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The Impact of Bed and Breakfast Atmosphere, Customer Experience, and Customer Value on Customer Voluntary Performance: A Survey in Taiwan

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This study aimed to explore the relationship between bed and breakfast (B&B) atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance. A survey targeted at B&B lodgers in Taiwan was launched and a theoretical hypothesis model was examined using confirmatory factor analysis, reliability analysis, and structural equation modeling. The research results showed that the B&B atmosphere had a positive influence on customer experience and customer value. Furthermore, customer experience was positively correlated with customer value and customer voluntary performance. Finally, some strategic suggestions on the operation and management of B&B enterprises were provided in this paper.

Key words: atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, customer voluntary performance, structural equation modeling

Introduction

Mehrabian and Russell (1974) put forward a model that claims that humans will show effective responses upon receiving a stimulus from the environment, the responses being either approach or avoidance; this is called the M–R model for short. Many scholars make use of this model to ascertain whether the

atmosphere created by a store will arouse perceived affective value on the part of the customers and further influence their purchase decisions (e.g. Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolyn, & Nesdale, 1994). In addition, the literature shows that the store atmosphere will influence customers' perceived quality (Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994; Kim & Moon, 2009), perceived impression of the store (Baker et al.,

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1994; Hu & Jasper, 2006), customer satisfaction (Ha & Jang, 2010; Sulek & Hensley, 2004), purchase intention (Chebat & Michon, 2003; Mattila & Wirtz, 2001), and after-purchase intention (Liu & Jang, 2009; Ryu & Jang, 2007). Therefore, creating a satisfactory bed and breakfast (B&B) atmosphere and providing a nice environment for guests is critical for B&Bs. This will allow them to establish market segments and increase their competitiveness.

In recent years, many researchers and managers have focused on studying and practicing the dimension and concept of customer experience (Grewal, Levy, & Kumar, 2009; Harris, Harris, & Baron, 2003; Högström, Rosner, & Gustafsson, 2010). In addition, for the tourism industry, customer value is an important tool for differentiation, as well as the key to maintaining a competitive advantage (Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez, & Moliner, 2006). For sightseeing tourists, customer value provides direct feelings. Thus, innovation in customer value has become a necessity and an important resource for creating differentiation. Bettencourt (1997) states that customer voluntary performance is when customers have a good relationship with the company and are willing to contribute to the improvement of its service quality and efficiency, playing different roles that are beneficial to the enterprise. Hence, customer voluntary performance can be regarded as an indicator of the quality of the customer–enterprise relationship. When customers tend to be dependent upon the enterprise, they are more inclined to offer suggestions to the enterprise for reference and to participate further in service delivery.

In a competitive market, a B&B should emphasize products, services, and customer satisfaction. Consequently, whether an enterprise can create a surprising experiential situ-

ation that meets the B&B lodger's actual needs and desires constitutes a valuable research topic. Based on the above, in recent years, although some studies have explored the atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance, most are individual studies instead of engaging in a systematic exploration on the overall relationship, and many of them do not focus on the B&B industry. Hence, the research findings are not suitable for the B&B industry and cannot serve as a reference for B&B planning and management decision-making. This study thus became urgently required. Since B&Bs are important for the development of local tourism industries, this study explored the effect of B&B atmosphere, customer experience, and customer value on customer voluntary performance, using a questionnaire survey and structural equation modeling as research methods. Furthermore, this study conducted an in-depth research by investigating Taiwan's B&B industry in relation to how the B&B atmosphere and customer experience exert an influence on customer voluntary performance through the mediating effect of customer value. In addition, there was discussion on whether the B&B atmosphere and customer experience show significant differences in their influence on customer voluntary performance with the mediating effect of customer value. Finally, based on the empirical findings, this research provided some specific and practical suggestions to B&B management as a reference for related decision-making.

Literature Review

B&B Atmosphere

A store's atmosphere is a very important clue for purchasers (Oh, Fiorito, Cho, & Hofacker,

2008). The research by Babin, Darden, and Griffin (1994) suggested that a customer's good mood amid a pleasant atmosphere had a significant influence on perceived value. Therefore, the creation of a store's ambience should aim to arouse positive feelings in customers, thereby enhancing purchase and driving sales (Chebat & Michon, 2003). Donovan and Rossiter (1982) tested the M-R environmental psychology model and found that a store atmosphere of pleasure and arousal caused customers to stay longer and increase their purchase intentions and interaction with the salespersons. Based on the comprehensive literature review results on store atmosphere and B&B consumption, this paper defined B&B atmosphere as follows: the B&B atmosphere is the design of the physical consumption environment in such a way as to arouse customers' perception of affective value.

Servicescapes play an important role in many service organizations (e.g. hotels, restaurants, and hospitals) in that they provide a first impression, before customers have a chance to interact with service employees (Lin, 2004). Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) assessed the effect of consumers' perceptions of atmospherics on their satisfaction and re-patronage intention levels in leisure service settings. Ryu and Jang (2007) evidenced the impacts of dining environments on intentions through emotions. Ha and Jang (2010) used interior design, music, mood, layout, and facility esthetics as measures of restaurant atmospherics. Bitner (1992) classified store atmosphere into three components – ambient conditions, space and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artifacts. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) put forward the three constructs of pleasure, arousal, and dominance, which are abbreviated to PAD. Many scholars engaged in research related to environmental

psychology find that the PAD classification of moods is feasible (Baker, Michael, & Dhruv, 1992). However, in many empirical studies, the constructs used for measuring mood do not include the dominance dimension. This is because, as Russell (1979) stated, the two dimensions composed of pleasure and arousal are adequate to reflect customers' emotions upon receiving a stimulus from the environment. As a result, this study selected B&B atmosphere as the key research variable and explored its influence on customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance. As can be seen from the above literature discussion, many researchers focus on dimensions such as vision, hearing, smell, and touch. However, in this case, the characteristics of the B&B industry should be taken into consideration. This research utilized Donovan and Rossiter's (1982) integrated exploration of store atmosphere and uses pleasure and arousal as the two basic dimensions for measuring B&B atmosphere in the B&B industry.

Customer Experience

Creating an excellent customer experience is an important goal for modern retailers, and is also the battlefield for future competition among enterprises and an important research topic (Harris et al., 2003). For the tourism industry, experiences should leave customers with an unforgettable beautiful memory and constitute the core value of traveling. Schmitt (1999) proposed the concept of strategic experiential modules (SEMs) which can be used by managers to create different types of customer experiences. These divide customers' experiential feelings into sensory experiences, affective experiences, creative cognitive experiences, physical experiences, lifestyles,

and social-identity experiences. Puccinelli et al. (2009) listed seven factors that might influence customer experience, which consist of: (1) goals, schemas, and information processing; (2) memory; (3) involvement; (4) attitudes; (5) affect; (6) atmospheric; and (7) consumer attributions and choices. There has been a wide discussion on customer experience in the leisure and tourism industry. The five types of customer experiences put forward by Schmitt (1999) differ from each other in terms of their importance and can be employed as the basis for an experience design. This study focused on customers' experiences of B&Bs and explored the relationships between B&B atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance. Differences in customer involvement lead to differences between the five types of customer experiences. Namely, the sensory experiences provided by the B&B atmosphere, the affective experiences provided by considerate service, the creative cognitive experiences provided by relevant activities and products, physical experiences, and social-identity experiences. Following the above literature review, this research used the concept of experiential marketing put forward by Schmitt (1999) as the basis and the five experiences of the SEMs as the dimensions for studying customer experience.

Customer Value

Customer value is critical for customers' actual behavior and is the important antecedent of purchase decision-making (Sivaramakrishnan & Manchanda, 2003). Exploring customer-based value has become a key factor in raising customer repurchase intentions and maintaining a competitive advantage

(Oh, 1999; Oh & Parks, 1997). The concept of customer value changes slightly as the research content and background varies. Besides, customer value is not limited to the functionality, efficiency, or price of the product; it also consists of customers' responses to purchasing experiences (Bloch, Sherrell, & Ridgway, 1986). Customer lifetime value is associated with customer value. Discovering and satisfying customer value is an important concept of modern business operation. Customer lifetime value means that the enterprises should avoid having the perspective of gaining short-term profit from customers, and should instead consider obtaining profits by maintaining lifelong relationships with customers and keeping customers with a high profit rate. Rust, Lemon, and Zeithaml (2004) suggest that customer equity is the total sum of current customers and potential lifetime value. When managers treat enhancement of customer equity as an operational goal, customers will be a priority for strategic thinking. The focus of such strategy will thus turn from product management to customer management. The managers will plan products and services needed by customers using a customer orientation (Blattberg & Deighton, 1996; Rust et al., 2004). Hanssens, Thorpe, and Finkbeiner (2008) also suggest that enterprises which practice customer equity must be customer-oriented and focus on long-term profits to expand customer lifetime value. Babin et al. (1994) classified customer value into two categories – utilitarian value and hedonic value. Utilitarian value is the overall assessment of utilitarian value plus the dimensions of saving money, saving time, service, and product selection. Hedonic value represents entertainment, escape from reality, visionary attraction, and interaction during a purchase. This research used Babin et al.'s (1994) concept of customer value and

its two dimensions to measure customer value in the B&B industry.

Customer Voluntary Performance

Customers play the role of both consumers and producers in their contact with services. If a long-term mutually beneficial relationship is established between the enterprise and the customer, the customer will perform many cooperative, innovative, and voluntary deeds (Bettencourt, 1997). Customers may even voluntarily explain to others the merits of an enterprise and make a recommendation (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Bettencourt (1997) divided customer voluntary performance into loyalty, cooperation, and participation. Loyalty in this scenario refers to customers' faithfulness to the enterprise and the situation which transcends personal interests and has the enterprise's interests in mind when acting. These aspects are measured by repeat purchases or repurchase intentions (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1994). Morgan and Hunt (1994) point out that cooperation comes from the customer's own will and promotes the success of relationship marketing. The last dimension, participation, means that customers serve as the consultants of the enterprise. Cermak, File, and Prince (1994) believed that customer participation is devotion both in the biological sense and in the intellectual sense. Customer participation also helps the firms establish more complete measures (Johnson & Rapp, 2010). Drawing from social response theory and the principle of reciprocity, when customers trust the enterprises, their relationship will be enhanced. Customers will engage in customer voluntary performance (such as the enhancement of voluntary information disclosure for enterprises) (Zimmer, Arsal, Al-

Marzouq, Moore, & Grover; 2010). Gruen, Summers, and Acito (2000) suggest that customer voluntary performance is shown in maintenance, participation, and co-production. Maintenance refers to customers treating the enterprise as a priority when repurchasing products. Co-production refers to customers' continuous positive feedback. Although the perspectives are different, this dimension is similar to loyalty and cooperation. Yi, Natarajan, and Gong (2011) found that customers' voluntary behavior (e.g. customer participation and citizenship behavior) positively influences employee performance, satisfaction and commitment, and turnover intention.

Relationship Between B&B Atmosphere and Customer Experience

As previously discussed, customers' decisions are influenced by the store atmosphere during the consumption process (Baker et al., 1992). In an environment with a nice atmosphere, a customer's good mood will evidently have an influence on their perceived value, so the creation of a store's atmosphere should mainly aim to arouse positive emotions in customers and drive them to make purchases (Babin et al., 1994). Donovan and Rossiter (1982) considered that a store atmosphere that provides pleasure and arousal will prompt customers to stay longer in the store and raise their intentions to interact with the salespersons. Studies confirm that a store's atmosphere is directly correlated with customers' impressions of the store and their purchase intentions (Grewal, Krishnan, Baker, & Borin, 1998; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007). Liu and Jang's (2009) study on restaurants indicated that a good dining atmosphere can arouse positive emotions in customers, and Puccinelli et al. (2009) stated that atmosphere

is one of the factors that influence customer experience. Based on the above opinions of different scholars, the author puts forward the following hypothesis:

H1: B&B atmosphere has a significant positive influence on customer experience.

Relationship Between B&B Atmosphere and Customer Value

Babin and Attaway (2000) believed that creating a nice store atmosphere arouses positive emotions in consumers, creates customer value, and leads to sustainable purchasing. Baker et al. (1992) also found that when consumers prefer the design of the store, they have a higher perceived opinion of the quality of the goods. Yüksel and Yüksel (2007) proposed that consumer' emotions influence customer value, among which pleasure positively affects hedonic value and utilitarian value. Liu and Jang's (2009) study on restaurants showed that the dining atmosphere has a significant positive influence on customer perceived value. Based on the views of the above-mentioned scholars, this study puts forward hypothesis 2.

H2: B&B atmosphere has a significant positive influence on customer value.

Relationship Between Customer Experience and Customer Value

Babin et al. (1994) pointed out in their research on retail store environments that emotions ranking higher on the pleasure or arousal scale indicated a higher level of customer experience and high utilitarian and hedonic value. The concept of sensory experience put forward by Schmitt (1999) stressed

the importance of creating visionary, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory sensations to provide customers with a variety of sensory experiences. This allows customers to feel the differentiation of the company and its products and gives customers stimuli to increase the added value of a product, i.e. to create hedonic value. Babin, Lee, Kim, and Griffin (2005) pointed out in their research on restaurant customers that the emotions experienced by customers are influenced by the restaurant environment whilst dining and that positive emotions aroused by the environment exert positive influences on utilitarian and hedonic value. Han and Back (2007) found through research that customer experience influences customer satisfaction. Chen and Chen's (2010) research on heritage tourism found that the quality of the experience influenced perceived value. Based on the opinions of the above-mentioned scholars, the paper puts forward hypothesis 3:

H3: Customer experience has a significant positive influence on customer value.

Relationship Between Customer Value and Customer Voluntary Performance

For customers, obtaining value is their final goal and also a pivotal part of a successful transaction (Patterson & Spreng, 1997). Parasuraman and Grewal (2000) pointed out that the higher the customers' perceived value is, the more loyal they will be. Many researchers confirm that when customers perceive that the purchase will yield higher profits than costs, their chances of making purchases increases accordingly and they exhibit loyal intentions toward the service provider (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990; Högström et al., 2010). Customers' perceived value is an important

barometer of repurchase intention (Petrick, Backman, & Bixler, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988). Liu and Jang's (2009) research on restaurants suggested that customer perceived value has a direct influence on after-purchase intention. Chen and Chen's (2010) research on heritage tourism found that perceived value influenced intention. Based on the opinions of the above-mentioned scholars, the paper puts forward hypothesis 4:

H4: Customer value has a significant influence on customer voluntary performance.

Method

Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review and with the research topic as the starting point, this research used B&B atmosphere and customer experience as the antecedent variables and explored the impact of the two constructs, customer experience and customer value, on customer voluntary performance via the mediating effect of customer value. The research framework of this paper is shown in Figure 1. The constructs used in this paper included B&B atmosphere, customer value,

customer experience, and customer voluntary performance. Based on the literature review, the operational definitions of the four constructs are given here. The research used the two dimensions of store atmosphere, put forward by Donovan and Rossiter (1982), for measuring B&B atmosphere (Table 1). As regards the concept of customer experience, the research borrowed Schmitt's (1999) idea and used sensory experiences, affective experiences, creative cognitive experiences, physical experiences (behaviors and lifestyles), and social-identity experiences as the variables for measuring customer experience (Table 2). As for customer value, the research used the two dimensions of utilitarian value and hedonic value put forward by Babin et al. (1994) (Table 3). Finally, it used the three dimensions of loyalty, cooperation, and participation put forward by Bettencourt (1997) as the variables for measuring customer voluntary performance (Table 4).

Data Collection

The research used B&B tourists as the study population and conducted a survey through questionnaire. Considering the respondents' capacity to complete the questionnaire, the

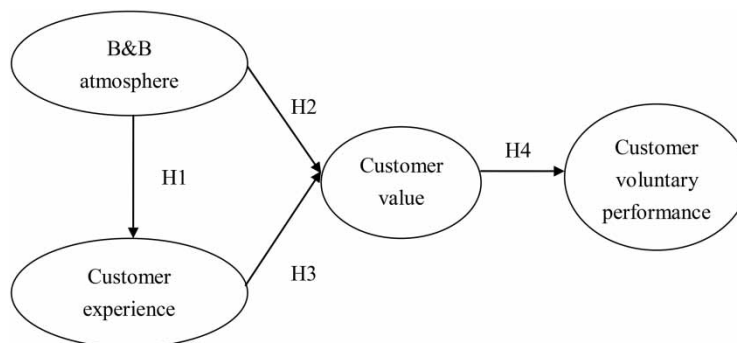


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework.

Table 1 Operational Definitions for B&B Atmosphere and the Measurement Items

Constructs	Operational definition	Measurement items
Pleasure	Customer perceived atmosphere related to happiness and satisfaction	I think the B&B makes people feel: 1. Depressed ↔ contented 2. Unhappy ↔ happy 3. Unsatisfied ↔ satisfied 4. Annoyed ↔ pleased 5. Bored ↔ interested 6. Despairing ↔ hopeful
Arousal	Customer perceived B&B atmosphere related to stimulus and excitement	1. Stimulated ↔ relaxed 2. Excited ↔ calm 3. Unaroused ↔ aroused 4. Sluggish ↔ frenzied

subjects were limited to consumers over 20 years old. In order to test the comprehensiveness and validity of the questionnaire, experts and scholars in related fields were called upon first to examine the content of the questionnaire. A pretest was then conducted among dozens of tourists boarding at B&Bs. Regarding the choice of samples, the survey used B&B lodgers as the subjects and since the sample had a limited population, the study used the convenience sampling method. Taking into consideration the research cost and timeliness, the study was carried out in the Hsinchu area, where the university in which the author works is located. As the sampling population, the study selected residents in the Hsinchu area who had lodged at a Taiwanese B&B (not restricted to the Hsinchu area) during the last three months. A pretest was conducted in January 2011 and then the formal survey took place in March 2011. The author's students from the division of extension education at the university (all of them live in the Hsinchu area and

have a full-time day job) distributed the questionnaires to their relatives, friends, and colleagues who also live in the Hsinchu area. The questionnaires were then collected. The students were asked to try their best to strike a balance of ratio across gender, age, profession, etc. when distributing the questionnaires. However, according to the survey results, fewer than half of the samples lived in Hsinchu, while more than half of them were colleagues or relatives living in other areas.

In this study, 250 questionnaires were distributed. With the assistance of the students who distributed the questionnaires, a total of 235 questionnaires were collected, achieving a return rate of 94%. Among them, 19 copies were either incomplete or contained abnormal answers (e.g. the same value given to all the items). Therefore, altogether there were 216 valid questionnaires, an effective response rate of 86.4%. Regarding the sample structure, female respondents accounted for 56%, slightly more than

Table 2 Operational Definitions for Customer Experience and the Measurement Items

Constructs	Operational definition	Measurement items
Sensory experiences	Stimulate tourists by arousing their visionary, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory sensations	1. The B&B tries to engage my senses 2. The B&B is perceptually interesting
Affective experiences	Arouse customers' active participation by touching their inner feelings and emotions	1. The B&B tries to put me in a certain mood 2. The B&B makes me respond in an emotional manner
Creative cognitive experiences	Encourage customers to change their lifestyles and influence their body	1. The B&B tries to intrigue me 2. The B&B stimulates my curiosity
Physical experiences and lifestyles	Lead people to the focused thinking mode and divergent thinking mode	1. The B&B tries to make me think about my lifestyle 2. The B&B reminds me of activities I can do
Social-identity experiences	Relate customers to others or social culture and let them exert an influence on potential communities	1. The B&B tries to get me to think about relationships 2. I can relate to other people through this B&B

Table 3 Operational Definitions for Customer Value and the Measurement Items

Constructs	Operational definition	Measurement items
Utilitarian value	Products and services received attain a standard in one's mind	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I accomplished just what I wanted to on this trip 2. I found just the item(s) I was looking for through this B&B 3. I feel this B&B was successful 4. I feel really smart about this trip
Hedonic value	Individual comment on the trustworthiness of the purchasing experience and the enjoyment involved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This B&B was truly a joy 2. Compared to other things I could have done, the time spent at the B&B was truly enjoyable 3. This B&B truly felt like an escape 4. I enjoyed this B&B for its own sake, not just for the items I may have purchased 5. I continued to stay at this B&B, not because I had to, but I wanted to

Table 4 Operational Definitions for Customer Voluntary Performance and the Measurement Items

Constructs	Operational definition	Measurement items
Loyalty	Customers' loyalty to the enterprise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This B&B is the best choice for me 2. I will recommend this B&B to others 3. This B&B makes me willing to continue consumption in the future
Cooperation	Customers respect the enterprise and perform deeds beneficial to the enterprise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will cooperate with the enterprise as much as possible 2. I will try to treat the employees of this B&B as kindly as possible 3. I will carefully observe the policies and regulations of this B&B
Participation	Customers are likely to participate actively and become involved in the development of this B&B	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will make suggestions as to how to improve its services 2. I will offer suggestions to the B&B if I think of any methods to improve its services 3. I will let the B&B know if I come across any problems so that it might improve its services

males. The majority of the respondents belonged to the 18–25 age group, were of university-education level, and were unmarried. Concerning the channels for choosing a B&B, most of them turned to friends' recommendations and website introductions. As regards the items for measurement, the measurement scale for B&B atmosphere showed that pleasure was slightly higher than arousal, but both received positive feedback. The measurement scale for customer experience demonstrated that the average score for each factor showed little variance. As for customer value, hedonic value slightly overtook utilitarian value. Concerning customer voluntary performance, the average score of the three variables differed slightly from each other.

Results

Reliability and Validity

This study used Cronbach's α reliability coefficient, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) to measure the inner consistency of the questionnaire. It compared the reliability value of latent variables with items removed with that of the original latent variables to see whether the former was higher than the latter and to thereby decide whether to retain the original items or not. The results showed that Cronbach's α reliability coefficients (ranging from 0.742 to 0.965) of each measurement scale were higher than 0.7, the value recommended by Nunnally (1978). As far as composite reliability and AVE were concerned, the composite reliability value of all the dimensions exceeded 0.7 and the AVE values all came close to 0.5, so the internal consistency of all the measurement items of each measurement

scale were within an acceptable range. Regarding validity, the questionnaire was compiled based on integrations of relevant theories and with reference to the measurement scales used in prior literature and advice from scholars and practical experts in relevant fields. Thus, it covered the characteristics of each latent variable to be discussed, and the content validity was acceptable. Furthermore, the study used the confirmatory factor analysis model to assess the fitness value of the measurement scale for each construct in order to analyze the convergent validity and discriminant validity among these constructs. Concerning the convergent validity, this study's Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) all approached the ideal level of 0.9 proposed by Bagozzi and Yi (1988) and the root-mean-square residual (RMSR) of each construct was below or close to 0.05. In addition, the results showed that all the factor loadings in this study were of significance. The variance extraction value (AVE) resulting from the confirmatory factor analysis in the first phase of this study reached a level of 0.5. Additionally, the composite reliability and AVE value resulting from the confirmatory factor analysis in the second phase was above the average level, indicating that the internal consistency of each scale was acceptable. Therefore, the convergent validity of each measurement model was within a good range. Regarding the discriminant validity, according to Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) suggestions, first, the correlation coefficient of a pair of dimensions was limited to one, and then the chi-square test of independence was adopted to compare the chi-square value of this restrained model with the original model. If the chi-square value of the limited model was larger than that of the original measurement model and at a significant level, then it meant that discrimi-

minant validity would exist between these two dimensions. The results indicated that discriminant validity existed among the various dimensions.

Structural Equation Analysis

The study used the two-stage analysis suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first stage, Cronbach's α reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis of the research constructs were conducted and through the analysis of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity a stable measurement model was developed. In the second stage, a large number of items for measurement were reduced to a few measurement indicators, which were then analyzed using a path analysis structural equation model to examine whether the path coefficients between the variables were supported in order to test the hypotheses.

Development of the Overall Pattern

It can be seen from the previous analyses that the measurement models of all the constructs were stable, and the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of each dimension also reached an acceptable level. Consequently, at this stage, the study performed a structural equation modeling analysis. The variables for measuring B&B atmosphere fell into two dimensions, pleasure and arousal. The variables for measuring customer experience were divided into sensory experiences, affective experiences, creative cognitive experiences, physical experiences, lifestyles, and social-identity experiences, a total of five dimensions. The variables for measuring customer value fell into two dimen-

sions, utilitarian value and hedonic value, and those for voluntary performance consisted of the three dimensions of loyalty, cooperation, and participation. This study used AMOS 7 structural equation modeling software for the analysis and the results showed that the variables were significantly related and therefore appropriate for the structural equation modeling analysis.

Assessment of Theoretical Models

Concerning the assessment of models' goodness of fit, the three criteria suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988) were used; the preliminary fit criteria, the overall model fit, and the fit of the internal structure of the model. The analyses of each criterion are as follows:

- (1) *The preliminary fit criterion:* This criterion is used to detect series errors, and identify problems or input errors, etc. According to Bagozzi and Yi's (1988) recommendations, this criterion can be measured by three standards. First, the measurement error of the measurement indicator should not have a negative value. Second, the factor loading should be between 0.5 and 0.95 and should not come close to either value. Finally, there should not be a significant standard error. The analysis of the measurement model of the overall theory is shown in Table 5. The factor loadings of all the potential constructs' measurement indicators reached significant levels, and were above 0.5. There was no negative value for measurement errors, and no high standard error was found either. Therefore, the study's preliminary model fit should have reached an acceptable level.
- (2) *Overall model fit:* This criterion is used to assess the goodness of fit of the overall

model with the observed data. In accordance with Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black's (1998) recommendations, this research selected three indicators to measure the goodness of fit of the overall model with the observed data. The three indicators were the absolute fit measures, the incremental fit measures, and the parsimonious fit measures. The absolute fit measures are used to determine the extent to which the overall model can predict the

covariance or the correlation matrix and the indicators include the chi-square statistics, GFI, RMSR, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), etc. As Table 5 shows, the absolute fit indicators of the overall model were as follows: $\chi^2 = 124.938$ ($df = 50$), $GFI = 0.910$, $RMSR = 0.057$, $RMSEA = 0.083$, and $AGFI = 0.860$. Among these, GFI and RMSEA are within the acceptable range, RMSR is

Table 5 The Analysis of the Measurement Model of the Overall Theory

	Maximum likelihood parameter estimation			Composite reliability	AVE
	Standardized factor loading	Error variance			
B&B atmosphere				0.848	0.735
Pleasure	0.897**	0.469			
Arousal	0.962**	0.151			
Customer experience				0.840	0.518
Sensory experiences	0.795**	0.381			
Affective experiences	0.832**	0.307			
Creative cognitive experiences	0.824**	0.359			
Physical experiences and lifestyles	0.658**	0.650			
Social-identity experiences	0.568**	0.857			
Customer value				0.826	0.703
Utilitarian value	0.836**	0.338			
Hedonic value	0.864**	0.275			
Customer voluntary performance				0.876	0.703
Loyalty	0.880**	0.255			
Cooperation	0.865**	0.256			
Participation	0.794**	0.388			

Note: $\chi^2 = 124.938$, $df = 50$, $GFI = 0.910$, $RMSR = 0.057$, $RMSEA = 0.083$, $AGFI = 0.860$, $NFI = 0.930$, $CFI = 0.956$, $PNFI = 0.704$, $PGFI = 0.583$.

**Significant at $p < .001$.

slightly higher than the 0.05 standard, and AGFI is slightly lower than the 0.9 standard. The incremental fit measures are used to make a comparison between the theoretical model and the null model; the indicators include NFI, CFI, etc. As shown in Table 5, the incremental fit indicators of the overall theoretical model were as follows: NFI = 0.930 and CFI = 0.956, and both were within the acceptable range (NFI and CFI must be greater than 0.90, Hu & Bentler, 1999). The parsimonious fit measures are used to compare models with different estimated coefficients to determine the goodness of fit of each estimated coefficient and the indicators including PNFI and PGFI. As shown in Table 5, the parsimonious fit measures' indicators of this study's overall theoretical model were as follows: PNFI = 0.704 and PGFI = 0.583, both within the accepted range (>0.5, Mulaik et al., 1989). On the whole, the goodness of fit of this study's overall theoretical model is acceptable.

- (3) *Fit of the internal structure of the model:* This criterion is used to assess the significance level of the estimated parameters and the reliability of all the indicators and latent variables, etc. These can be determined by ascertaining whether the individual item reliability is above 0.7, the composite reliability of the latent variables is above 0.7, and the AVE of the latent variables is above the acceptable level of 0.5. The assessment of the composite reliability and AVE of latent variables is shown in Table 5. The composite reliability results for B&B atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance were 0.848, 0.840, 0.826, and 0.876, respectively. Additionally, the average variances extracted were 0.735, 0.518,

0.703, and 0.703, all of which were above the minimum acceptable level, so the goodness of fit of this model's internal structure was acceptable.

As shown by the measurement model analysis in Table 5, the measurement models included the analysis of four constructs, i.e. B&B atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance. Regarding the construct of the B&B atmosphere, it can be seen from the comparison of the factor loadings of all the dimensions that the arousal dimension ($\lambda = 0.962$) was the most important, followed by the pleasure dimension ($\lambda = 0.897$). These results showed that if a B&B wanted to enhance its customers' evaluation of its atmosphere, the two dimensions of arousal and pleasure were very important. Concerning the construct of customer experience, the most important items were the evaluation of affective experiences ($\lambda = 0.832$) and creative cognitive experiences ($\lambda = 0.824$), followed by sensory experiences ($\lambda = 0.795$). For the construct of customer value, the most important item was hedonic value ($\lambda = 0.864$). Utilitarian value ($\lambda = 0.836$) came in second. As for the construct of customer voluntary performance, the dimensions that received the highest comments were loyalty ($\lambda = 0.880$) and cooperation ($\lambda = 0.865$).

The influence between the constructs can be divided into three aspects: direct influence, indirect influence, and total influence. The total influence is the direct influence plus the indirect influence. According to Figure 2 and Table 6, the B&B atmosphere had no direct influence on customer voluntary performance. However, it had two paths to exert indirect influences. They were $\gamma_{21\beta 32}$ and $\gamma_{11\beta 21\beta 32}$, the values of each being 0.148

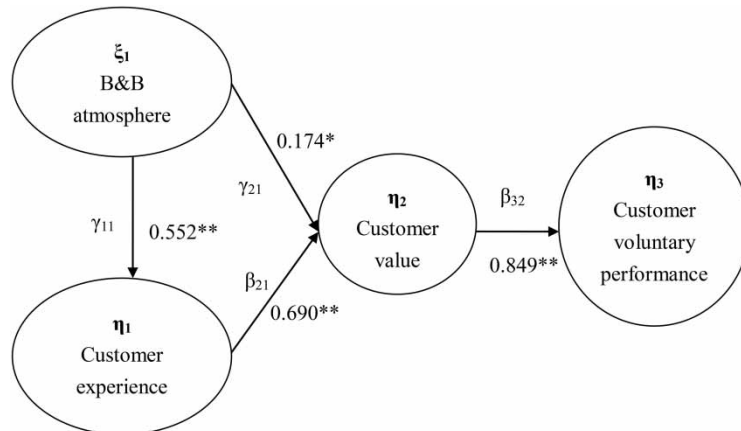


Figure 2 Structural Results of the Proposed Model.

Note: $\chi^2 = 124.938$, $df = 50$, $GFI = 0.910$, $RMSR = 0.057$, $RMSEA = 0.083$, $AGFI = 0.860$, $NFI = 0.930$, $CFI = 0.956$, $PNFI = 0.704$, $PGFI = 0.583$, $*p < .01$, $**p < .001$.

and 0.323, respectively, with the total influence being 0.471. Customer experience had no direct influence on customer voluntary performance. It had only one path for indirect influence, namely $\beta_{21}\beta_{32}$, its value being 0.589 (also the total influence). Customer value’s direct influence on customer voluntary performance was executed through path β_{32} , its value being 0.849 (also the total effect).

Judging from the total influence on customer voluntary performance, customer value was the highest, followed by B&B customer experience and customer voluntary performance. Furthermore, B&B atmosphere and customer experience must exert their influence on customer voluntary performance indirectly via customer value. It can be seen from Figure 2 that the overall pattern supports all the hypotheses.

Table 6 Analysis of the Influence of Each Construct on Customer Voluntary Performance

Influence constructs	Direct influence	Indirect influence			Total influence
		Customer experience	Customer value	Customer experience–customer value	
B&B atmosphere	–		0.148	0.323	0.471
Customer experience	–		0.589		0.589
Customer value	0.849				0.849

Conclusions

This study examined the relationship between B&B atmosphere, customer experience, customer value, and customer voluntary performance. The results of the study showed that the B&B atmosphere had a significant positive effect on customer experience and customer value. In addition, customer experience had a significant positive effect on customer value. Customer value also had a significant positive effect on customer voluntary performance. As a result, customers have a stronger sense of customer experience and customer value when the B&B atmosphere is better. Stronger senses of customer experience lead to a higher level of perception of customer value and, subsequently, influence customer voluntary performance. In other words, customers will be more loyal and willing to cooperate with and be involved in the B&Bs. Therefore, a good B&B atmosphere not only improves customer experience and customer value, but also stimulates customer voluntary performance. As a result, creating a good atmosphere is very important for B&B owners because a happy and encouraging atmosphere can improve customers' experiences and their perceptions of customer value, thus raising the possibility of their future consumption.

This study established a conceptual framework based on a review and exploration of the literature. The results of the analyses showed that customer value had the greatest influence on customer voluntary performance, followed by customer experience and B&B atmosphere. Consequently, the hypotheses developed in this study were all confirmed. First, hypothesis 1 was supported. This corresponded to the findings of Babin et al. (1994), Donovan and Rossiter (1982), and Grewal et al. (1998). Second, the research results confirmed that B&B atmosphere had a significant

positive effect on customer value. Therefore, hypothesis 2 of this study was supported. This was consistent with the findings of Babin and Attaway (2000), Babin et al. (1994), and Baker et al. (1992). Third, this study confirmed that customer value had a significant positive influence on customer experience. This was consistent with the findings of Babin et al. (1994, 2005) and Schmitt (1999). Finally, this study also confirmed that customer value had a significant positive influence on customer voluntary performance. Therefore, hypothesis 4 of this study was supported. This was consistent with the findings of Babin et al. (1994, 2005) and Baker et al. (1992).

Managerial Implications

This study results showed that B&B atmosphere had a positive influence on customer experience and customer value. Furthermore, customer experience was positively correlated with customer value and customer voluntary performance. Hence, how B&B managers find the unique advantages of B&B and apply them in operation and management has become an important issue. Overall, the results of this study have several implications. First, in the exploration of the overall model, the direct influence of customer experience on customer value was the greatest, followed by B&B atmosphere. It is apparent that B&B tourists attach more importance to customer experience than B&B atmosphere. As customers attach more importance to their leisure time, they set a higher level of requirements from B&Bs and their service. In operation, B&Bs differ greatly from big hotels. The operation of B&Bs emphasizes a home-like environment and service and combines it with cultural and natural tourist spots, environmental resources and activities to

make customers feel at home and, at the same time, enjoy traveling. Therefore, if tourists have a good experience during the consumption process, they are more likely to gain “delight in consumption”, and form a value judgment.

Second, the factor loadings of the dimensions composing customer experience, in descending order of importance, were: affective experiences, creative cognitive experiences, sensory experiences, physical experiences, lifestyles, and social-identity experiences, respectively. All the dimensions appeared to be rather important. Therefore, to maintain the provision of good experiences for tourists, attention should be paid to focusing on customers’ feelings and the interaction with tourists in order to create a unique experiential situation, thereby enhancing tourism enjoyment and maintaining good customer relations.

Third, it was therefore confirmed that B&B atmosphere and customer experience influenced and enhanced each other. Therefore, this study recommends that, in addition to providing a good atmosphere, B&B enterprises should also make a deep and thorough exploration of the “customer experience” issue. They should actively create and activate various experiential situations so that tourists acknowledge the B&B enterprise and acknowledge a differentiated value, thereby sharpening its competitive edge. This is because an enterprise’s competitive edge is derived not only from product innovation, the marketing mix, and price competition, but also from providing valuable experiences to customers (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Moreover, apart from the operation of the B&B, B&B owners should also think about how to cultivate their operational abilities, establish their own special B&B products, and create proper B&B features. This will help their ability to attract customers through commu-

nity and industrial organizations and to develop their B&B in line with local features.

Finally, the study also found that only customer value had a direct influence on customer voluntary performance. In terms of the total effect, the sequence was: customer value, customer experience, and B&B atmosphere. It can be seen that customer value had the greatest influence on customer voluntary performance. Therefore, to enhance the customer value of B&B enterprises, apart from continuing to promote hedonic demands, further and more in-depth activities can be held that target customers’ utilitarian demands, increasing the fun and real interests of a purchase and thereby enhancing their consumption intentions. The reason is that the higher the hedonic value of a purchase, the higher the customers’ intentions, and this is the same for utilitarian value (Babin et al., 2005). In addition, customers’ perceived value of the commodities in a transaction process and the utilitarian and hedonic values perceived during the purchase experience all have positive influences on customers’ purchase or patronizing intentions (Babin et al., 1994; Baker et al., 1992). Zeithaml (1988) contends that the perceived high value of products and services will lead to customers’ purchasing (Patterson & Spreng, 1997), thereby influencing customer voluntary performance. Therefore, it is important to understand B&B’s customers’ psychology, their social relationships, and their diversified needs, such as self-fulfillment.

With the coming of the service economy era and the rise of consumer consciousness, B&B competition has become severe. The managers must conduct self-review and reconstruct positive operational quality in order to obtain consumers and establish long-term competitive advantages. Positive atmosphere cognition will result in consumers’ positive emotion and enhance their experience. Customers will

thus stay longer and consume more goods and services, which will reinforce the firms' operational performance (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). Customer experience is the key factor to create customer value in the hospitality and tourism industry. B&B consumption and production often exist at the same time. Positive customer experience influences consumer behavior, feelings, and thoughts, and it affects customers' perceived value.

Limitations and Future Research

First, the research used B&B tourists as the subjects of empirical studies. Considering the research costs and timeliness, this study involved residents in the Hsinchu area in Taiwan who had lodged at a B&B in Taiwan during the last three months. Due to time and funding constraints, it was not possible to carry out a thorough investigation into all the consumers. However, consumers in different regions, influenced by different environments, may exhibit different consumption characteristics, and investigations into these consumers may produce different results. It is therefore suggested that future studies expand the research into other regions, or involve other industries, in order to explore the relationship among the variables further. Furthermore, as this study used data from a cross-sectional study as the empirical basis, it was only possible to observe the phenomenon at a certain point in time, and was not possible to know how the variables interacted with each other from a longitudinal perspective. As a result, this restrained the basis for causal inference. Therefore, it is suggested that future research should make a longitudinal study to collect empirical data if time and funds permit. Third, the questionnaire design of the study was based on theoretical foun-

dations, studies, and analyses, and the actual circumstances of the industry, and efforts were made to ensure the completeness and explanatory power of the questions. However, in order to stimulate respondents to complete the questionnaire, compromises were made in the wording and the number of questions. As a result, the questionnaire did not contain all the questions raised by the original scholar. Therefore, the objectiveness and comprehensiveness of the original questions were not reflected here. It is suggested that future researchers, while referring to the original scholars' scales for measurement, should draw on the principle of using a moderate number of items. Finally, the research used a single dimension for the empirical study in the discussion of customer value construct. It is suggested that future research could make inferences based on the division of two dimensions, utilitarian value and hedonic value, in order to look for more individual results. In addition, more constructs could be included, such as store image, brand image, service quality (Lin, Shiu, & Wu, 2012), and consumer emotions, in order to build a more comprehensive overall framework. Finally, an analysis and comparison could then be made with this research to look for more rational and effective empirical results.

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