

The Effect of Experiential Marketing on Tourists' Satisfaction and Revisit Intention in Lukang Town

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Abstract:- This study aims to investigate the influence of experiential marketing on tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention in Lukang, an ancient town located in central Taiwan. By analyzing the three types of experiential marketing experiences in Lukang tourist area, including historical sites and culture, famous snacks and sightseeing tricycles, the researcher explores what are the predictors of tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention for various groups of tourists who come to Lukang for sightseeing. In this study, tourists who come to Lukang as a sample were collected by means of field distribution and online questionnaire filling. A total of 211 valid questionnaires were obtained. The results of the study reveal that historical sites culture and sightseeing tricycles in experiential marketing have a positive impact on tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention, while famous snacks only have a positive impact on revisit intention, and tourism satisfaction has a positive impact on revisit intention. In addition, in most of the demographic variables, there is no significant difference among different types of tourists in experience marketing, tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. However, age (below 20 years old) and place of residence (Yilan, Hualien, & Taitung) in the demographic variables both have low tourists' satisfaction to go sightseeing in Lukang, and those who come to Lukang for more times (more than four times) have a greater sense of identity with the historical site culture in experience marketing. Finally, based on the research results and practical experience, the researcher provides improvement strategies for the Lukang tourism industry, and gives suggestions and directions for the local government to improve the quality of tourism.

Keywords: Experiential Marketing, Tourists' Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, Lukang Tourism Area.

1. Introduction

Lukang, known as one of the "Three Major Towns" in historical Taiwan alongside "Taipei," and "Mengjia," was a crucial town in the early development of Taiwan. In 1784, during the Qing Dynasty, the government opened it up for trade, leading to its rapid growth into the largest port in central Taiwan. Despite later siltation issues rendering it less significant as a port city, Lukang boasts abundant historical sites, cultural heritage, and a variety of local delicacies. Consequently, it remains a favored destination for tourists in Taiwan. In 2012, Lukang was honored as one of the "Top Ten Tourist Small Towns in Taiwan" by the Tourism Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation for its craftsmanship, cuisine, and historical significance.

Lukang's abundance of historical landmarks and traditional crafts makes it a significant tourist attraction in Taiwan. What sets Lukang's old streets apart from others in Taiwan is its unique historical resources, which serve as a powerful tool for its tourism development. Urry & Larsen[1] argue that tourist engagement necessarily involves a "departure" from the ordinary, allowing individuals to temporarily escape routine affairs and immerse their senses in a series of stimulating activities, creating a stark contrast with their mundane daily lives.

The historical landmarks and culture of Lukang are the most attractive aspects for tourism. In addition to these basic tourism resources, the local snacks, crafts, and specialties of Lukang are also one of the features that attract people to visit. This allows tourists to have more options to purchase products after touring historical buildings.

Furthermore, as Lukang is an early-developed town with narrow lanes that are not conducive to car traffic (as shown in Figure 1 of the Lukang Historical Landmarks Walking Map), it has developed a unique form of tourism with local characteristics: tricycle tours. Therefore, this study will explore three aspects: tricycle tourism services, Lukang's historical landmarks, and local snacks and specialties, to understand whether experiential marketing affects the satisfaction and willingness to revisit Lukang for tourists.

The main purpose of this study is to explore ways to enhance the quality and value of tourism in Lukang, ensuring that visitors have pleasant experiences and are willing to return for future visits. Furthermore, understanding how various historical landmarks, local delicacies, and experiential marketing in the Lukang tourist area affect tourists' satisfaction can serve as a guide for future upgrades or transformations in local industries.



Figure 1. Lukang Historical Landmarks Walking Map

2. Literature Review

Tourism planning should contain local historical and cultural elements, utilizing regional and local imagery as developmental characteristics. This can be achieved through the preservation and regeneration of historic sites, traditional settlements, and industrial architecture, as well as the reshaping of local imagery, to enhance the foundation of tourism's added value. Heritage tourism has been regarded as a unique form of tourism activity, often intertwined with urban and cultural tourism. The combination of cultural heritage and tourism has become a trend worldwide, driving urban development. The types of tourism resources in Lukang can be categorized into historical architecture, folk activities, cultural and educational facilities, village lanes, local specialties, and accommodation systems.

2.1 Definition of Experiential Marketing

Schmitt[2] proposed the concept of "experiential marketing," defining it as follows: "Consumers, after observing or participating in something, feel stimulated, leading to motivation, generating consumption behavior or recognition of thought, and enhancing the value of the product." Schmitt[2] believes that products or services can create a complete experience for consumers by providing rich sensory stimulation and experiences with persuasive and creative connections, thereby inducing consumers to view the product or service as a lifestyle. From this perspective, we can understand that experiential marketing emphasizes customer experience rather than simply focusing on product value. Compared to traditional marketing, where there is a lack of two-way communication, the interactive experience of experiential marketing can increase customer loyalty. Therefore, by enhancing the experiential marketing experience during the travel process, customer satisfaction and willingness to revisit can be promoted.

Traditional marketing tends to focus excessively on product performance and benefits. It assumes that consumers are rational, so they consider product benefits or evaluate product performance in different markets and choose products with maximum comprehensive benefits. However, experiential marketing is the best way to understand consumers. It views consumers as having both rational and emotional aspects and enhances interaction between consumers and products or services. This allows consumers to have sensory, emotional, cognitive, action, and relational experiences, creating loyalty to the product or service.

2.2 Tourist Satisfaction

Fornell[3] argues that customer satisfaction is a comprehensive attitude based on experiences, and perceived quality is the most significant explanatory factor for customer satisfaction. Behind any consumer behavior lies motivation and needs. Travel motivation is based on individuals' needs for leisure or self-relaxation, which leads individuals to engage in recreational activities and guides them towards a particular goal. Through the occurrence of travel behavior, these needs are satisfied[4]. Tourist motivation refers to the driving force behind why tourists engage in travel activities and can be used to estimate the likelihood of repeat visits by tourists. Oliver[5] views satisfaction as a state of satisfaction that consumers experience after consumption, evaluating goods or services based on the psychological state generated by previous experiences; thus, experiences will affect satisfaction. Oliver[6] defines satisfaction as a happy experience of meeting expectations, reflecting the degree of happiness consumers feel internally and their satisfaction with the product or service. The importance of satisfaction in tourism research lies in understanding consumers' perceptions of tourism-related services and reflecting the importance of tourism service management in the hotel, airline, and tourist attraction industries[7]. Tourist satisfaction refers to the psychological responses derived from tourists' evaluations of travel products, services, and the experiential process, as well as their assessments of various elements and functionalities[8, 9]. Therefore, by understanding tourist satisfaction, operators can provide services and basic facilities that meet tourists' satisfaction to enhance their tourist experiences[10].

2.3 Revisit Intention

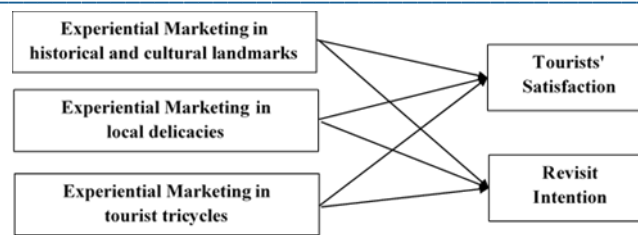
Revisit intention indicates tourists' willingness to visit again, which contributes to the growth and consumption of tourist attractions. To foster the development of the tourism industry, the tourism industry must consider how to create demand and desire for visitors' revisit intention[11]. Therefore, revisit intention is crucial for the sustainable operation and continuous growth of tourist attractions, and attracting tourists to revisit is an essential focus for tourism industries worldwide. Parasuraman, Zeithmal & Berry[12] define revisit intention as tourists' willingness to revisit and recommend the destination positively to others. Guest [13] suggests that consumers will revisit based on their satisfaction with their travel experience, which is known as revisit intention. Baker and Crompton[14] propose that tourist revisit intention refers to the likelihood of tourists returning to a tourist area or attraction or the tendency to participate in activities again. Kozak[15] indicates that tourist revisit intention is whether tourists are willing to visit again or recommend others to visit. Castro, Armario, and Ruiz[16] define revisit intention as the likelihood of recommending to others and the willingness to revisit.

3. Research Methodology

This study primarily focuses on tourists visiting Lukang for sightseeing and aims to investigate the impact of experiential marketing in Lukang on tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. The content of experiential marketing in Lukang includes three main tourism features: Lukang's historical and cultural landmarks, local delicacies, and experiences with tourist tricycles. The framework of this study is illustrated in Figure 2.

This study conducts a questionnaire survey and the questionnaire items were measured by using five-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree."

The design of the Lukang Experiential Marketing Scale is based on the model developed by Schmitt[2], utilizing five dimensions of sensory experience, emotional experience, cognitive experience, action experience, and relational

**Figure 2. Research Framework**

experience for measurement. These measurements were then modified based on the characteristics of this study and compiled into three parts, namely, "Lukang's Historical and Cultural Landmarks," "Local Delicacies in Lukang," and "Tourist Tricycles," representing three types of experiential marketing. The questions and their corresponding experiential dimensions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Constructs and Measurements

Construct	Measurement	Experiential market constructs
Experiential Marketing--Historical & Cultural Landmarks	01. The distinct local culture of Lukang is very appealing to me.	Sensory
	02. The historical monuments and buildings in Lukang make me want to learn more about Lukang's history.	Cognitive
	08. I would take photos or selfies at various attractions in Lukang to capture memories.	Action
	10. Visiting Lukang for sightseeing makes me contemplate issues related to the preservation of historical monuments.	Relational
	14. Exploring Lukang's old streets makes me feel culturally enriched.	Emotional
Experiential Marketing--Local Delicacies	03. I really enjoy the taste of local delicacies in Lukang.	Sensory
	05. The dining expenses in Lukang are quite worthwhile.	Emotional
	06. Sharing local delicacies with friends in Lukang helps foster friendships.	Relational
	09. Lukang's local delicacies are well-known and make great gifts for others.	Action
Experiential Marketing--Tourist Tricycles	13. Lukang's local specialties evoke nostalgia and bring back memories of the past.	Cognitive
	04. The guided tours provided by tourist tricycles are practical.	Cognitive
	07. The service provided by tourist tricycle operators is very friendly.	Emotional
	11. Tourist tricycles help me gain more knowledge about Lukang.	Relational
	12. Tourist tricycles are very convenient and allow me to explore the beauty of Lukang.	Sensory
Tourists' Satisfaction	15. Tourist tricycles are a unique feature of Lukang's tourism and are worth experiencing.	Action
	16. I am satisfied with traveling to Lukang.	Overall
	17. I am satisfied with the public facilities and services in the Lukang area.	Service

Construct	Measurement	Experiential market constructs
Revisit Intention	18. It is quite convenient to access tourist information in Lukang.	Information
	19. I am satisfied with the overall cleanliness and hygiene of Lukang.	Environment
	20. Visiting Lukang allows me to feel relaxed both physically and mentally, and I am satisfied.	Emotion
	21. I would recommend others to visit Lukang.	Recommendation
	22. Compared to other tourist attractions, I would prioritize choosing Lukang.	Revisit
	23. I would visit Lukang for tourism again.	Revisit
	24. I will always pay attention to the event information in Lukang in order to visit.	Revisit
	25. I am willing to share my visit to Lukang on social media.	Recommendation
	26. I will share my experience of visiting Lukang with family and friends.	Recommendation

4. Findings and Discussion

This study distributed a total of 250 questionnaires, deducted 49 invalid ones, and obtained 211 valid questionnaires, resulting in an effective response rate of 84.4%. Among all the effective responses, 43.1 % (91) are males, and most of the respondents aged between 51-60 years old (29.9%), followed by 41-50 (20.9%) and 31-40 years old (20.4%). More than 70% of the respondents are residents in central Taiwan (73.9%), and most of the respondents (34.6%) have monthly income level ranging between NT 30,000~50,000 (USD 900~1500), followed by the participants (28.4%) with income level more than 80,000 (USD 2400).

This study employed simple regression analysis to examine the impact of experiential marketing on tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. The results were illustrated in Table 2.

The linear regression analysis results showed that tourists' experience in historical & cultural landmarks is the most important predictor of tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. This finding echoes the characteristic of Lukang focusing on cultural heritage as its main tourism attraction. Furthermore, the results also demonstrated that the experience of Tourist Tricycles is the second most important factor influencing both tourism satisfaction and revisit intention. This highlights that the unique tricycle tours developed in Lukang due to its distinctive street environment are one of the key factors influencing tourists' experiences. Another interesting finding is that the local delicacies showed significant influence on revisit intention, but no significant impact on tourists' satisfaction was revealed. This demonstrated that local cuisine, which tourists must try, is a key factor in attracting them to revisit. Its influence is even greater than that of the tricycle tours experience, reflecting the unique appeal of many famous delicacies in Lukang, such as noodles, mochi, meatballs, and pastries.

Table 2: Regression Analysis Result

Predictors	Dependent Variables		
	Tourists' Satisfaction	Revisit intention	
Experiential Marketing-- Historical & Cultural Landmarks	0.590***	0.399***	--
Experiential Marketing--Local Delicacies	0.102	0.261***	--
Experiential Marketing--Tourist Tricycles	0.132*	0.242***	--

Tourists' Satisfaction	--	--	0.734***
Adjusted-R ²	0.576	0.640	0.537
F	96.268***	125.331***	244.421***

*p<0.05; *** p<0.001

5. Conclusion and Further Research

The results indicated that two of the three dimensions of experiential marketing, namely cultural heritage and tricycle tours, are positively correlated with tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, experiential marketing as a whole can predict tourist satisfaction. According to the path analysis, cultural heritage and trishaw tours have predictive effects on tourist satisfaction, whereas local delicacies do not. Based on these results, the study suggests that providing diverse marketing experiences locally can enhance tourist satisfaction in visiting Lukang. The long-standing cultural heritage of Lukang serves as its main tourist attraction, with tourists primarily visiting for its cultural heritage. Trishaw tours can also predict tourist satisfaction, indicating that marketing experiences involving trishaw tours can enhance tourist satisfaction, promoting repeat tourism. However, local delicacies do not significantly predict tourist satisfaction, contrary to the researcher's expectations. However, they are highly correlated. The researcher believes that satisfaction in this aspect includes factors such as cleanliness, accessibility of information, and overall satisfaction. The attractiveness or preference for local delicacies may not predict satisfaction with cleanliness, information accessibility, and convenience of public facilities, leading to the inability of local delicacies to predict tourist satisfaction in this study.

Furthermore, the research results also indicate that the three dimensions of experiential marketing, namely cultural heritage, local delicacies, and tricycle tours, are positively correlated with revisit intention. Experiential marketing as a whole can predict revisit intention, and according to path analysis, cultural heritage, local delicacies, and trishaw tours have predictive effects on revisit intention. Based on this, the study suggests that diverse marketing experiences contribute to increasing tourists' willingness to revisit Lukang and recommend Lukang tourism. The services related to Lukang's cultural heritage, local delicacies, and trishaw tours can all encourage tourists to revisit Lukang and share or recommend their travel experiences to others. This result prompts us to consider the future direction of the tourism industry, specifically how to plan travel itineraries that integrate these three aspects to enhance tourists' willingness to revisit. This will elevate the operational efficiency of Lukang's tourism industry to a higher level and propel Lukang tourism towards internationalization.

Lastly, the research findings also indicate a positive correlation between tourism satisfaction and revisit intention, and according to path analysis, tourism satisfaction has a predictive effect on revisit intention. This result aligns with previous research, where higher tourism satisfaction corresponds to a greater willingness among tourists to revisit or recommend their tourism experience. Although in this study, tourism satisfaction in Lukang regarding cleanliness, information accessibility, and public facilities was relatively low, overall, most tourists perceived their tourism experience in Lukang positively, allowing them to feel relaxed. This suggests that there is room for improvement in Lukang's tourism administrative services, while also highlighting Lukang's excellent tourism reputation, which is a key factor attracting a large number of tourists year after year.

Based on the above research results, this study proposes three ideas for the Lukang tourist tricycle industry. Firstly, regarding promotional methods, it is evident from the research findings that the experience of riding the tourist tricycle can enhance tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention. However, the sample in this study consisted mostly of older individuals (41.3% aged over 50, with 45.5% earning over 50,000), while younger tourists showed lower satisfaction levels. To attract younger visitors or those with average incomes, it is necessary to enhance the appeal. For younger tourists, the author suggests utilizing influencer marketing through platforms like TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube to increase the visibility of Lukang tourism, encouraging young tourists to try riding the tourist tricycle. For the general public, collaboration with surrounding businesses could be considered, offering discount coupons to encourage spending among average-income individuals.

Secondly, the age range of tourist tricycle drivers is relatively high. According to a literature review on the management strategies of Japanese rickshaws, Japan employs fixed salaries and comprehensive employee

training. However, Lukang's tourist tricycle drivers are mostly part-time and lack training, resulting in varying levels of tour guide capabilities. Given that Taiwan's tourist volume may not sustain the economic scale of the entire tricycle operation, the author suggests that each tourist tricycle operator should focus on enhancing the tour guide capabilities of their employees. This could involve offering higher bonuses to employees with tour guide capabilities, with senior staff serving as mentor trainers to train less experienced or poorly skilled employees. Additionally, to recruit younger individuals, companies could collaborate with tourism departments of universities and local hotels to provide internship opportunities and generous scholarships. These individuals could work as tourist tricycle drivers for the company while also serving as hotel staff. Exceptional interns could be hired as regular employees in the future, providing fixed salaries and business bonuses, thus making the future of tourist tricycle drivers younger and reducing the age gap.

Finally, the author believes that due to the limited Taiwan market, it is necessary to internationalize the tourism industry in Lukang. Similar to the uniqueness of Japanese rickshaws, the author suggests that the appearance of the tricycles of each company should incorporate more elements of Changhua's local characteristics to establish the uniqueness of the products. Additionally, drawing from the experience of Japanese kimono tours, the author also believes that the design of qipao or ancient costume experience tours is an important aspect. Costumes should not only serve as props for taking pictures but should also be integrated into local characteristics and culture to provide tourists with a deeper cultural immersion.

From the results of this study, it is evident that visiting Lukang can make tourists satisfied, and there is a high willingness to revisit Lukang. Furthermore, the experience of riding the tourist tricycle can enhance tourist satisfaction and the intention to revisit. Therefore, local governments should pay attention to the development of tourist tricycles. Regarding Lukang's tourism satisfaction, satisfaction with environmental cleanliness, information convenience, and public facilities is relatively low, which is related to the design of Lukang tourism by the local government. Lukang is currently divided into two tourist service centers, with the Southern District Tourist Service Center located at the Wenwu Temple, which has only 53 Google reviews. Many tourists find it too hidden and are unaware of the location of the tourist service center. In contrast, the Northern District Tourist Service Center has more reviews, totaling 731. This indicates that people are only aware of the location and services of the Northern District Tourist Service Center but not the Southern District Tourist Service Center. Therefore, the lack of information promotion by the government makes it difficult for tourists to obtain tourism information. The author suggests that in terms of information convenience, the Southern District Tourist Service Center should be as prominent as the Northern District Tourist Service Center, with a dedicated building to facilitate tourists in finding necessary information.

Furthermore, Lukang's limited space and the addition of tourist tricycles make traffic even more chaotic, especially on holidays, with pedestrians, motorcycles, and cars vying for space. According to descriptions from senior employees of the company, the biggest challenge for tourist tricycles in Lukang is the difficulty in finding parking spots. Many well-known tourist attractions, such as the Guihua Lane Art Village, the Temple of Mazu, and the Touching Breast Lane, have no nearby parking spaces. When tourists get off to visit, tricycle drivers have to stay in their vehicles to avoid being fined by the police. Parking near businesses or residences may also lead to disputes. Therefore, the author suggests that local governments should consider how to arrange the routes and parking locations for these tricycles, providing standards for operators to follow, avoiding conflicts between operators and communities, and reducing the situation where tricycle operators solicit customers arbitrarily. Additionally, Lukang becomes extremely congested on holidays, with parking spaces in high demand. The bustling areas of the town are particularly congested with pedestrians and vehicles. The author suggests that Lukang's pedestrian areas should be expanded or reorganized, not only near the Temple of Mazu but also connecting segments from the Temple of Mazu to the Longshan Temple, providing tourists with a more comfortable experience.

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