The Impact of Food Quality on Experiential Value, Price Fairness, Water Park Image, Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intention in Context of Water Park

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of current study is to develop and estimate a proposed model that explains the potential relationships among food quality, experiential value, price fairness, image, satisfaction, and behavioral intention in context of water park. In addition, the study will verify how these factors link to each other. Results show that food quality is a significant antecedent of experience value, price fairness, water park image. Also, the experiential value and water park image influence on visitors' satisfaction. Last, the satisfaction is critical predictor of behavioral intention. These findings will contribute to understand the consumers' perception about water park, and how derives the customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. In sum, present study will serve insights for industry marketers and managers in water park segment.

Keywords: water park, food quality, experiential value, price fairness, water park image, satisfaction, behavioral intention

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago first water park, Caribbean Bay, opened in South Korea and it is becoming one of popular places for leisure activities. Korea National Statistical Office reported that around 40 water parks now operate in 2011, and the water park business steadily increasing and growing in the past years. In addition, previosu study informed that the average annual revenue of water parks business increased more than 40% compare to past decade[1]. Although water park industry is keep growing in South Korea, few studies have been conducted to find any significant elements that influence on customers in context of water park.

In previous studies, various key factors have been identified that directly impact on visitors' satisfaction from diverse studies such as tourism, foodservice, and other hospitality industry[2,3,4,5]. Identifying a critical factor that can influence profit and derive positive perception from customer becomes the most important work in both academic and industry filed. Therefore, water park sector also needs to find any significant elements that impact on future business to maximize revenue as well as improve customer preference.

In order to get higher evaluation of general experience, prior research emphasized the importance of food quality as an critical factor in various areas[3, 6,7,8]. For instance, Quan and Wang found that food is one of key factors that may contribute to lead positive experience and valuable memory among tourists[8]. In addition, food quality has been demonstrated the most important component in context

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of foodservice industry[9,10]. These studies identified that food quality is a critical predictor to lead positive satisfaction and behavioral intention, and directly connect to consumer perceptions of value[10,11,12]. Namely, the present study suggested that the food quality can be significant component for increasing perceived experience, value, perception, satisfaction as well as behavioral intention to recommend the water park or revisit same destination.

To date, however, previous studies just estimated simple relationships among antecedents, satisfaction, and loyalty in water park sector[1,13]. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of the this study is to identify the importance of food quality as a main antecedent, and to evaluate the relationships among food quality and other critical variables: price fairness, experiential value, water park image, satisfaction, and behavioral intention, in water park segment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food Quality

In previous research, food is estimated as an critical component in various service sector including foodservice and hospitality area since it is closely linked to important dependent variables such as satisfaction, loyalty, behavioral intention[3,6,7]. Prior researchers employed various element to measure the quality of food. Namkung & Jang used tastiness, menu variety, serving size, menu design, temperature for measuring the food quality in restaurant sector[9]. Not only foodservice area, but also the food has been considered as an important reason to decide a destination for tourists. For example, Quan & Wang reported that food experience is one of critical factors to improve satisfaction and recommend the place to other among tourists[8]. In addition, prior study demonstrated that food quality was essential antecedent of customer emotion and satisfaction as well as visitors' loyalty among festival participants[7]. In sum, the food quality has been considered a significant predictor that related to other critical variables such as perceived value, experience, satisfaction, and behavioral intention[11,12]. Nowadays, water park provide various service along

with playing facilities such as restaurants, cafe, theater, and so on. Therefore, this study proposed that the food quality may contribute to improve overall value, water park image, and satisfaction as perceived by water park visitors.

Experiential Value

Experience is an essential factor and it was influenced by consumers' various feelings through encountering diverse experiences[14,15,16]. In other words, people may make decisions when they purchase a product or service after considering the value based on their experiences such as pleasure, feeling, or overall quality[17,18]. Experience value represent the psychological aspect resulting from consumers[19], and it can be affected various physical characteristics such as food quality as well.

Experiential value consists of experience-based values and water park provide numerous experiences to improve visitors' experiences such as food quality, physical facilities, and interaction with employee[9, 20,21]. Also, all these elements are closely related to business success and improving positive experiences. Therefore, current study has been employed the experiential value as a significant factor that related physical element such as food quality, and emotional factor such as perceived price fairness, water park image, and satisfaction.

Price Fairness

In South Korea, many water park business keep growing and people are trying to visit better water park by comparing overall service including reasonable price. In previous study, price fairness has been defined as a customer's general assessment and associated emotions of whether the price is reasonable, acceptable, or justifiable by comparing selling price and the other comparative price[22]. In hospitality sector, perceived price has been recognized as a critical factor in decision making and it significantly influenced on customers purchase behaviors[23,24,25]. In addition, in behavioral studies, acceptable price is an important predictor for evaluating and understanding the consumers' level of satisfaction as well as future behaviors. Therefore, the perceived price can be directly influenced by visitors' perception of experience or provided product

quality such as food.

Water Park Image

A number of researchers empirically demonstrated that image is a critical component for determining customer perceptions, satisfaction as well as future behavioral action or intentions[11,26,27]. For instance, Andreassen and Lindestad suggested that the company image significantly affects tourists' satisfaction, perceived quality, and loyalty[26]. Futhermore, Chen identified that consumers' experience is very important element influencing customers' impression of the destination[11]. In other words, if a visitor get a satisfactory image it can change the overall perception of the destination. In present study, thus, water park image refers to visitors' general perceptions about the water park, and it may be affected by prior experiential value, provided products or service in the ware park.

Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention

Customer satisfaction has been recognized as a key determinant variable that directly link to long-term consumer behavior. In numerous previous studies, additionally, customer satisfaction was important mediator between principle antecedents and behavioral intention[11,28,29]. Particularly, previous studies have concentrated on the experiential side along with other components to better understand customers' future behavior or intention in various sector[18,30,31,32]. Moreover, previous researchers shown that destination image could be an essential clue that related to customer satisfaction[33]. Even though earlier studies demonstrated the relationships among experiential value, water park image, perceived price fairness, and satisfaction that were derived from experiential factors, conceptualizing the logical links among the variables for water park segmentation is very insufficient.

In academic research, the behavioral intention has been identified as a final determinant factor. In the studies, behavioral intention indicates an personal efforts to achieve a finial goal and it was a principle predictor of consumers' future action[34,35].

Thus, this study verifies the relationships among food quality, experiential value, price, water park image, and satisfaction as perceived by water park visitors.

METHOD

A survey was developed from previous studies to estimate food quality, experiential value, price fairness, water park image, satisfaction, and behavioral intention[18,36,37,38,39,40]. Total eighteen items employed to assess the six factors by using 7-point Likert-type scale (1: strongly disagree to 7: strongly agree), and three items were employed for collecting demographic information. To collect survey convenience sampling method was used. Five research assistants visited a water park located in middle of South Korea, and they distributed the survey after explaining the general purpose of current study at the water park.

RESULTS

Empirical Results

All participants answered the survey based on personal experiences at the water park. Total 400 questionnaires collected and 376 responses were used for data analysis after removing incomplete samples. More than half of respondents were female (63%), and various age groups visited the water park between teenagers to senior. Majority of age groups were 21~30-year olds (51.9% of respondents) and 31~40-year olds (20.7% of respondents). In addition, around 56% respondents visited the water park with friends.

Measurement Model

The Table 1 shows that the factor loading for all items are greater than 0.701 ($p<0.001$), and indicators for all items loaded on the designed constructs (Table 1). Average Variance Extracted of all constructs are higher than the standard which is 0.50[41], so that the convergent validity was confirmed[42]. Discriminant validity can be identified when each squared correlation (R^2) was less than the each constructs' AVE score[42]. All discriminant validity have been verified except for correlations between "water park image and satisfaction." To identify the discriminant validity for this exceptions, two constructs combined to make a single construct to

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis for the measurement model

Constructs and scale items	Standardized loadinga	Composite reliability	AVE
Food Quality		0.898	0.748
The water park offers a variety of menu items.	0.839		
The water park serves tasty food.	0.902		
The water park offers fresh food.	0.852		
Experiential Value		0.862	0.678
I felt excited during the playing process.	0.905		
I really enjoyed this resort.	0.899		
I had fun during the playing process.	0.701		
Price Fairness		0.877	0.706
The food prices at this resort are reasonable.	0.719		
The prices charged by this resort are appropriate for the level of service.	0.837		
I got my purpose when I consider about the price.	0.903		
Water Park Image		0.850	0.654
The water park provides good service.	0.794		
The water park has good accessibility from home.	0.790		
The water park has good reputation.	0.840		
Satisfaction		0.914	0.780
All things considered, I feel good about my decision to play at this water park.	0.897		
Overall, I am satisfied with the resort.	0.864		
Considering all my experience with this resort, my choice to play at this water park was a wise one.	0.888		
Behavioral loyalty		0.942	0.845
I would like to return to this water park in the future.	0.890		
I would recommend this water park to my friends or other acquaintances.	0.940		
I want to tell other people positive things about this water park.	0.927		

[a.] All factor loadings are significant ($p<.001$).

perform a χ^2 difference test on the hypothesized original measurement model and the combined alternative model[41]. The result shown that g χ^2 differences was 89.532 (df=5) and it represents that the differences was significant at $p<0.001$. Therefore, discriminant validity among all the pairs of constructs were confirmed. In addition, Hair and his colleague suggested 0.70 as a minimum level for the reliability of each construct to check internal consistency of items[43], and all constructs of composite

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis and discriminant validity

	FQ	PF	EV	WI	SA	BL
FQ	0.748[a]					
PF	0.298	0.678				
EV	0.203	0.135	0.706			
WI	0.362	0.321	0.416	0.653		
SA	0.289	0.232	0.564	0.767	0.780	
BL	0.255	0.186	0.549	0.613	0.769	0.845
χ^2=256, d.f.=120, IFI=0.976, TLI=0.969, CFI=0.976, RMSEA=0.055						

FQ=Food qaulity; PF=Price fairness; EV=Experiential value; WI: Water park image.
SA=Satisfaction; BL=Behavioral loyalty;
IFI=Incremental fit index; TLI=Tucker-lewis index; CFI=Comparative fit index;
RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.
Note. [a] AVE is on the diagonal. Squared of paired constructs are on the off-diagonal.

reliabilities verified appropriate level. Last, confirmatory measurement models show the soundness of measurement properties (χ^2=256; df=120; $p<$0.001; Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=0.976; Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)=0.969; normed fit index (NFI)=0.955, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.055) (Table 2).

Structural Equation Modeling

The proposed model identifies an good model fit to the data (χ^2=291.374; df=126; $p<$0.001; Com-parative Fit Index (CFI)=0.970; Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)=0.964; normed fit index (NFI)=0.949, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.059). Table 3 shows the path coefficients for all hypothesized paths in current model and Figure 1 presents the paths visually. All the path coefficients in the model were significant and positive except one path between price fairness and satisfaction. Therefore, empirical support attends all the hypotheses except one path. Specifically, the results demonstrate the proposed effects of food quality on

Table 3. Structural parameter estimates

| Hypothesized path	Coefficient	*t*-value	Results
Hypothesis 1: Food quality → Experiential value	0.449	8.227***	Supported
Hypothesis 2: Food quality → Price fairness	0.488	7.482***	Supported
Hypothesis 3: Food quality → Water park image	0.401	7.559***	Supported
Hypothesis 4: Experiential value → Price fairness	0.158	2.719**	Supported
Hypothesis 5: Experiential value → Water park image	0.467	8.795***	Supported
Hypothesis 6: Experiential value → Satisfaction	0.355	7.646***	Supported
Hypothesis 7: Price fairness → Satisfaction	0.016	0.432	Not Supported
Hypothesis 8: Water park image → satisfaction	0.640	11.172***	Supported
Hypothesis 9: Satisfaction → Behavioral loyalty	0.890	20.448***	Supported
χ^2=291.374, d.f.=126, IFI=0.971, TLI=0.964, CFI=0.970, RMSEA=0.059.			
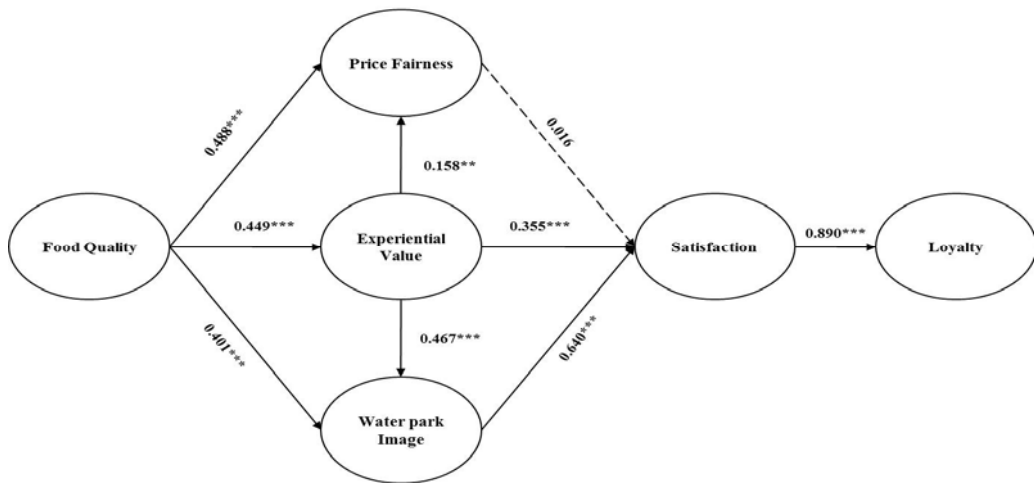
Figure 1. Result of hypothesized paths.

experiential value (Hypothesis 1: β=0.449; t=8.227), price fairness (Hypothesis 2: β=0.488; t=7.482), and water park image (Hypothesis 3: β=0.401; t=7.559). In addition, results confirms the proposed effect of experiential value on price fairness (Hypothesis 4: β =0.158; t=2.719), and water park image (Hypothesis 5: β=0.467; t=8.795). Furthermore, customer satisfaction was significant predictor of experiential value (Hypothesis 6: β=0.355; t=7.646), and water park image (Hypothesis 8: β=0.640; t=11.172). Apparently, satisfaction has a critically influence on behavioral intention (Hypothesis 9: β=0.890; t=20.448). However, the price fairness was not significant antecedent of satisfaction (Hypothesis 7: β=0.016; t=0.432).

CONTRIBUTIONS

Present study examines to verify the importance of food quality for influencing visitors' experiential value, price fairness, and water park image in context of water park. The results of current study serve managerial implication as well as theoretical suggestion.

First, the results identify that the food quality is very important predictor that significantly linked experiential value, satisfaction and behavioral intention along with price fairness and water park image. The result is supported by previous studies in various consumers such as restaurants[44,45,46]. Thus, this results confirmed the theoretical frame of the means-end chain that verified relationships among quality, value, and behavior in water park segment. In addition, the food quality was significant and positive antecedents for all constructs.

Second, quality of food has to consider as one of the most important factors to derive various components including experience, water park image, perceived price as well as satisfaction. Therefore, the manager or administrator of water park companies should make an effort to improve their quality of foods by developing new menus and evaluating existing menu items. Based on these efforts, overall satisfaction or value of experience will improve not only from general playing facilities but also provided nice foods.

Third, the experiential value has significantly affect on price fairness, water park image, and satisfaction. Those results were confirmed from prior studies[47,48]. Namely, increasing positive experience is principle work to satisfy various factors in water park. For example, the water park can make some events or promotions by considering visitors characteristics. More than half visitors visited the water park with friend and 63% visitors are female. That means the water park need to develop new promotion for female who visit with friend such as pajama party in hotel industry. If the water park make some different services or attractive promo-

tions for these consumers, it will directly influence on the water park revenue or reputation. Therefore, water park managers need to consider their visitors' characteristics of population to develop specialized promotions or services. Another critical finding of current study is that price fairness is not a significant predictor for customer satisfaction. There are a lot of water parks in South Korea, and it provide detailed information about price using website or application for smart phone. Therefore, many visitors of water parks will chose a water park after confirming reasonable price or service by comparing other water park. So that the price may be standardized among increasing price competition.

Limitation

This study estimated the experiential value as a one-dimensional construct in water park sector. Therefore, further research may need to employ a multidimensional measurement that includes diverse experiential aspects. Also, current study collected the data from a water park, so it is difficult to generalize the results on all water parks. To cover the external validity, a more sample from various locations is meaningful for future study.

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