnaire design and sample survey, and analysis were then conducted to verify the research hypotheses and the conceptual model proposed in this study. Figure 1 shows the research structure.

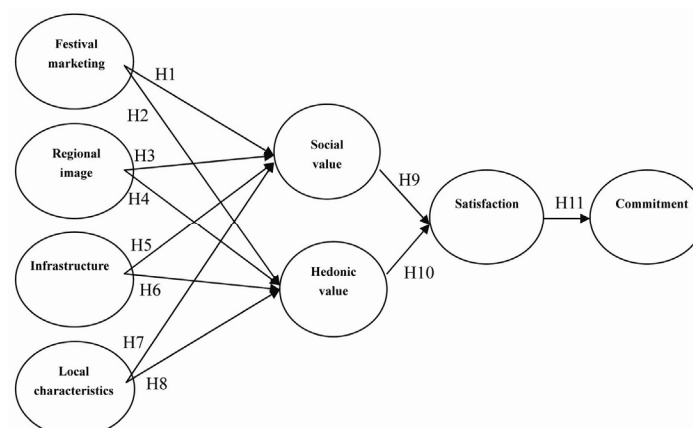


Figure 1. Research framework

4.2 Questionnaire Design

This study first reviewed relevant theories and literature to provide a basis for the research framework. After the questionnaire was designed, a survey was conducted to collect the primary data for analysis. The questionnaire contains nine parts: Part 1 is about festival marketing and comprises 5 items; Part 2 is about regional image and comprises 5 items; Part 3 is about infrastructure and comprises 3 items; Part 4 is about local characteristics and comprises 3 items; Part 5 is about social value and comprises 4 items; Part 6 is about hedonic value and comprises 5 items; Part 7 is about satisfaction and comprises 5 items; Part 8 is about commitment and comprises 5 items. The measurement was based on a Likert 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Part 9 is the background information of the respondents and contains 9 items; this part is measured with a nominal scale.

4.3 Pretest and Pilot Test

Before the questionnaire was distributed, a pretest and a pilot test were conducted respectively. This study first listed the popular event marketing campaigns held around Taiwan in recent years. Then 100 respondents were invited to select the top three events, which were Taipei 101 New Year Firework, Sky Lantern Festival in Pingxi District of New Taipei City, and Luishidan Mountain Daylily flowers season. The three events were used as the targets of this study.

For the pretest, 45 tourists that had participated in any of the above festival were chosen by convenience sampling as the subjects of the in-depth interviews. The questionnaire items with unclear meaning were then revised.

During the pilot tests, the revised questionnaire was filled out by 90 respondents who were selected by convenience sampling. The validity and reliability analysis showed that the Cronbach's α for all the constructs were greater than the standard value of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978) and item-to-total correlations were all greater than 0.5 (Kerlinger, 1978), showing a good reliability for all constructs. According to the results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the eigenvalues of all the constructs were greater than 1, the total variation explained was greater than 0.5, and the factor loadings of all variables were greater than 0.5, showing that all constructs have convergent validity (Kaiser, 1958). This questionnaire was thus used in the formal survey.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 Sample Structure

The subjects of the questionnaire survey were tourists who had participated in any of the three festivals, and were selected by convenience sampling. The questionnaires were all manually distributed. A total of 480 questionnaires were distributed. After eliminating the invalid samples, there were 450 valid samples, with a valid return rate of 93.75%. According to the sample analysis, 39.6% of the respondents are men, while 60.4% are women. Most of them are in the age group of 25~34 (28.4%), followed by 35~44 (25.6%); live in central Taiwan (44.7%), followed by northern Taiwan (32%); have a college/vocational college degree (64.2%), followed by a high (vocational high) school degree (22.2%); work in the service industry (32%), followed by students (15.6%); have an average monthly income of 30,001~50,000 NTD (34.2%), followed by 10,001-30,000 NTD (31.6%); participate in such festival once in less than half a year (34.7%), followed by once a year (28.2%).

5.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

In this study, a reliability and validity analysis was conducted on the 450 valid samples. According to Nunnally (1978), Cronbach's α should be greater than 0.7. Kerlinger (1978) suggested that item to total correlation should be greater than 0.5. The Cronbach's α and item-to-total correlations for all the constructs in this study meet or are close to these standards, which indicates good reliability and validity (see Table 1). As Kaiser (1958) proposed, the eigenvalue of a factor extracted from the explanatory factory analysis should be greater than 1, that the factor loadings of the variables on all the constructs of a factor should be greater than 0.5, and that cumulative explained variance should be greater than 0.5. The questionnaire of this study also has a good convergent validity (see Table 1).

The draft questionnaire of this study was designed based on literature review and existing scales, and was revised after expert review to develop the pretest version. Based on the pretest results, the questionnaire was revised again. This suggests that it has good content validity. This study also referred to existing theories and empirical evidences as the bases for developing the research framework, hence, the questionnaire has nomological validity.

Table 1. Reliability and validity analysis of the formal questionnaire

Factors and items	Mean	Item-to-total correlation	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Total variation explained %	Value for Cronbach's α
Festival marketing						
This activity is unique in style	5.97	0.778	0.876	3.295	65.892	0.869
This activity is impressive	5.92	0.760	0.865			
This activity is rich in content	5.69	0.726	0.837			
This activity could facilitate the development of businesses nearby	6.05	0.616	0.746			
This activity could demonstrate local cultural features	5.82	0.590	0.723			
Regional image						
The region hosting the event has a generally good quality in tourism	5.58	0.719	0.834	3.126	62.510	0.849
The region hosting the event has a great number of tourist attractions	5.69	0.610	0.748			
The region hosting the event has a good urban image	5.61	0.672	0.803			
The region hosting the event promotes a unique lifestyle	5.74	0.724	0.840			
The region hosting the event has a series of leisure and entertainment activities unique to the area	5.74	0.571	0.722			
Infrastructure						
Public works that are satisfactory in quality	5.31	0.823	0.922	2.552	85.067	0.912
Good city planning	5.30	0.865	0.943			
Well-planned leisure attractions	5.39	0.784	0.901			
Local characteristics						
Food and drinks unique to the area	5.59	0.742	0.895	2.274	75.799	0.840
Souvenirs unique to the area	5.45	0.729	0.890			
Special features that are unique to the city	5.62	0.633	0.825			
Social value						
The participation of this activity could be showed off	5.57	0.557	0.712	2.965	74.132	0.880
The participation of this activity involves good interactions with other people	5.76	0.826	0.923			
The participation of this activity help to strengthen the ties with friends and family	5.80	0.821	0.918			
The participation of this activity improves one's interpersonal relationship	5.60	0.753	0.875			
Hedonic value						
This activity is entertaining	5.69	0.733	0.837	3.525	70.507	0.895
This activity is interesting	5.66	0.773	0.863			
This activity is creative	5.61	0.732	0.832			
This activity has a unique aesthetic beauty	5.91	0.716	0.819			
This activity has a beautiful style	5.76	0.756	0.847			
Satisfaction						
This activity is unforgettable	5.82	0.669	0.788	3.402	68.034	0.882
This activity is satisfying	5.70	0.677	0.798			
The area hosting the activity is satisfying in its cultural resources	5.51	0.783	0.871			
The area hosting the activity is satisfying in its tourist attractions	5.60	0.784	0.871			
The area hosting the activity is satisfying in its public works	5.41	0.669	0.791			
Commitment						
I have a strong intention to participate in this activity again	5.51	0.758	0.856	3.593	71.861	0.902
I am willing to recommend this activity to other people	5.57	0.769	0.860			
I have a strong intention to visit this region	5.57	0.774	0.861			
This place will be a priority when I plan my next trip	5.19	0.749	0.842			
I am willing to participate in other activities to be held in this region	5.45	0.724	0.819			

5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In order to confirm the validity of the various constructs, AMOS was used to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the measurement model with eight constructs, namely festival marketing, regional image, infrastructure, local characteristics, social value, hedonic value, satisfaction and commitment. According to the principle of rigor, as for the indicator of fitness, the degree of freedom in the chi-square test should be less than 3 (Carmines & McIver, 1981), RMSEA should be less than 0.05, while GFI, AGFI, NFI, RFI and CFI be greater than 0.9 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989). According to the results of the analysis, χ^2/df is 1.621, RMSEA is 0.037, GFI is 0.914, AGFI is 0.885, NFI is 0.939, RFI is 0.923, and CFI is 0.975. As these results meet or are close to the standards, it means that the model used this study is acceptable, and the measurement indexes have good construct validity and measurement efficiency.

5.4 Structural Modeling Analysis

A linear structural modeling analysis was conducted using AMOS to explore the causal relationship and correlation between the variables. The results showed that, χ^2/df is 1.662, RMSEA is 0.038, GFI is 0.912, AGFI is 0.882, NFI is 0.937, RFI is 0.921, and CFI is 0.974. As these results meet or are close to the principles of a satisfactory model, the structural model of this study is proven to have good fitness, making it an acceptable model.

According to the analysis of the relationship between the constructs: festival marketing, infrastructure and local characteristics positively and significantly influence social and hedonic values, which supports H1, H2, H5, H6, H7 and H8. In other words, when tourists have more positive feeling toward the festival, feel more satisfied toward the infrastructure and local characteristics of the region, they would perceive greater social and hedonic values. It is found, however, that regional image does not have a significant influence on social and hedonic values, which does not support H3 and H4. In other words, regional image of a tourist destination is not so influential on tourists' social and hedonic values. In addition, tourists' social and hedonic values are found to have a positive and significant influence on their satisfaction, which supports H9 and H10. This suggests that the greater social and hedonic values perceived by a tourist, the greater satisfaction they would obtain. Tourists' satisfaction is found to have a positive and significant influence on their commitment, which supports H11. In other words, when tourists feel more satisfied, they would have greater commitment toward future participation. Figure 2 shows these results.

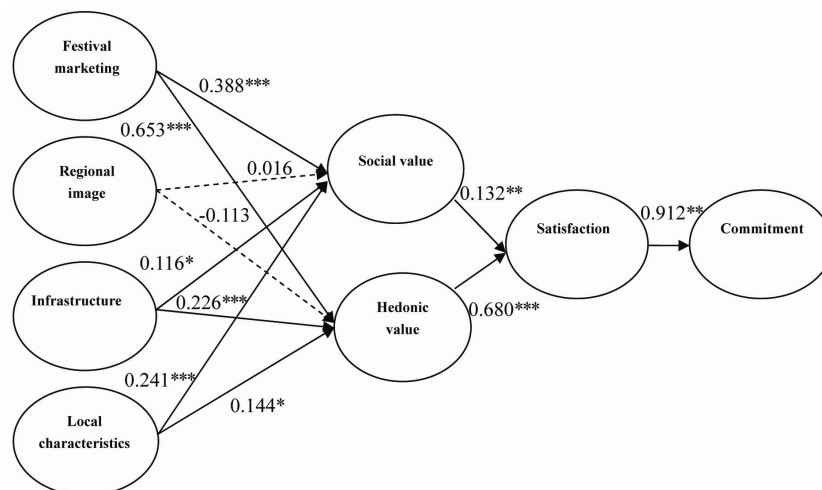


Figure 2. Structural modeling analysis

6. Conclusion and Suggestions

6.1 Conclusion

From the viewpoint of the tourist and taking festival marketing campaigns as the research topic, this study probed into the influence of festival marketing, regional image, infrastructure and local characteristics on tourist's social value, hedonic value, satisfaction and commitment in an in-depth manner. It also established a correlation model and efficient measurement indicators, making the research findings both academically and pragmatically valuable. Based on the results, the conclusions are drawn as follows:

- (1) Festival marketing can significantly and positively influence both social and hedonic values, which is consistent with Button (2003) and Lo et al. (2002), who suggested that when a festival marketing activity is favored by the tourists, or stimulates their interest and preferences, it would help tourists to improve self-identification, enhance interpersonal interactions and create a sense of joy. In other words, regional festival marketing campaigns could positively influence tourists' social and hedonic values.
- (2) Regional image has no influence social and hedonic values significantly, which does not support the research hypotheses. This suggests that tourists tend to care more about the content of the festival, rather than the image of the area hosting the event. This is an important finding of this study.
- (3) Infrastructure has a significant and positive influence on both social and hedonic values, which is consistent with Wirtz & Bateson (1999) and Baker et al. (2006), who found that well-planned infrastructure and facilities lead to positive perceived value among tourists. In other words, when festival marketing campaigns are held in a region with well-planned facilities and surrounding environment, tourists would have a positive feeling, thus enhancing their perceived values.
- (4) Local characteristics have a significant and positive influence on both social and hedonic values, which is in line with Bitner (1992), Babin, Darden, & Griffin et al. (1994). This shows that the unique cultural features of a region could attract tourists and enhance their perceived value, bringing them a good travel experience.
- (5) Tourists' social and hedonic values have a significant and positive influence on their satisfaction, which is consistent with Lee & Overby (2004), Ha & Jang (2010), who indicated that if a tourist could enhance self-image and identification, and feel joyful and fun in the activity, they are more satisfied. Tourists' satisfaction, on the other hand, is found to have a significant and positive influence on their commitment, which is consistent with Kotler (1994), Lewis & Soureli (2006). In other words, when tourists are satisfied with a festival marketing campaign, they could develop a sense of trust toward the activity and the intention to revisit the place, namely a stronger commitment.

6.2 Managerial Implications

This study probed into the perception of tourists toward festival marketing campaigns through an empirical analysis, and investigated the influence on regional image, infrastructure, local characteristics, tourists' social value, hedonic value, satisfaction and commitment, and the correlation between them. The findings of this study can serve as references for the following areas:

- (1) Festival marketing is the most influential factor among the four variables. It is suggested that local governments should integrate regional resources, such as natural landscape, historical relics, special buildings and cultural features to organize creative festival marketing campaigns, and promote the festivals to attract media coverage and tourists' participation, thus facilitating local prosperity.
- (2) For the planning of festival activities, as important as the marketing strategies are, the main appeal of local festivals should be the "local characteristics", including local history and culture, geography and customs. Without the support of local characteristics, such as rich history, culture, and tourist attractions, the activity would not sustain its popularity. Exploring local characteristics, creating cultural experience unique to the area, and demonstrating the unique selling point are the most efficient ways to drive regional marketing.
- (3) Infrastructure is physically visible and could be improved through the planning of tourist attractions and public facilities, convenient transportation, or comfortable space. It could be used to trigger the positive feelings of the tourists toward the area. Friendly and pleasant space, on the other hand, could trigger the good mood of the tourists, hence their positive behavioral responses to the consumption environment.
- (4) Given the significantly positive influence that the social and hedonic values perceived by the tourists have on their satisfaction, it is advisable for local governments to enhance tourists' perception of social and hedonic values during the trip. For example, efforts could be made to offer more chances for interpersonal interactions in an activity and make them feel proud of participating in the activity. Compared with social values, hedonic values are more useful in generating tourists' satisfaction. It is thus even more advisable to make tourists joyful or interested during the trip, thus enhancing their perceived hedonic values. This could be achieved by organizing parent-child activities, contests, experiential activities or DIYs, which tourists could enjoy and leave with a memorable experience.
- (5) Winning tourists' commitment is the ultimate goal of activities marketing. By satisfying the needs of tourists, it is important to trigger their intention to revisit the area and recommend it to other people. Hence, positive word-of-mouth is effective than the traditional marketing strategies. It could strengthen current customer loyalty, and create word-of-mouth benefits, thus bringing in more potential customers and business

opportunities.

6.3 Research Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

Based on empirical results, the research framework of this study could provide some new academic viewpoints for the reference of future researchers. However, since this study focused on three festivals, the findings may not be applicable to other cities or regions, due to different local characteristics and cultural features. It is suggested that future studies can investigate and compare event marketing campaigns held in different areas and of different categories, thus gaining a deeper understanding of the perception of tourists on different regions and types of festivals. It is also advisable to conduct in-depth studies on a single festival marketing campaign with the research framework of this study as the basis to gain more specific understanding of the effects of festival marketing campaign.

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