

# A Service Quality Contingency Model Approach to the Willingness of Revisit a Leisure Farm

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study were to explore the leisure farm tourist's service quality, consumer decision-making styles and willingness to revisit cognitive and diversities situation, then to understand the influence of this three variable. This study takes the scales for service quality, consumer decision-making styles and willingness to revisit as measurement tools. 565 valid questionnaires were collected and used descriptive statistics, and structural equation modeling to analyze and verify the data. The results indicate that: Tourists were satisfied at Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village service quality and willingness to revisit; Style of perfectionist, leisure shopping, price consciounesss and habitual loyalty has positive effect of service quality and style of impulsiveness has positive effect of willingness to revisit; willingness to revisit were affected directly by service quality.*

**Keywords:** *Leisure farm, Service quality, Consumer decision-making styles, Willingness to revisit*

## INTRODUCTION

According to "Annual Survey Report on Visitors Expenditure and Trends in Taiwan (2005)" of Tourist Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communication of R.O.C., domestic travel rate was 90.0% in 2004 and 91.3% in 2005 respectively, increasing by 1.3%; average number of days per trip was 1.64 days in 2005, nearly as same as that of 1.65 days in 2004; percentage of trips taken during holidays and weekends was 73.5% in 2005, increasing by 6.0% compared with that of 2004 (67.5%); as for outbound travel rate, it was 16.4% in 2005, reducing by 4.4% compared with that of 2004 (20.8%); the above survey indicates the overall implementation of Two-day Weekend Leave policy not only has changed people's working style, but also changed the holiday period more than three days into holiday period of two days, which has changed people's tour style accordingly. Tourist Bureau of Ministry of Transportation and Communication mentioned people expected to have more diversified leisure sites to relieve the working pressure, ease the fast paced life and adjust mental and body after leisure time increased. With respect to tour style, more people choose to take holidays in domestic sites and leisure tour in nature is most popular in many kinds of leisure tour styles; leisure farm is exactly one of such sites for leisure tour, which can allow people access natural fresh air and sunlight, get interpersonal relationship closer and has positive value for pursuing healthy, eliminating alienation and edifying mind, therefore leisure farm has been more popular gradually.

Along with the development trend of Taiwan joining in WTO and implementing Two-day Weekend Leave policy, "Leisure farm" has been a new industry for agriculture transformation and multiple leisure activities, which becomes a kind of leisure industry featuring recreational service by expanding the resources of agriculture and village besides keeping the original agricultural production (Cheng and Chen, 1996). As leisure farm is one kind of leisure service industry, it can only provide quality that meets consumers' demands in order to hold the competitiveness in the severe leisure market, however such aim more relies on improvement of operation management and service quality; Garvin (1998) pointed out high service quality could affect loyalty and profit positively, that is to say to provide service quality

meeting customers' demands can increase customers' loyalty and future repurchasing willingness. Research of Tuan (2005) suggested there were 1102 leisure farms totally in Taiwan, which meant consumers had more choices in the consumption decision, however operators of leisure farms also had to face more competitors and serious threat in leisure agriculture. So operators of the farms must understand decision-making styles, characteristics and demands of consumption groups, improve service quality and launch leisure products and services that meet demands of customers so as to attract tourists to take holidays and have consumptions, thus the farms can own the absolute advantage in the market, further establish loyalty of customers and have tourists be willing to revisit the farms. Based on the view of point above, the study expected to discuss differences and interactions among tourists with different background variables from the aspects of service quality cognition, decision-making style and revisit willingness and provide references and basis of future activity design and plan for operators, researchers and concerned industries of leisure farms.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Shin (1996) studied correlation between service quality of recreational park and revisit willingness of tourists and found revisit willingness was significantly correlated with cognitive degree and other constructs of service quality, as the correlation degree between perceived service quality and revisit willingness of tourists is highest, it can be seen the actual perceived service has a crucial effect on revisit willingness of tourists. Chang (2002) carried out a study on effects of service quality of country clubs in Taiwan and customer satisfaction on participation willingness and discovered satisfaction of golf club members for service quality of the clubs posed a positive effect on their participation willingness. Duan (2004) took Wuling Hoya Resort Hotel as object and conducted a study concerning effects of service quality and satisfaction on revisit willingness, of which the findings showed service quality was positively correlated with the overall satisfaction, also had some effect on revisit willingness of tourists. Tseng (2005) studied the influence of service quality of Sah-Mao Mountain Hot Spring Resort Restaurants on customer satisfaction and loyalty by using the Palm Tree Restaurant as the case and found service quality of the restaurant and loyalty of tourists both were very high, so tourists had a high willingness to revisit the hot spring restaurant and recommend it to other people. Lee (2006) conducted a study on service quality of theme park and revisit willingness of tourists, which used Yamay Amusement Theme Park as the case and showed: care of service personnel to tourists was the main factor to affect revisit willingness of tourists. In addition, Lee, Chou and Lin (2006) carried out a study on correlation among service quality, relationship quality and customer loyalty of leisure farms, of which findings indicated service quality of leisure farms had a positive influence on customer loyalty directly and could exert a positive influence on customer loyalty through relationship quality, furthermore relationship quality of leisure farms also could create a direct positive influence on customer loyalty and pose a positive influence on customer loyalty through service quality.

Consumer decision-making style is the psychological guidance of consumer behavior and is the decision-making process prior to purchasing behavior; that is a consumer will use relevant rules to guide his/her consumption decision under effect of various factors in purchasing. However, few studies paid attention to relationship among consumer decision-making style, service quality and revisit willingness and this study found many scholars used different background variables to discuss consumer decision-making style (Wu, 2003; Chan, 2005; Chen, 2006); service quality (Yu & Yeh, 1998; Lin, 2003; Lin, 2006; Lee, 2006) and revisit willingness (Hwang, 1993; Shin, 1996; Wang, 2002; Yu, 2003; Lee, 2006) after literature review; thus the study expected to understand consumer decision-making style with different background variables of tourists and examine the differences on service quality and revisit willingness for different consumer decision-making styles.

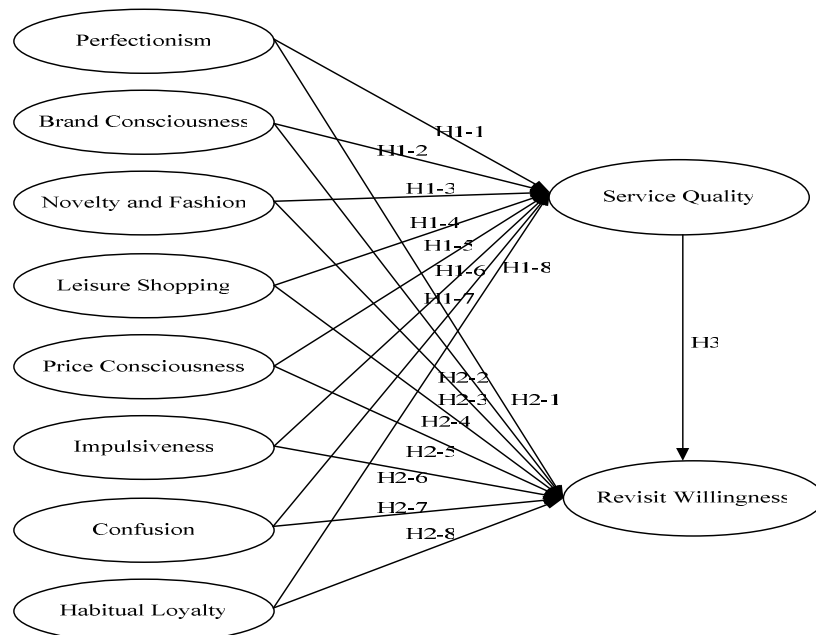
According to the above literatures review and concerned study results, consumer decision-making style will form different types under the effect of personal life style and cultural environment of tourists, which also can affect appraisal of tourists on service quality and revisit willingness; in addition many studies have found service quality satisfying tourists can create positive effect over an enterprise or a service industry and promote the willingness of tourist to repurchase or revisit; in this way the study took factors (gender, age, education, job, marriage, monthly income and habitation) which could affect service quality, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness as background

variables and formulated a questionnaire with regard to consumer decision-making style, service quality and revisit willingness based on concerned theories and empirical studies in order to know distribution and difference of consumer decision-making style, service quality and revisit willingness under effect of different background variables, further to discuss and verify correlation and influence among consumer decision-making style, service quality and revisit willingness.

## METHOD

### Study Structure

After reviewing the concerned literatures, the study framed a structure including three parts: the first one discussed service quality cognition, distribution of consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness cognition of tourists in Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village; the second part compared and analyzed the variation of averages of variables involving service quality of leisure farm, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness based on the background variables (gender, age, education, job, marriage, average monthly income and habitation) of tourists in Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village. And the third part is a study model concerning service quality of leisure farm, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness, which is typically used to verify the influence relationship among service quality of leisure farm, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness; Figure 1 presents the structure.



**Figure 1: Relationship Structure among Service Quality of Leisure Farm, Consumer Decision-making Style and Revisit Willingness**

### Study Range & Object

The study typically took Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village as study range and tourists in Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village as objects who would be given questionnaires at the exit; the investigation would let the interviewees know the study purpose and content before they agreed to fill the questionnaire and check whether the questionnaires were completed when they were returned so as to promote the effective return rate. Totally 600 questionnaires were sent out and returned and effective 565 questionnaires were obtained with effective return rate of 94% after removing ineffective questionnaires.

## Measurement Instrument

Measurement instruments used by the study involve four parts: basic data of tourists, service quality scale, consumer decision-making style scale and revisit willingness scale; Likert Five-Point Scale was used to measure the point calculation of each scale, including 1 point for “Strongly Disagree”, 2 points for “Disagree”, 3 points for “Neutral”, 4 points for “Agree” and 5 points “Strongly Agree”; higher score means higher degree of agreement; specific description of the scale content is as following: The Service quality scale, a modified version of there is 26 items by reference to service quality measurement scales designed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988), Tseng (2005) and Lin (2003) and literatures mentioned above. The Consumer decision-making style scale, a modified version of there is 41 items by Sproles (1985), Sproles and Kendall (1986); Wu (2003), Chen (2006) and Chan (2005) etc. The Leisure Farm Revisit Willingness Scale including 4 items after referring to the revisit willingness scales established by Wu and Huang (2001); Lee (2006); Lin (2004); Chen (2006) and Chen (2004).

As Huang (2004), Chiou (1991), Chang (2006) suggested validity and reliability analysis couldn't stand for stability of a scale until they had been tested strictly, the study tested validity and reliability in two phases; in the first phase, 220 preliminary questionnaires were distributed out and item analysis was applied to assess whether individual item discrimination was good; then exploratory factor analysis was adopted to assess factor structure of scales for validity construction; at last Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was used to assess the reliability of scales; in the second phase 565 samples were used in confirmatory factor analysis to confirm fitness and reliability of the factor structure.

In the factor analysis on 220 sample service quality scales of first phase, 5 factors including 21 items were obtained; the total variance explained was 61.69% and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the scale was 0.8; as for consumer decision-making style scale, 8 factors with 35 items were obtained, of which the total variance explained was 58.56% and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the scale was 0.86; 4 items were obtained for revisit willingness scale with total variance explained was 71.65% and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  0.86; therefore all of the leisure farm service quality, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness scales had good reliability and validity.

According to the analysis result of confirmatory factor analysis on second group of sample: with respect to the service quality scale, as  $\chi^2_{(180)} = 766.35$  and  $p = 0.00$  in absolute fit measures were significant, which meant the covariant matrix in the model was different with that of empirical data, so the model was declined; as for absolute fit measures, SRMR was 0.07 and RMSEA was 0.08; NNFI=0.94 and CFI=0.95 for relative fit measures; PNFI=0.69 and  $\chi^2/df = 4.26$  (less than 5.0) with regard to parsimonious fit measures. From the above result, except  $\chi^2$  value of absolute fit measures was significant due to effect big sample number and could not be accepted, the remaining fit measures all passed the tests, which meant Leisure Farm Service Quality Model of the study was acceptable. With respect to consumer decision-making scale: as  $\chi^2_{(528)} = 1849.52$  and  $p = 0.00$  in absolute fit measures reached significant level, the model was declined; SRMR was 0.06, REMSEA was 0.07 (less than acceptable value of 0.08); NNFI=0.91, CFI=0.92; PNFI=0.79;  $\chi^2/df = 3.50$ . On the whole, most fit measures of the three model passed tests and even some values exceeded the thresholds suggested by some scholars. Therefore the scale was acceptable, that is the scale has a good overall construct validity. As for revisit willingness scale: as  $\chi^2_{(2)} = 4.41$ ,  $p = 0.11$  and didn't reach the significant level, the model was acceptable; SRMR=0.02, RMSEA=0.05; NNFI=0.98, CFI=0.99; PNFI=0.53;  $\chi^2/df = 2.25$ . The whole assessment result indicated the model of Leisure Farm Revisit Willingness passed the tests on the aspects of absolute fit measures, relative fit measures and parsimonious fit measures; that is to say the model has a good overall construct validity.

## Data Collection & Analysis

The study used statistics software such as SPSS12.0 and LISREL8.80 to process the questionnaire data and conducted data analysis in accordance with study purpose and issue; statistics methods adopted by the study include descriptive statistics, item analysis, exploratory factor analysis, t-test, single factor variant analysis, multiple variable & variation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation model analysis; if single factor variant analysis showed significant level, Scheffe approach would be used for post hoc comparison and statistic significant level of the study was set as  $\alpha = .05$ .

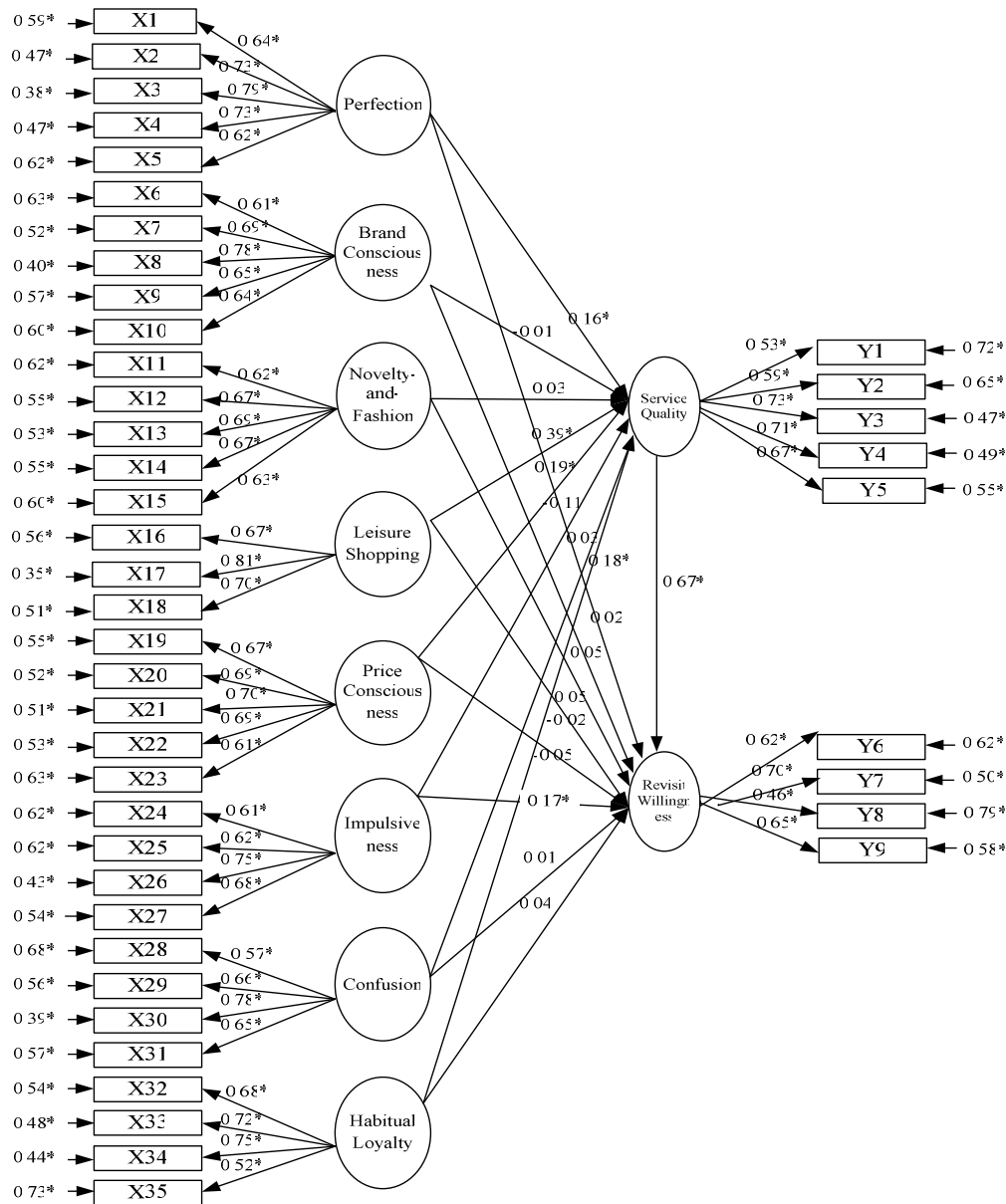
## RESULTS

### Data Analysis on Basic Variables of Tourists

Data analysis result concerning 565 interviewees in the study showed: there were 238 males (42.%) and 327 females (57.9%); 6 groups were classified with respect to age, among which there were 182 persons in the biggest group of 20-29 (32.2%), 150 persons in the secondary group of 30-39 (26.5%) and 24 persons in the smallest group with age over 60 (4.2%); as regards education degree of tourists, tourists graduated from junior colleges or universities were 256 and most, taking up 45.3% in the all samples; secondarily, 215 tourists graduated from high schools or vocational schools and accounted for 38.1% in the whole samples; tourists with educational background of middle schools or lower were 37 persons and fewest in the whole sample (6.5%); as for job, person number of tourists from private enterprises was 134 and took the biggest proportion in the sample (23.7%); secondarily, there were 110 students who took up a proportion of 19.5% in the sample; the tourists of other kinds of job were fewest and only 16 persons, accounting for 1.1%; from the aspect to marriage, unmarried tourists were most and 287 persons (50.8%); 262 married tourists were on the second place and took up 46.4% in the sample; there were 16 tourists of other kinds of marriage situation, accounting for 2.8%; six groups were divided in accordance with average monthly income and tourists with income from NT\$ 20001-40000 were most (196 persons, 34.7%); tourists with income equal to or less than NT\$ 20000 were on the second place (122 persons, 21.6%); and tourists with income over NT\$ 80001 were fewest (19 persons, 3.4%); tourists lived in north area were most (180 persons, 31.9%); secondarily there were 168 persons from south area (29.7%) and 17 persons from outlying islands, taking up the smallest proportion (3.0%).

### Structural Equation Model Analysis on Service Quality Cognition, Consumer Decision-Making and Revisit Willingness of Leisure Farm Tourists

The study established the overall model structure of service quality cognition, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness of leisure farm tourists by reference to concerned theories and literatures of empirical study (Figure 2). According to parameter estimation of confirmatory factor analysis on overall model of service quality cognition, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness of leisure farm tourists, standardized regression coefficients were from -0.11 to 0.81 and most of them were not closed to 1; standard errors were from 0.04 to 0.07 and were not very big, in addition, there was no any negative variance existing. Fitness indicators of the overall model:  $\chi^2_{(857)} = 2986.89$ ,  $p = 0.000$  showed a significant level, so the model was declined; SRMR value was 0.06 and less than the acceptable value 0.08, RMSEA = 0.07; NNFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.91; PNFI = 0.79, PGFI = 0.70;  $\chi^2/df = 2.65$  (less than 5.0); the above fitness indicators suggested the overall model of service quality cognition, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness of leisure farm tourists passed the fitness test, therefore the overall model was acceptable.



**Figure 2: Overall Conceptual Model of Service Quality Cognition, Consumer Decision-making Style and Revisit Willingness of Leisure Farm Tourists**

### Effect Analysis

Direct effect, indirect effect and overall effect (Table 1) of the structural equation model were acquired by statistics and analysis on the model and the significant influence of the Model of Service Quality Cognition, Consumer Decision-making Style and Revisit Willingness of Leisure Farm Tourists in the study.

#### 1. Influence of Variable of Consumer Decision-making Style on Service Quality Cognition

- (1) Direct effect value of tourists of perfectionism style on service quality cognition was 0.16 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching the significant level, and the overall effect value 0.16 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.
- (2) Direct effect value of tourists of leisure shopping style on service quality cognition was 0.39 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching the significant level, and the overall effect value 0.39 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.
- (3) Direct effect value of tourists of price consciousness style on service quality cognition was 0.19 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching the significant level, and the overall effect value 0.19 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.
- (4) Direct effect value of tourists of habitual loyalty style was on service quality cognition 0.18 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching the significant level, and the overall effect value 0.18 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.

2. Influence of Variable of Consumer Decision-making Style on Revisit Willingness

- (1) Direct effect value of tourists of impulsiveness style on revisit willingness was 0.17 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching the significant level; the indirect effect was -0.08 and the overall effect was -0.09 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.
- (2) Effect of Variable of Service Quality on revisit willingness: the direct effect value was 0.67 ( $p < .05$ ), reaching significant level and the overall effect was 0.67 ( $p < .05$ ), meaning the influence was significant.

**Table 1: Summary of Effect Analysis on Latent Variables concerning the Leisure Farm**

Independent Variables		Dependent Variables (Latent Variables of Endogenic Factor )				
		Service Quality Cognition		Revisit Willingness		
		Standard Effect Value	t	Standard Effect Value	t	
Latent Variables of Exogenic Factor of Consumer Decision-making Style	Perfectionism	Direct Effect	0.16	2.69*	0.02	0.34
		Indirect Effect	---	---	0.11	2.62
		Overall Effect	0.16	2.69	0.13	1.99
	Brand Consciousness	Direct Effect	-0.01	-0.13	0.05	0.71
		Indirect Effect	---	---	-0.01	-0.13
		Overall Effect	-0.01	-0.13	0.04	0.57
	Novelty-and-Fashion	Direct Effect	0.03	0.40	0.05	0.65
		Indirect Effect	---	---	0.02	0.40
		Overall Effect	0.03	0.40	0.07	0.84
	Leisure Shopping	Direct Effect	0.39	6.11*	-0.02	-0.28
		Indirect Effect	---	---	0.26	5.33
		Overall Effect	0.39	6.11	0.25	3.84
Price Consciousness	Direct Effect	0.19	2.93*	-0.05	-0.74	
	Indirect Effect	---	---	0.13	2.81	
	Overall Effect	0.19	2.93	0.08	1.15	
Impulsiveness	Direct Effect	-0.11	-1.75	0.17	2.58*	
	Indirect Effect	---	---	-0.08	-1.72	
	Overall Effect	-0.11	-1.75	0.09	1.32	
Confusion	Direct Effect	0.03	0.53	0.01	0.09	
	Indirect Effect	---	---	0.02	0.53	
	Overall Effect	0.03	0.53	0.03	0.41	
Habitual Loyalty	Direct Effect	0.18	3.08*	0.04	0.72	
	Indirect Effect	---	---	0.12	2.97	
	Overall Effect	0.18	3.08	0.16	2.60	
Latent Variables of Endogenic Factor of Service Quality Cognition	Direct Effect	---	---	0.67	7.49*	
	Indirect Effect	---	---	---	---	
	Overall Effect	---	---	0.67	7.49	

\* $p < .05$

## CONCLUSIONS

### Discussion

Effect Relationship among Service Quality Cognition, Consumer Decision-making Style and Revisit Willingness of the Leisure Farm Tourists

The study formulated service quality cognition, consumer decision-making style and revisit willingness models, all of which had passed concerned test and had good reliability and validity and the study findings indicated:

1. With regard to influence of Variables of Consumer Decision-making Style on Service Quality, Perfectionism (overall effect value was 0.16), Leisure Shopping (overall effect value was 0.36), Price Consciousness (overall effect value was 0.19) and Habitual Loyalty (overall effect value was 0.18) presented significant influences, which meant service quality cognition for the leisure farm was affected by these four kinds of consumer decision-making styles and higher cognitions of tourists of the four styles had, better the service quality was.

2. As for influences of variables of Consumer Decision-making style on Revisit Willingness, only influence of impulsiveness (total effect value was 0.09) reached the significant level, which meant tourists of impulsiveness style could affect the revisit willingness and it probably is related to the characters of impulsive tourists who often buy products just for instant impulsiveness and don't care how much money they would spend, additionally their purchase behavior commonly is based on instinct (as long as I like it), so they can create some influence on revisit willingness for the leisure farm.
3. With regard to influence of variable of Service Quality Cognition on Revisit Willingness, the total effect value is 0.67 ( $p < .05$ ), showing significant influence; the study result is same as those of Shin (1996), Chang (2002), Yang (2004), Chen and Chen (2006), Duan (2004), Tseng (2005), Hong (2005), Lee (2006) and Lee, Chou and Lin (2006), so we can know effect of service quality cognition has influence on revisit willingness regardless of the type of leisure and recreational place or study object.

### Suggestions

As the study found items concerning service quality of the leisure farm including "Clothes of service staff of the leisure farm are cleaning and proper" and "The leisure farm is equipped with completed tour introduction and charge system data" were most satisfying, but the items involving "Staff of the leisure farm can keep a consistent service level" and "The leisure farm's approach to deal with problems of tourists are trustworthy" were most unsatisfying, it is suggested besides keeping the original advantages, the leisure farm should train the ability of employees to deal with problems and maintain a good service level and keep the consistence between service content and concerned advertising so as to promote trust of tourists on service quality of the leisure farm.

"Leisure shopping" and "novelty-and-fashion" got the highest points and "impulsiveness" and "brand consciousness" got the lowest points with regard to consumer decision-making style, so it is suggested the leisure farm should conduct market integration and establish a proprietary brand to promote its popularity besides developing its new features to embody the meaning of the word "creativity" in the name of Son-Ten-Kan Creativity Life Village,

The study discovered revisit willingness could be affected by the style of impulsiveness that means tourists conduct the purchase behavior on instinct, so the factor for revisit willingness has some uncertainty; as service quality has a positive influence on revisit willingness, it is suggested the leisure farm should improve service quality and know consumption characteristics of the tourists in order to satisfy consumers, further promote their revisit willingness and create more profits.

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