The Effect of Basic, Performance and Excitement Service Factors of a Convention Center on Attendees' Experiential Value and Satisfaction: A Case Study of the Phoenix Convention Center

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The Effect of Basic, Performance and Excitement Service Factors of a Convention Center on Attendees’ Experiential Value and Satisfaction: A Case Study of the Phoenix Convention Center

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This study investigates how the various services provided by a convention center and its service quality affects attendees’ experiential values, and in turn, leads to the attendees’ overall satisfaction and loyalty. The sample consisted of 217 convention attendees in Phoenix, AZ, representing a response rate of 54%. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used for analyses. Results indicate that basic and excitement service factors have a positive influence on individual experiential values. Also, the study shows that enhanced individual experiential values have an impact on raising overall satisfaction with the convention center.

KEYWORDS behavioral intention, convention center, experiential value, service quality, three-factor structure

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the convention industry has grown rapidly, and this trend is continuing. One recent report by the International Association of Convention Centers (AIPC; 2014), revealed that convention centers’ revenue growth had exceeded global gross domestic product (GDP) from 2010 to 2013, and that an even greater increase was expected for 2014. With an emphasis on the U.S. market, approximately 1.87 million meetings took place,
generating $280 billion in direct spending, and contributing more than $115 billion to U.S. GDP (Convention Industry Council, 2014). As communities look for ways to enrich their economic vitality, the meetings industry plays a vital role in supporting jobs and development in these communities, as well as creating an environment that promotes regional tourism.

Given growing competitiveness, the convention industry recognizes that service is one of the most important industry products and the key for a successful approach to customers. The majority of convention studies focus largely on meetings and events such as conventions, exhibitions, and trade shows, and scrutinize service attributes, service quality, as well as customer satisfaction and their behavioral intention (Jung, 2005; Lee & Park, 2002; Mair & Thompson, 2009; Severt, Wang, Chen, & Beriter, 2007; Smith, Hama, & Smith, 2003; Whitfield & Webber, 2011; Yuksel & Voola, 2010). The Schmitt (1999a) study, however, focuses on discussion of experiential consumption. He insists that today’s consumption is now changing from goods and services to experiences. Thus, understanding of service experience has become more important than ever in the field of marketing research. Much research of service fields posits that customers’ service experience and their perception of service quality greatly influences their satisfaction and future behavioral intention (Kandampully, 1998; Kim, 2011; Lee, Hsiao, & Yang, 2010; Lee, Cho, & Ahn, 2012; Palmer, 2010; Ryu & Han, 2010; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Wilkins, Merrilees, & Herington, 2009; Yuan & Wu, 2008).

Gursoy and Swanger (2007) further suggest that the quality of service and customer satisfaction should be considered as the heart of the hospitality industry in order to achieve continued financial success. Along with this trend, convention centers have increasingly viewed attendee-centered service as a key ingredient in creating high-quality customer experience, and in turn, increasing revenue. Here, customers include not only meeting planners but also attendees. The actual users of the convention facility are attendees, while the meeting planners serve an important role as venue decision makers. Although many studies have considered service quality to be an important site selection criterion (Crouch & Louviere, 2004; DiPietro, Breiter, Rompf, & Godlewska, 2008; Elston & Draper, 2012; Jago & Deery, 2005), little research has examined service quality from the perspective of attendees.

Compared to previous studies regarding the examination of relationships among service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, research has been limited when experiential consumption values are taken into account. Moreover, in the context of convention centers, little research has examined the entire relationship among attendees’ perceived service quality, their experiential consumption value, satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, the object of this study is to identify the dimensions of service quality of a convention center, and to examine the effect of experiential consumption value on the relationship between each of the dimensions of service quality as
well as satisfaction and loyalty in an event setting. More specifically, this study aims to investigate (1) how the various services provided by a convention center and their service quality affect attendees’ experiential values, and (2) how this can lead to the attendees’ overall satisfaction and loyalty. By understanding the relationship between service attributes and attendees’ experiential consumption values, which affects customers’ satisfaction, convention centers will be able to develop and implement a strategic approach to achieving a competitive advantage over other venues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Convention Center

A convention center is a large building designed to host a convention, exhibition, tradeshow, as well as other events. If a venue is able to host a tradeshow with over one million square feet of space, it is operationally defined as a large convention center (Breiter & Milman, 2006a). Increasingly, convention centers see core venue services, such as exhibit hall and room rental, as well as expanded food and beverage (F&B) services, as the industry’s main revenue sources. In addition, technology infrastructure and services, meeting rooms, and exhibit halls look to be most in need of enhancement (AIPC, 2014). Therefore, as the development of new convention centers and the expansion of existing convention centers continue, an understanding of the importance of services provided by convention centers has become more imperative than ever.

The Phoenix Convention Center (PCC), one of the major convention centers in the United States, is located in downtown Phoenix, the country’s sixth largest city. Since opening in 1972, it was renovated and expanded to triple its original size in 2008. Its services are focused on environmentally friendly practices, such as green purchasing and recycling programs. This environmental effort has been recognized with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. In addition, the PCC has in-house F&B outlets with five themed eateries and 900,000 square feet of meeting and exhibition space with 46 convenient loading docks (Phoenix Convention Center, n.d.).

General Service Factors in the Convention Industry

In recent years, convention attendees have been viewed as key players in the upward growth of the convention industry, as well as regional economies. Braun and Rungeling (1992) point out that the relative economic impact of convention travelers is larger than the impact of general tourists. In order to market convention centers and attract convention attendees more efficiently,
both academia and industry value “convention service” as being very important.

Breiter and Milman (2006a) divide service items into facility services and facility features. The results of their study reveal that overall cleanliness and a well-maintained facility are perceived to be two of the most important facility services; meanwhile, directional signage and nearby quality accommodations are important facility features of a convention center. Correspondingly, Wu and Weber (2005) argue that convention attendees are concerned more about a venue’s facility service than helpfulness and courtesy of the staff. In addition, the study by Jago and Deery (2005) indicates that the quality and quantity of food, or delivery of special food at convention centers, leads to positive comments from attendees compared to other attributes of convention services. Crouch and Louviere (2004) claim that both extra-conference services, such as entertainment and sightseeing opportunities as well as physical convention attributes, are important. In an effort to identify convention service factors used by customers, Lee and Park (2002) define “convention service” as the sum of all the services that convention attendees experience from convention arrival to departure. This definition embraces convention-related facilities and services, including the combination of tangible (physical facilities) and intangible services (human services).

While these previous studies have classified service factors based on the study context, there were common service attributes along with the definition of convention services. Therefore, given a comprehensive understanding of convention service literature (Bitner, 1992; Breiter & Milman, 2006a; Crouch & Louviere, 2004; Jago & Deery, 2005; Jung, 2005; Kim, Kim, & Weaver, 2010; Lee & Park, 2002; Renaghan & Kay, 1987; Siu, Wan, & Dong, 2012; Wu & Weber, 2005; Yoo & Chon, 2008), this study incorporates service items identified based on the characteristics of the PCC with a three-factor structure of service quality.

Three-Factor Structure of Service Quality in Convention Centers

As indicated above, much research has identified convention services and divided it into various dimensions. Some studies found that each of these factors exerts a different influence on customers’ experiences and satisfaction (Breiter & Milman, 2006b; Siu, Wan, & Dong, 2012). So far, in the context of convention center studies, however, no major study has used Matzler and Sauerwein (2002) three-factor structure of customer service quality in order to examine the influence of services provided by a convention center on attendees’ satisfaction and behavioral intention. The three-factor structure by Matzler and colleagues has been widely accepted as a method for identifying different service factors and customer satisfaction (Füller & Matzler, 2008; Lee & Min, 2013; Matzler, Bailom, Hinterhuber, Renzl, & Pichler, 2004).
Matzler and Sauerwein (2002) suggest the following comprehensive three-service factor structure based on customer satisfaction: basic, performance, and excitement. Basic factors are defined as minimum requirements that cause dissatisfaction if not fulfilled, but do not lead to customer satisfaction significantly if fulfilled or exceeded (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002). Hence, low performance on these service factors has a more decisive effect on customers’ overall satisfaction than high performance. The fulfillment of basic service factors does not qualify as a sufficient condition for customer satisfaction; rather, the customer is likely to count these as prerequisites (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Füller & Matzler, 2008). These service factors are basically provided in order to enter the market. In this convention service study, basic service factors represent overall cleanliness, maintenance of meeting facilities, availability of ventilation, comfort of seating in the meeting rooms, friendliness and helpfulness of the staff, and so on.

On the other hand, performance service factors are directly linked to customers’ needs and desires, which result in customer satisfaction. Thus, when they perceive that service performance is high, customers are content with the services provided, while if service performance is low, these services prove unsatisfactory for customers (Deng, Kuo, & Chen, 2008; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002). In this study, performance service factors refer to local food facilities, general F&B outlets, convenience of parking, accessibility of designated smoking areas, cost of transportation, and so forth.

Excitement service factors are the factors that increase customer satisfaction if services are delivered, but do not cause dissatisfaction if they are missing. Unlike basic service factors, high performance on these factors has a positive impact on overall customer satisfaction. Furthermore, since excitement service factors are generally provided to customers beyond their needs and expectations, these are not only unexpected and a surprise to customers, but also do nothing to decrease their satisfaction. (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Füller & Matzler, 2008; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002). Hence, compared to basic and performance factors, excitement service factors hardly provide a negative impact on customers’ satisfaction levels. Examples of excitement service factors include the following: availability of nightlife, light rail (public transportation in downtown Phoenix) access, unique architecture design, organic and vegetarian food availability, availability of tourist information, and so on.

When various services are perceived by attendees, these are counted as service quality from the attendees’ perspective based on their own experiences. In other words, service quality is regarded as an assessment of service performance measured by consumers (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fullerton & Taylor, 2002; Olorunniwo, Hsu, & Udo, 2006). According to studies in other service settings, customers’ own experiences regarding service quality influence their satisfaction, and in turn, affect their behavioral intention (Ryu
In addition, high-quality performance is likely to induce a high level of satisfaction for attendees (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Even though there are several instruments for measure, the weight of previous studies supports the performance-only measure, which considers only the customer’s perception of the service performance. Therefore, this article implements performance-only as a service quality measurement (Brady, Cronin, & Brand, 2002; Cronin & Taylor, 1992, 2000; Olorunniwo, Hsu, & Udo, 2006).

On the other hand, the findings from Yuan and Wu’s study (2008) indicate that the process of experiencing is closely related to the experiential marketing concept as well as customers’ perception. Thus, in order to investigate the relationship between service quality performance and customers’ perceived experience consumption value, this study incorporates Schmitt’s (1999a, 1999b, 1999c) and Brakus (2001) experiential marketing concepts. This study focuses on how these three-factor service quality items have an impact on attendees’ satisfaction and loyalty toward a convention center by acquiring the attendees’ perceived experiential consumption value.

Experiential Consumption Value

According to Schmitt (1999b), experiences that are caused by direct observation and/or participation in events occur in response to some stimulation derived from sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, or relational value (p. 60). Within the context of service fields, experiences can occur when a consumer interacts with atmospheric variables and personnel of service organizations (Boulding, Karla, Staelin, & Zeithaml, 1993; Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Hui & Bateson, 1991). From the “experiential view,” Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) highlight that various environmental and consumer inputs such as individual difference, type of involvement, and search activity, are processed by cognitive, affect, and behavior responses within the intervening response system. Supportively, Schmitt had postulated the term “experiential marketing” in his study published in 1999 (Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c). Through the process of perceiving and experiencing services or products, customers receive each type of stimulation. The “sense” experience refers to how consumers perceive sensory qualities through sight, sound, taste, and touch, while the “feel” experience puts greater emphasis on the affective side, such as mood and emotion. The “think” experience that makes consumers engage in the creative thinking process appeals to the customers’ convergent and divergent thinking, which are commonly experienced with exposure to new technology. In the context of services operated by a convention center, the think experience is not considered in this study. Additionally, the “act” experience targets customers’ physical and behavioral experiences, which could enrich their lifestyles and behaviors. Finally, the “relate” experience refers to social experiences, such as connections with other people and groups (Schmitt, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c).
These five different experiential types of stimulations are divided into two categories: individual (i.e., sense, feel, think) and shared (i.e., act, relate) experiences. Considering service quality items provided by a convention center, these are likely to appeal to attendees’ individual sense and emotional values, rather than their behavioral and social values. Numerous studies have found that individual experiential elements play an important role in perceiving and evaluating service quality (Kandampully, 1998; Lee, Hsiao, & Yang, 2010; Palmer, 2010; Yuan & Wu, 2008). Also, it has been proven that convention facilities, atmosphere, as well as overall service environment affect the customers’ emotional responses (De Ruyter & Bloemer, 1999; Siu, Wan, & Dong, 2012; Yoo, Park, & MacInnis, 1998). Given that, when it comes to the PCC, the majority of experiences might appeal to customers’ sensory and emotional values rather than other experiential values.

On the other hand, Lin and Chiang’s study (2010) reveals that the perceived experiential value that is reinforced by overall perceived quality can positively affect customers’ behavioral intentions. Findings from Lee et al.’s study (2010) indicate that customers’ perceived service quality, driven from their experiential consumption of the product or service, significantly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. Wang and Lin (2010) also support the notion that tourists’ experiential marketing and their satisfaction have a positive relationship. Therefore, this study focuses on customers’ sensory (sense) and emotional (feel) values while investigating how different service quality items influence attendees’ experiential consumption values, as well as how they lead to attendees’ satisfaction with and loyalty to the convention center.

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

The majority of previous studies argue that delivering high-quality service is critical to attaining customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Barsky & Nash, 2003; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Kim, Lee, & Yoo, 2006; Lee, Graefe, & Burns, 2004; Ryu & Han, 2010; Wang & Lin, 2010; Yuan & Wu, 2008; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996). Also, studies indicate that both service quality and satisfaction can be essential factors predicting attendees’ future behavioral intentions (e.g., Baker & Crompton, 2000; Lee et al., 2004). For example, Cronin and Taylor (1992) stress that service quality is an antecedent of satisfaction. The findings from Lee and colleagues (2004) not only support Cronin and Taylor’s findings, but also indicate that satisfaction can be a mediator between service quality and behavioral intentions. Future behavioral intentions are indicators of whether or not an attendee will return to a convention center (Baker & Crompton, 2000). Indicators of predicting attendees’ future behavioral intentions commonly include positive word-of-mouth, revisiting intention, and/or recommendation to others (Antón, Camarero, & Carrero, 2007; Bell, Auh, & Smalley, 2005). Similarly, Tanford, Montgomery, and Nelson (2012) point out that satisfaction plays a significant role in determining antecedents to attendees’ loyalty.
However, even though much research in service fields confirms that there is a direct and indirect relationship among service quality, satisfaction, and loyalty (Bloemer, Ruyter, & Peeters, 1998; Lee et al., 2004; Shemwell, Yavas, & Bilgin, 1998), only a few studies focus on convention services (Breiter & Milman, 2006b; Severt et al., 2007; Siu, Wan, & Dong, 2012). For example, Severt et al. (2007) claim that attendees’ positive evaluations of conference performance drive their satisfaction, generating positive word-of-mouth recommendations and intent to return to the regional conference center. However, research still remains limited when experiential consumption values are taken into account. There is little research which examines the whole relationship between attendees’ perceived service quality, experiential consumption values, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Given these aspects, this study regards experiential consumption value as an important component in influencing attendees’ perceived service performance, as well as satisfaction and loyalty. To be specific, the current research attempts to examine (1) how the different service items provided by a convention center affect attendees’ experiential consumption value and (2) how attendees’ experiential consumption value influences their satisfaction with and loyalty to the convention center. A conceptual relationship model and six hypotheses are proposed as follows:

H1: Convention basic service quality has a positive influence on attendees’ experiential consumption value.
H2: Convention performance service quality has a positive influence on attendees’ experiential consumption value.
H3: Convention excitement service quality has a positive influence on attendees’ experiential consumption value.
H4: Attendees’ experiential consumption values lead to consumer satisfaction with the PCC.
H5: Attendees’ experiential consumption values influence consumer loyalty to the PCC.
TABLE 1 Profile of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>(%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>(65)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>(35)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20–29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>(13.6)</td>
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<td>30–39</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>(17.3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40–49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>(24.8)</td>
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<td>50–59</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>(30.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>(14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous visit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>(82.5)</td>
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H6: Attendees’ satisfaction has a positive impact on their loyalty to the PCC.

METHOD

Research Framework

Based on the above literature and hypotheses, this study proposes a conceptual relation model (Figure 1). The following section explains the sampling method and the survey instrument, followed by the related scale and definitions.

Sampling Method

The study data was collected at the PCC when the International City/County Management Association’s (ICMA) 98th annual conference was being held there in October 2012 (October 7–10). As the largest annual event for local government managers and staff, a large number of ICMA members gathered to participate in daily keynote sessions, educational sessions, roundtable discussions, ICMA University workshops and forums, and field demonstrations. Seven Arizona State University students helped to conduct a survey during the second and third day of the conference. The research team members approached ICMA attendees around the booth that was set up for the survey, and asked them whether they would like to complete a survey regarding the services provided by the PCC and their satisfaction.

Simply put, the data for this study were collected by a self-administered questionnaire method using convenience sampling. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to attendees, of which 217 usable responses were generated, representing a response rate of 54%. The sample size for this study meets the requirement—a minimum ratio of at least five respondents for each estimated parameter (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). The demographic profiles of the respondents are provided in Table 1. The ma-
The Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was developed as a self-administered questionnaire comprised of three sections. The first section examined the attendees’ experienced service quality of each of the 25 convention service attributes, using a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (poor) to 7 (excellent). Given an understanding of convention service literature (Bitner, 1992; Breiter & Milman, 2006a; Lee & Park, 2002; Jung, 2005; Wu & Weber), 30 items were initially selected and tailored specifically to the PCC. After six convention managers pre-tested the selected convention service items, which were categorized into the three-basic, performance, and excitement-factors, the 25 service quality items were finally chosen for inclusion in the survey (see Table 2).

By definition, the basic service factor refers to as rudimentary requirements for entering the market, which customers are likely to count as pre-requisites (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Füller & Matzler, 2008). For the present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2 Three-Factor Service Quality Items</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three-factor service quality items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic factor</td>
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<td>Excitement factor</td>
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Sources: Adapted from Bitner (1992), Breiter and Milman (2006a), Lee and Park (2002), Jung (2005), and Wu and Weber (2005).
study, these included overall cleanliness, directional signage in the PCC, friendliness of the staff, helpfulness of the staff in the PCC, etc. On the other hand, the performance service factor can be defined as services which are directly linked to customers’ needs and desires (Füller & Matzler, 2008; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002). In this study, it consists of availability of facilities for disabled access, convenience of parking, availability of F&B outlets around the PCC, etc. Finally, the excitement service factor is counted as services beyond customers’ needs and expectations. Thus, these services can enhance customers’ satisfaction, but do nothing to decrease it (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Füller & Matzler, 2008). The present study included availability of nightlife, availability of organic and vegetarian food, availability of light rail near the PCC, and so on.

The second section consisted of 11 items. The first five items measured sense and feel experiential values. In this study, sensory and feeling values are counted as stimulations which serve to mediate the effect of three factor service dimensions on attendees’ satisfaction and loyalty. More specifically, this five items driven by previous studies (Schmitt, 1999b; Tsaur, Chiu, & Wang, 2007; Yuan & Wu, 2008) are modified in the context of the PCC as follows: “The interior and exterior of the PCC make a strong visual impression on me,” “The PCC appeals to my senses,” “The atmosphere of the PCC evokes a warm sensation,” “The atmosphere of the PCC makes me feel comfortable,” and “I feel the facilities at the PCC are convenient.”

The remaining six items investigated attendees’ overall satisfaction and their loyalty to the convention center. It is common to measure satisfaction in surveys through overall satisfaction and positive consumption emotion of atmosphere (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). This study investigates customer satisfaction by examining three items: “Overall, I am satisfied with the services the PCC provided,” “I have really enjoyed myself at the PCC,” and “I am pleased to have visited the PCC.” When examining the relationship between satisfaction and behavioral loyalty, three items were adopted from the previous study (Lee et al., 2004): “I am going to say positive things about the PCC,” “I will recommend the PCC,” and “I will come back to the PCC in the future.” All items were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Finally, the last section of the survey consisted of four socio-demographic questions on gender, age, residence, and previous visitation to the PCC. This socio-demographic information was measured by a categorical scale, while other items were measured using a 7-point Likert-type scale.

RESULTS

Data were analyzed using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 21.0 procedure of structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the proposed model. In addition, the maximum likelihood (ML) method of estimation and two-stage testing processes
were adapted for this study: the measurement model and the SEM (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

Prior to AMOS analyses, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed only for the purpose of reducing the number of variables in three service factor constructs including basic, performance, and excitement service factors. Using the principal component method with Varimax rotation, factor number was decided with a rule of extracted eigenvalue being greater than 1.0 and a factor loading of .4 or higher in order to arrive at a factor number (Hair et al., 1998; Matsunaga, 2010). Three service factors, explaining 52.07% of the total variance, were identified. After initial assessment and purification using EFA, this study included 14 service items under the basic, performance, and excitement service factor constructs. After this procedure, a six-factor structure—consisting of basic, performance, and excitement service factors, experiential value, satisfaction of the PCC, and revisit intention to the PCC—was examined by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the validation sample (N = 217).

Analysis of Measurement Model

After initial assessment of the proposed model, a confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model was conducted to specify the posited relationships of the observed variables to the latent constructs. At this point, following Anderson and Gerbing (1988)'s suggestion, before testing the measurement model overall, each construct in the model was analyzed separately in order to investigate reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity.

Reliability test for each of 25 items were performed by calculating Cronbach’s alpha to measure internal consistency, which indicated satisfying reliability scores ranging from .75 to .92 for all of six latent constructs in the model (Nunnally, 1978; see Table 3).

The authors also assessed the composite reliability (CR), convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the model. First, the CR coefficient of each construct was measured. Bagozzi and Yi (1989) suggested that all composite reliabilities should be above the .6 cut-off value. As shown in Table 4, these values ranged from .81 (excitement service factor) to .93 (attendees’ satisfaction). Since none of the values for all six constructs were less than .6, this confirmed that the scales were reliable. In addition, the factor loadings provided evidence for convergent validity as all latent constructs loadings were greater than the threshold of .5 suggested by Peterson (2000; see Table 4).

The discriminant validity of factors was also estimated by the average variance extracted (AVE). Fornell and Larcker (1981) considered AVE values higher than .5 to be acceptable. The AVE for all six constructs exceeded this threshold value of .5 (see Table 5), which confirmed that discriminant validity was justified. Furthermore, the AVE scores for all of the constructs were higher than the correlations among each pair of the con-
### TABLE 3 Mean, Standard Deviation, and Cronbach’s Alpha of All Measurement Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three-factor service quality items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic factor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of meeting facilities</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly staff</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>0.819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful staff</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance factor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled person accessibility to PCC</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>1.663</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience of parking</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>1.788</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of F&amp;B outlets around the PCC</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional road signage around the PCC</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>1.255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of designated smoking areas</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.890</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of transportation to the PCC</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>1.439</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excitement factor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightlife</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.698</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique architecture design</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>1.388</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of special food such as organic and vegetarian</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>1.722</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist information</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>1.411</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of light rail near PCC</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>1.534</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiential value</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interior and exterior of the PCC make a strong visual impression on me</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>1.181</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PCC appeals to my senses</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>1.175</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The atmosphere of the PCC evokes a warm sensation</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The atmosphere of the PCC makes me feel comfortable</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>0.985</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the facilities at the PCC are convenient</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.945</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I am satisfied with the services the PCC provided</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have really enjoyed myself at the PCC</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>1.008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am pleased to have visited the PCC</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyalty</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am going to say positive things about the PCC</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>0.980</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will recommend the PCC</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will come back to the PCC in the future</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>1.400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

structs (see Table 5), confirming that each construct had good discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In order to ensure that the measure of one theoretical construct was not similar to the measures of other different theoretical constructs, discriminant validity analysis was conducted (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). According to Kline (2011), discriminant validity can also be
### TABLE 4 Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>The three-factor service quality items</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>SMC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic factor</td>
<td>Maintenance of meeting facilities</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friendly staff</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful staff</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance factor</td>
<td>Disabled person accessibility to PCC</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convenience of parking</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of F&amp;B outlets around the PCC</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directional road signage around the PCC</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility of designated smoking areas</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost of transportation to the PCC</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitement factor</td>
<td>Nightlife</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unique architecture design</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of special food such as organic and vegetarian</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourist information</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of light rail near PCC</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential value</td>
<td>The interior and exterior of the PCC make a strong visual impression on me</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The PCC appeals to my senses</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The atmosphere of the PCC evokes a warm sensation</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The atmosphere of the PCC makes me feel comfortable</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I feel the facilities at the PCC are convenient</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>Overall, I am satisfied with the services the PCC provided</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have really enjoyed myself at the PCC</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am pleased to have visited the PCC</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>I am going to say positive things about the PCC</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I will recommend the PCC</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I will come back to the PCC in the future</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: SMC is squared multiple correlation.

confirmed when the estimated correlations of the constructs are not excessively high (> .85) or excessively low (< .1). As shown in Table 5, the correlation scores satisfied the criteria to establish discriminant validity. Combining all of the above aspects of the model evaluation process, the factors in the measurement model were deemed as having convergent and dis-
TABLE 5  Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity of Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic service factor</th>
<th>Performance service factor</th>
<th>Excitement service factor</th>
<th>Experiential consumption value</th>
<th>Attendees' satisfaction</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic service factor</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance service factor</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitement service factor</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential consumption value</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees' satisfaction</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendees' loyalty</td>
<td>.49*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01.
Note: Square root of AVE is shown on the diagonal of the matrix; inter-construct correlation is shown off the diagonal.

criminant validity, and this measurement model provided a good fit to the data.

CFA analysis was also performed in order to test whether the measurement model presented a good fit between the data and the proposed measurement model. All of the goodness-of-fit measures in this study fell into acceptable ranges with scaled $\chi^2/df = 2.2$, CFI = .90, IFI = .90, and RMSEA = .075, indicating that the proposed measurement model provided a good fit to the data.

Analysis of SEM

The structural model was assessed to examine the overall fit of the model and to test the hypothesized structural relationships among the six constructs. All of the goodness-of-fit measures in the study fell into acceptable ranges ($\chi^2/df = 2.1$, CFI = .91, IFI = .91, RMSEA = .072), which confirmed that

TABLE 6  Goodness-of-Fit Indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\chi^2/df$</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measurement model</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural model</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested value*</td>
<td>$\leq 3$</td>
<td>$\geq .9$</td>
<td>$\geq .9$</td>
<td>$\leq .08$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Suggested values were based on Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006).
TABLE 7 Structural Parameter Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural paths</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>t-statistics</th>
<th>Hypotheses result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic service → experiential value</td>
<td>.82**</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>H1 supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance service → experiential value</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1.74</td>
<td>H2 not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitement service → experiential value</td>
<td>.75*</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>H3 supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential value → satisfaction</td>
<td>.83**</td>
<td>10.98</td>
<td>H4 supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential value → loyalty</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction → loyalty</td>
<td>.85**</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>H6 supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01.

the structural model for this study provided a good fit to the data as shown in Table 6.

Furthermore, the results of this study demonstrated that the majority of regression coefficients for the hypothesized relationships were significant. More specifically, the perceived quality of the basic and excitement service factors had a positive influence on individual experiential values, whereas the quality of the performance service factors had no effect on these experiential values (see Table 7). The results supported H1 (β = .82, p < .01), and H3 (β = .75, p < .05).

More interestingly, even though enhanced individual experiential values had an impact on raising overall satisfaction with the convention center (H4: β = .83, p < .01), they did not directly affect loyalty toward the convention center. Finally, it was found that satisfaction strongly influenced loyalty toward the convention center, which provided support for H6 (β = .85, p < .01; see Table 7). The squared multiple correlation coefficients (SMC; $R^2$) for indicator variables were assessed. SMCs lie between 0 and 1 (the closer to 1, the better the variable acts as an indicator of the latent construct). As the result of SMCs, the model explained experiential value ($R^2 = .78$) and satisfaction of the PCC ($R^2 = .69$) very well. Furthermore, this model explained a large portion of the revisit intention to the PCC ($R^2 = .79$; see Figure 2).
DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study developed and empirically tested a conceptual model of the determinants of individual consumption value, satisfaction, and loyalty by considering three antecedents: basic, performance, and excitement service factors. The results revealed that two of the three independent variables—basic and excitement service factors—had a direct effect on individual experiential value, which in turn affected satisfaction and loyalty. In general, the current study sheds light on how attendees’ perception of service quality influences their individual experiential value, overall satisfaction, and loyalty toward a convention center. The role of experiential value is gaining attention in the literature of hospitality and tourism research (Chou, 2013; Lien, 2012; Tsaur, Chiu, & Wang, 2007; Wu & Liang, 2009; Yuan & Wu, 2008); however, when it comes to convention studies, no major studies have utilized a concept of experiential value in their model to assess customers’ service experience evaluation, their satisfaction, and behavioral intention. In this regard, this research provides valuable insights into the impact of individual experiential value on satisfaction and loyalty.

The findings support that perceived service quality has a positive impact on experiential value, and also confirm the finding of previous studies that the process of experiencing services is critical for inducing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Lee et al., 2010; Lin & Chiang, 2010). More specifically, the findings of this study identify which service attributes are capable of encouraging the process of experiential consumption value. Interestingly, the results reveal that perceived quality of basic service factors has a strong influence on convention attendees’ experiential values, which can lead to their satisfaction and intention to revisit. As shown in previous studies, basic factors are defined as minimum requirements that cause dissatisfaction if not fulfilled (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Matzler & Sauerwein, 2002). In the context of a convention facility setting, basic service factors can be regarded as maintenance of meeting facilities, and friendliness and helpfulness of the staff. This result implies that it is crucial to retain high quality care for basic service factors, as these services can still play a critical role in amplifying attendees’ experiences and enhancing their satisfaction.

Adding to basic service factors, it is also confirmed that excitement service factors are proven to affect attendees’ perceptions on experiential consumption values. As inferred from the literature review, excitement service factors are generally provided to customers beyond their needs and expectations. Thus, these factors are unexpected and surprise customers (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004; Füller & Matzler, 2008; Matzler and Sauerwein, 2002). For this study, excitement service factors included the following: availability of nightlife, unique architectural design (southwestern design, culture, and diverse artwork displayed), availability of special food (such as organic and vegetarian), availability of light rail access near the convention center, and
availability of tourist information. These services are not a frequent expectation of convention attendees, but this study proves that these can arouse a positive emotional response in regards to attendees’ convention center experiences. For example, attendees who visit the convention center would be pleased to see a variety of unique artwork during their stay, and would also appreciate the accessibility of the light rail, which makes it easy to travel around the Phoenix area and is rarely found in other cities. According to a recent survey of AIPC (2014), convention centers in North America in particular make an effort to update meeting rooms (considered as a basic service factor), as well as improve the exterior of the venue and provide access to public transportation (which are excitement service factors).

On the other hand, performance service factors comparing the availability of facilities for disabled access, availability of F&B outlets around the convention center, and availability of designated smoking areas insignificantly influence the attendees’ experiential value in this theoretical model. Based on previous studies that delegates evaluated the aforementioned services as important facility features of a convention center (Breiter & Milman, 2006a; Wu & Weber, 2005), the authors expected a significant impact of performance service factors on experiential value. Contrary to the authors’ expectation, however, there was no significant effect. One explanation for this could be that the targeted convention attendees may pay less attention to these service factors, since these are neither required nor surprising services, thus not stimulating their perceived experiential values. In summary, in line with the Lin and Chiang (2010) study, the current study confirms that perceived high service quality has a positive impact on attendees’ experiential values.

With regard to the relationships among experiential consumption values, satisfaction, and loyalty to the convention center, this study affirms previous findings (Baker, Parasuraman, & Voss, 2002; Chou, 2013; Yuan & Wu, 2008) that there is a direct relationship between perceived experiential values and satisfaction, and an indirect relationship between perceived experiential values and loyalty to the convention center. On the other hand, other recent service-setting studies in tourism and hospitality have revealed the significant impact of customers’ experiential values, such as feeling and emotion, on their behavioral intentions (Bigné, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005; Lien, 2012; Lin & Chiang, 2010). Given this, the present study has tried to examine a significant direct relationship between attendees’ experiential values and loyalty. However, this finding makes contrasts with results of previous studies (Bigné, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005; Lin & Chiang, 2010) in that attendees’ experiential consumption values, which affect loyalty to the convention center, are mediated by their overall satisfaction. The possible explanation for this is that customers usually visit convention centers for specific meetings and events, unlike other tourism destinations or retail stores. Therefore, their experiential consumption values might not directly lead to their intention
to revisit without anticipation of any future meetings or events to attend. In conclusion, the study contributes to the literature by (1) advancing the understanding of service-oriented constructs in convention center settings, (2) finding empirically valid service items that embrace various aspects of a convention center, and finally (3) combining the experiential consumption value concept so as to investigate how this value is perceived differently depending on service attributes.

In a practical environment, findings from this study provide important insights in terms of enhancing competitiveness over other venues. Gursoy, Chen, and Kim (2005) posit that a better understanding of customers’ perceived service quality is one critical component of positioning strategies in the hospitality industry. Supportively, Torres (2014) also suggests that practitioners need to design service of quality, although service of quality is measured by the customers’ experiences. It is important for convention managers and operators to recognize the types of service factors which significantly enhance attendees’ sensory and emotional experiences at convention facilities and increase their satisfaction and revisit intention. This can be an effective marketing strategy to appeal to meeting planners and organizations. From the meeting planners’ perspective, they want their customers (e.g., attendees, exhibitors, and associations) to be satisfied with the venue they chose. According to a study by Severt and Palakurthi (2008), it is important that the building aesthetics and services provided by a convention center should be appealing and provide a positive experience to attendees. A well-maintained convention center influences not only perception of the convention center itself, but also perception of the meeting. On the premise that attendance affects the success of a meeting, if attendees are satisfied with and make positive comments about the convention center, meeting planners will likely select the venue for future events.

Finally, as a stimulant to local economies, convention centers are usually expected to generate a positive economic contribution and physical revitalization for their local communities (Boo & Kim, 2010; Fenich, 1994). Thus, it is critical to not only enhance the performance of individual centers for the continued success of the convention center, but also to invest limited resources effectively based on attendees’ needs and expectations. As mentioned in the introduction, the industry’s core revenue categories are comprised of convention service related items such as meeting room facilities, signage, F&B services, and technology services (AIPC, 2014). This means that attendees are spending more money and time on these services when a venue provides a better service experience. Considering the study results, from the convention center perspective, not only delivering high-quality service, but also focusing on basic and excitement service categories can be an effective strategy to appeal to customers. Furthermore, gaining feedback from the customers is also preliminarily necessary for changing and adjusting center’s service standards (Torres, 2014).
As key stakeholders, attendees can generate positive economic contributions to the convention center, and by extension, to the host destination. Also, their satisfaction and positive comments may provide a competitive advantage, along with service reputations, in the current market. This study attempts to investigate attendees’ perceived service quality of a convention center, and to unveil the relationship between service quality, experiential consumption value, as well as satisfaction and loyalty. The results of this study may enhance the future services of a convention center; also it may help improve marketing strategies for not only meeting planners but also convention center managers and destination marketers who want to market and utilize the site as much as possible.

This study has certain limitations for generalizability. The sample of this study was drawn from one annual association conference held in October 2012. Taking into consideration conditions such as the type of events and customers in attendance, data needs to be collected from a variety of events held at the PCC to get a more comprehensive sample. Also, the study only investigated one specific convention center (PCC) and the services provided at the center. In order to identify which service attributes affect various experiential consumption values of customers, varying service attributes provided by a greater number of convention centers need to be taken into account in future studies.

REFERENCES


