

A STUDY ON HOLISTIC CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN CHINA'S RELATED
HOTEL AND RESORTS

FAIZAN ALI

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Resort hotels have sprung up all over China in recent years providing customers with pleasurable and memorable experiences. The challenge to creating these consumer experiences is the proper identification of specific characteristics that influence experiences and gaining better understanding of how these experiences impact customers' perceptions, emotions and behavior. To this end, this study intends to develop a model that identifies antecedents and consequences of consumer experiences in Chinese resort hotels. To facilitate this research objective, a model was presented which propose that advertising efforts and service performance of resort hotels are antecedents of consumer experiences whereas customers' perceived value, consumption emotions, satisfaction and behavioral intentions are its consequences. This proposed holistic model of customer experience includes 11 hypotheses and is based on Stimulus – Organism – Response (S-O-R) model, Information Theory and Services Theatre Model. A scale was also developed to operationalize the construct of service performance. To initiate this research, a survey approach was taken. A total of 1570 questionnaires were distributed within 11 resort hotels across 5 cities in China and 900 of them were returned back. Partial least squares based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the collected data. Overall, the results indicated that the proposed holistic model of customer experience is a parsimonious model with good predictive ability. The results also show that collected data fits the proposed model well with a support for all the 11 proposed hypotheses. Given that the experience of customers at resort hotel plays a significant role in affecting their emotions, perceptions and behavior, resort hotels need not only to put efforts into improving their service performance and advertising efforts, but also to understand and carefully manage the overall resort hotel experience. Overall, this study proposed and tested a holistic model of customer experience which does not only have a theoretical significance but also enhances understanding of customer experiences in resort hotels, their antecedents and consequences.

ABSTRAK

Hotel-hotel peranginan telah berkembang pesat di seluruh China sejak akhir-akhir ini dengan menyediakan pengalaman yang mengasyikkan dan kenangan manis yang sukar dilupakan. Cabaran dalam mencipta pengalaman kepada pelanggan adalah melalui penelitian dalam mengenalpastikan kesan pengalaman ini terhadap persepsi pelanggan, emosi dan tingkah laku. Bagi tujuan tersebut, kajian ini bercadang untuk membangunkan sebuah kerangka model yang menentu dan menguji elemen utama serta kesan daripada pengalaman pelanggan hotel peranginan yang terletak di China. Bagi mencapai objektif kajian, model ini mengusulkan bahawa usaha pengiklanan dan prestasi perkhidmatan di hotel-hotel peranginan merupakan elemen utama kepada pengalaman pengguna manakala nilai yang diterima pelanggan, emosi penggunaan, kepuasan dan tingkah laku niat adalah kesan yang terhasil dalam analisa hubungan. Cadangan model pengalaman pelanggan yang bersifat holistik ini merangkumi 11 hipotesis dan berdasarkan kepada model S-O-R, Teori Informasi dan Model Perkhidmatan dalam perspektif teater (Service Theatre Model). Skala pengukuran telah dibangunkan untuk mengendalikan elemen prestasi perkhidmatan. Sebagai inisiatif, kajian berbentuk tinjauan telah dilaksanakan. Sebanyak 900 borang soal selidik telah diedarkan di 11 hotel peranginan merangkumi 5 buah bandar di China. Penganalisaan hubungan variabel yang kompleks menggunakan Partial Least Square berdasarkan Structural Equation Model untuk analisis dapatan data. Secara keseluruhan, keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa model holistik pengalaman pelanggan ini adalah model yang menghasilkan nilai taksiran yang seragam dengan keupayaan jangkaan yang baik. Hasil keputusan ini juga menunjukkan data yang diperolehi memenuhi kesesuaian model dan jangkaan teori dengan disokong oleh kesemua 11 hipotesis yang telah dicadangkan. Memandangkan pengalaman pelanggan di hotel peranginan memainkan peranan penting dalam memberi kesan kepada emosi, persepsi dan tingkah laku pelanggan, maka hotel peranginan bukan sahaja perlu berusaha mempertingkatkan prestasi perkhidmatan dan usaha pengiklanan, malahan juga perlu memahami dan mengendalikan keseluruhan pengalaman di hotel peranginan dengan baik. Secara keseluruhan, kajian ini telah mengusulkan dan menguji model holistik pengalaman pelanggan dimana ianya bukan sahaja mempunyai sumbangan yang signifikan secara teori malahan membantu pemahaman yang lebih mendalam terhadap pengalaman pelanggan di hotel peranginan, elemen-elemen utama serta kesannya.