

Relationship Among Experiential Marketing, Service Quality and Customer Loyalty- Case Study Based on Exploratory Factor Analysis

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ABSTRACT:As a result of diffusion of diverse culinary cultures over the recent decades, chatting with friends and enjoying beverages amid the romantic atmosphere and décor of international coffee chains have become an increasingly popular with consumers. This trend has led to a continuous expansion of franchise stores. In this context, the main purpose of this study is to explore consumers' perception of experiential marketing and service quality during the purchase process offered by three major coffee chain operators in Taiwan and to survey the establishment of consumer loyalty and support as the psychological contracts between consumers and these three major coffee chain operators. Due to research resource limitations, the study focuses on consumers of three major internationally renowned coffee chains in Taiwan and employs convenience sampling of this population. Statistical software SPSS is used for a series of statistical analyses, including Pearson product-moment correlation and hierarchical multiple regression analysis. This research findings are as follows: (1) The degree of experiential marketing has a positive and significant impact on the service quality perceived by salespersons; (2) The service quality of salespersons has a positive and significant impact on consumer (customer) loyalty; (3) The degree of experiential marketing has a positive and significant impact on consumer (customer) loyalty; (4) Service quality has a mediating effect on the relationship between experiential marketing and customer loyalty; and (5) Experiential marketing and service quality have a moderating effect on customer loyalty. This study findings can serve as a valuable reference for management and marketing strategies of the three major coffee chain operators to achieve continued success and further growth.

KEY WORD: Experiential marketing, Service quality, Customer loyalty

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I. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Along with the economic advancements today, the quality of life and leisure is gradually improving. As the service industry develops, consumers are beginning to emphasize service quality, and the essence and nature of services affect customer satisfaction with businesses. As a result of changes in societal trends during recent years, drinking coffee has become a lifestyle for many. However, how to capture the interest of the target audience and create a valuable marketing approach has contributed to the popularity of experiential marketing. As a result, prominent coffee chain operators in Taiwan have progressively utilized sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational approaches to enhance customer service quality, aiming to stimulate customer loyalty and purchasing behavior.

With the advent of the experiential economy era, experiential marketing differs from traditional marketing methods and focuses on providing unique experiences to customers. By shifting the emphasis from the functional benefits of products, multimedia is used to attract customers through product experiences and further into product brand. By the end of 2022, the total number of coffee shops in Taiwan surpassed 4,000. The market shares of the top 10 coffee chains in Taiwan were as follows: Starbucks ranked the first with 13.4%, followed by Louisa Coffee (12.8%) and Cama Café (4.0%). The combined market share of the top three was 30.2%, while the total market share of the fourth to tenth companies was 7.2%, significantly lower than the top-ranking Starbucks Coffee and the second largest player Louisa Coffee (Preacher, 2023).

The rise of experiential marketing has led to a continuous improvement in customer service. As a result of diffusion of diverse culinary cultures, chatting with friends and enjoying beverages amid the romantic atmosphere and décor of international coffee chains have become an increasingly popular with consumers. This trend has contributed to a continuous expansion of franchise stores (Kan 2013). In this context, this study conducts convenience sampling of the consumers (i.e., the population) of the three major internationally renowned coffee chains in Taiwan. The primary objective of this study is to explore the experiential marketing

and service quality during the purchase process offered by three major coffee chains in Taiwan and to examine the establishment of consumer loyalty and support as the psychological contracts between consumers and these three major coffee chain operators.

The main objectives of this study are outlined as follows: To sample the consumers of the three major internationally renowned coffee chains in Taiwan so as to examine (1) whether experiential marketing has significant influence on service quality (2) whether service quality has significant influence on customer loyalty; (3) whether experiential marketing has significant influence on customer loyalty. To take a step further, this study intends to understand; (4) whether service quality has a mediating effect on the relationship between experiential marketing and customer loyalty; and (5) whether service quality and experiential marketing has a moderating effect on customer loyalty

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

This section aims to define the various constructs of the research topics and the relationships among these main constructs. Hence, a literature review is conducted on publications by scholars and relevant research hypotheses concerning the relationships between constructs are formulated.

2.1 Conceptual Definition of Experiential Marketing

This study conceptually defines experiential marketing as marketing that engages the five senses (visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory), encompassing: (1) sensory experience; (2) emotional experience; (3) cognitive experience; (4) behavior experience; and (5) relational experience. The aforementioned conceptual definition is derived from the following literature references.

Schmitt (1999) believed that experiential marketing is based on individual customer's psychology and social behavior, incorporated with traditional marketing perspectives to form a conceptual framework that extends the management of consumer group experiences. This framework comprises two levels: strategic experiential modules (SEMs) and experiential providers (ExPros).

Falk and Dierking (2011) posited that experience is a dynamic process and can be divided into pre-experience, during experience, and post-experience phases. Experience is not a personal event created by consumers. Rather, it is a spontaneous response onsite, with the actors involved.

Pine and Gilmore (2011) mentioned that experience is an activity that creates unforgettable moments. Consumption is considered a process. When a business treats service as an experience, the experience takes place. Products serve as props on stage to attract consumers. Products are tangible, services are intangible, and the experience is memorable.

Chang (2023) indicated that in the past, consumer experienced marketing with a focus on aspects such as quality, price, distribution channels, and promotions. However, with the arrival of the experience economy era, consumer demands have become increasingly diverse, and traditional marketing have gradually lost its appeal.

Consequently, experiential marketing has emerged to explore consumer needs from the perspective of consumers. Experiential marketing categorizes consumer experiences into sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational aspects. By implementing strategies tailored to different consumer needs and providing high-quality experiences, experiential marketing allows consumers to form emotional connections and enhance brand loyalty.

Chiu (2023) suggested that experiential marketing involves the creation of wonderful and unforgettable experiences through the senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. It aims to provide consumers with delightful experiences and memorable moments so that tangible or intangible products or services trigger transactions via consumer behavior or brand identification.

Lai (2023) indicated that experiential marketing involves not only the provision of information to consumers related to the purchase of goods or services, but also the delivery of an enhanced sense of added value. A satisfying experience is more likely to make consumers feel that they have received value for money. It is the unique experiences that leave a profound impression. The creation of gratifying experiences requires the understanding and capturing of consumers' feelings and thoughts, so that the feelings stay in the heart of consumers and they would like to make repeated purchases.

2.2 Conceptual Definition of Service Quality

The conceptual definition of service quality in this study is based on Parasurama, Zeithaml, Berry (1988), who define it as the difference between customers' perceptions of the service received and expectations for the service provided. This consists of the following constructs: (1) tangibility; (2) reliability; (3) responsiveness; (4) assurance; and (5) empathy.

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines services as the activities, benefits, or satisfaction offered for sale or accompanied with the sale of goods. Services are the actions or performances offered by one party to another, and the essence of these actions or performances is intangible (Kotler, 1996).

As time evolves, the consumer market is no longer centred on the sale of products. How to make one's own products stand out, attract attention and allure customers to make a purchase is a challenge faced by many businesses today. The quality of service has a significant impact on overall corporate performance, return on investment, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profits (Lin, Lin, & Wang, 2021).

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985) believed that it is consumers who ultimately measure the quality of services. There are five gaps in the servicing of customers: the gap between customer expectations and management's perception, the gap between management's delivery and service specifications, the gap between service quality and service rendering process, the gap between service rendering and external communication, and the gap between customer expectations and post-service experience. All these gaps can lead to negative sentiments among customers regarding service quality. Therefore, if a business wants to meet the service required by customers, it needs to reduce the occurrence of these gaps in order to maximize the value of products and encourage customers to make repeat purchases.

2.3 Conceptual Definition of Customer Loyalty

The conceptual definition of customer loyalty in this study is that customers express satisfaction as the purchased product or service meets or even exceeds expectations and 100% willingness to repurchase or recommend to others. The above conceptual definition is based on the following literature references.

Selnes (1993) defined repurchase intention as the likelihood of repeat purchases based on experience and judgment. Repurchase intention is the consumer's willingness to make repeated purchases from the same product or service provider. It represents a psychological commitment from consumers. This intention is derived from the consumer's experience and judgment. Repurchase intention reflects the customer's expectations and perceptions, such as the intention to purchase specific products produced by a particular supplier in the future or the willingness to recommend products or services from a specific supplier to others (Daugherty, Stanket, Ellinger, 1998).

Dick and Basu (1994) divided customer loyalty into four types: no loyalty, spurious loyalty, latent loyalty, and loyalty. The reasons for no loyalty in the consumer market include the absence of distinctive features or competitiveness in the market for specific branded products.

Chiu, Sun, and Chen (2005) argued that customer satisfaction also has a significant and positive influence on customer loyalty.

Lin (2002) took a step further and indicated that customers loyal to specific brands, shops or services either like or trust the brands or suppliers. This is how loyal customers come about.

Chen and Wang (2006) believed that customer loyalty is the sense of trust arising from the mind of customers. It results in repeated purchases and word of mouth.

According to Cheng, Luo, Hsieh, and Lien (2020), loyalty means customer emotions and behaviors do not change due to market conditions or marketing campaigns of competitors.

2.4 Experiential Marketing and Customer Loyalty

In terms of the correlation between experiential marketing and customer loyalty, Tse, Nicosia & Wilton (1990) proposed that the quality of consumer experience inevitably impacts the level of consumer satisfaction. Conversely, about 91% of the dissatisfied customers are unlikely to make a repeat purchase and may even broadcast their unhappy experience to other customers. Hence, there is a positive correlation between experiential marketing and customer loyalty.

Huang, Hsu & Lin (2005) highlighted the positive and significant influence of experiential marketing on customer loyalty.

Wang (2007) believed that experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

Yeh (2010) suggested that experiential marketing exhibits positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

Chen (2023) indicated that there is a positive and significant correlation between experiential marketing and loyalty.

Li (2023) held that there is a significant and positive correlation between experiential marketing and purchase intention and between purchase intention and customer loyalty.

Chang (2023) found that good experiential marketing campaigns are positively correlated with customer loyalty, able to effectively enhance perceived value and customer satisfaction, customer relationship management and ultimately customer loyalty. Supportive customers spread the words to friends and family and create lifelong value as customers.

The analysis indicates that experiential marketing, service quality, and experience value have positive influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Among these, experience value has particularly significant influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

In summary, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

2.5 Experiential Marketing and Service Quality

The literature on the relationship between experiential marketing and service quality is as follows:

Lin (2021) believed that both experiential marketing and service quality have positive and significant influence on repurchase intentions.

Kan (2023) posited that experiential marketing exhibits positive and significant influence on service quality.

Chang (2023) indicated that experiential marketing, service quality and customer loyalty have positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

Huang (2023) pointed out that experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on purchase intentions of coffee consumers in Penghu. The service quality of cafes in Penghu exhibits positive and significant influence on purchase intention of consumers.

In summary, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₂ : Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on service quality.

2.6 Service Quality and Customer Loyalty

The literature on the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty are as follows:

Chen (2021) held that service quality has positive and significant influence on experience satisfaction. Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on purchase intention.

Chen (2023) indicated that there is a positive and significant correlation between service quality and loyalty.

Wong & Yeh (2023) suggested that service quality has positive and significant influence on repurchase intentions.

Lin, Lin & Lee (2007) argued that service quality has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

In summary, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₃: Service quality has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

2.7 Service Quality to Experiential Marketing and Customer Loyalty

The literature addressing the relationship among service quality, experiential marketing and customer loyalty as the three major constructs are as follows:

The empirical results by Huang & Zhang (2010) showed: (1) Experiential marketing is positively correlated with and has positive influence on experience value; (2) Experiential marketing is positively correlated with and has positive influence on customer satisfaction; (3) Experiencing value is positively correlated with and has positive influence on customer satisfaction; (4) Experience value is positively correlated with and has positive influence on customer loyalty; and (5) Customer satisfaction is positively correlated with and has positive influence on customer loyalty.

Liu (2011) indicated that the strategic experience modules of website experience marketing are positively and significantly correlated with experience value. Meanwhile, website experience value is positively and significantly correlated with customer satisfaction.

Kan (2023) believed that service quality has mediating effects but no moderating effects on experiential marketing and customer loyalty. This conclusion is rather different from abovementioned Huang et al (2010) and Liu (2011).

In summary, this study develops the following two hypotheses:

H₄:Service quality has mediating effects on experiential marketing and customer loyalty.

H₅:Service quality and experiential marketing has moderating effects on customer loyalty.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the aforesaid research motivations and objectives, the following research framework is derived (Figures 1, 2 and 3).

3.1 Research Framework

Figure 1 Construction of Research Model: Main Effects and Hypotheses

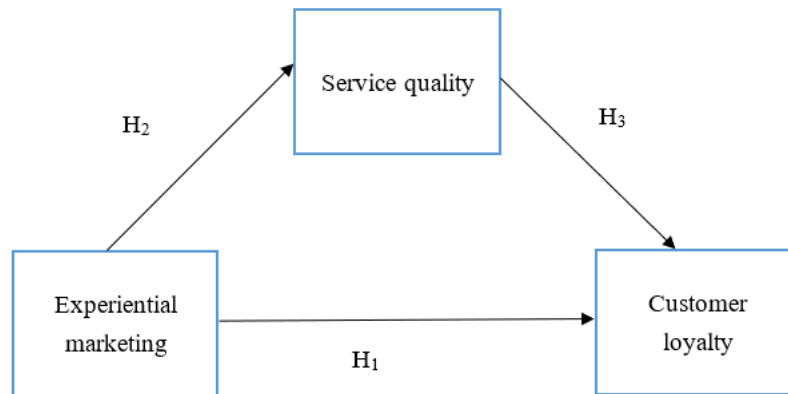


Figure 2 Construction of Research Model: Mediating Effects and Hypotheses

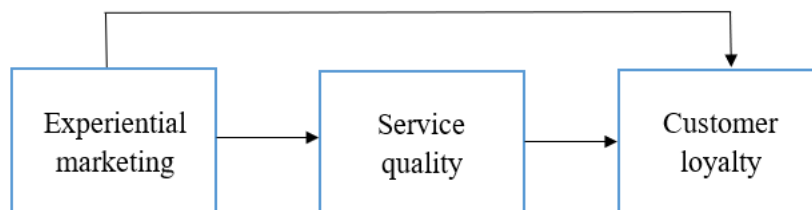
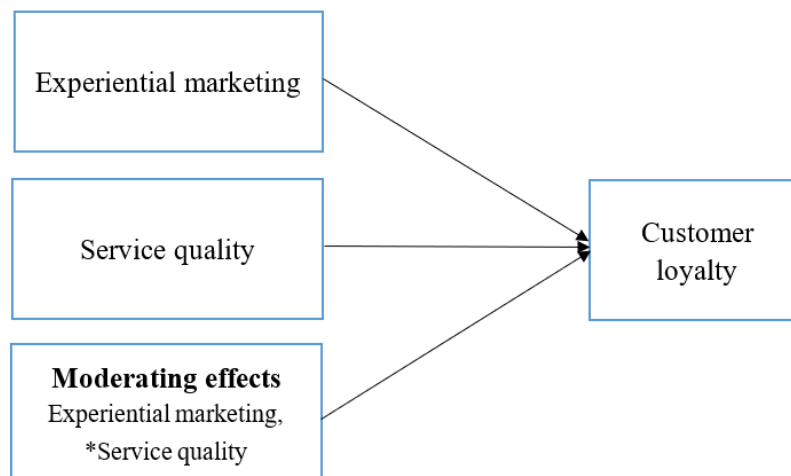


Figure 3 Construction of Research Model: Moderating Effects and Hypotheses



3.2 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design of this study is based on the research questionnaire by Kan (2023) with slight modifications. In other words, the questionnaire is developed on the basis of literature by making appropriate adjustments to the three main constructs: experiential marketing, service quality, and loyalty. The measurement of the questionnaire adopts a Likert seven-point scale, where scores ranging from 7 to 1 are assigned based on the degree of agreement and disagreement. A score of 7 indicates extreme agreement, while a score of 1

indicates extreme disagreement, with higher scores reflecting higher agreement and lower scores reflecting lower agreement.

3.3 Sampling Method and Statistical Software

Due to research resource constraints, this study focuses on consumers of three well-known international coffee chains in Taiwan and employed convenience sampling on this population. A total of 20 expert questionnaires were distributed the pilot test. After adjustments based on suggestions from scholar experts for improvement, a post-test was conducted to ensure that each major construct meets reliability and content validity standards. In addition, factor analysis results on the questionnaire were used to extract the same constructs. This was followed with a principal component analysis and the Vari-max method to convert the results into a component matrix for analysis. Unsuitable and semantically unclear items were removed to facilitate subsequent testing (Chiou, 2018). This study issued a total of 750 questionnaires and collected 623 effective ones, at an effective recovery rate of 83.07%.

Moreover, this study used SPSS, a statistical software package, to perform a series of statistical analyses (including Pearson product-moment correlation, hierarchical multiple regression analysis and Sobel-Test) on the organized effective questionnaires. Finally, the main report and analysis is presented in the following section.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows the pairwise correlation coefficients between main constructs in this study on the basis of Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. The data in Table 1 reveals significant correlations between main constructs in this study.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficients Between Main Constructs

	Experiential marketing	Service quality	Customer loyalty
Experiential marketing	1		
Service quality	.823**	1	
Customer loyalty	.842**	.761**	1

Source: this study

Note: $P^* < 0.05$; $P^{**} < 0.01$ $P^{***} < 0.001$

Next, this study employed hierarchical regression analysis, as detailed in Tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3. It is noteworthy to emphasize that "multiple regression" in this context refers to the use of the forced entry method in regression models, i.e., introduction of predictors intended for multiple regression analysis into the regression equation. Subsequently, the statistical significance of β -Value (path coefficient or standardized regression coefficient) is examined based on the magnitude of each variable's *t*-value and probability value (*P*-Value)(Chiou, 2018).

According to Analysis of the First Multiple Regression (Table 2.1) below, the independent variable in the first regression equation is "experiential marketing" and the dependent variable is "customer loyalty". The β -value is 0.834, and the R SQUARE is 0.711.

This suggests that experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty and hence supports H_1 .

Table 2-1 Analysis of First Multiple Regression

Model 1	Dependent variable: customer loyalty					
Independent variable	β	<i>t</i>	R^2	F	VIF	significance
Experiential marketing	.834	14.243	.711	245.231	1	.000

Source: this study

Note: $P^* < 0.05$; $P^{**} < 0.01$ $P^{***} < 0.001$

According to Analysis of the Second Multiple Regression (Table 2.2) below, the independent variable in the second regression equation is "experiential marketing" and the dependent variable is "service quality". The β -value is 0.822, and the R SQUARE is 0.664. This suggests that experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on service quality and hence supports H_2 .

Table 2-2 Analysis of Second Multiple Regression

Model 2		Dependent variable: Service quality				
Independent variable	β	t	R^2	F	VIF	significance
Experiential marketing	.822	13.242	.664	203.832	1	.000

Source: this study

Note: $P^* < 0.05$; $P^{**} < 0.01$ $P^{***} < 0.001$

According to Analysis of the Third Multiple Regression (Table 2.3) below, the independent variable in the third regression equation is “experiential marketing” and the dependent variable is "Customer loyalty". The β -value is 0.762, and the R SQUARE is 0.553. This suggests that experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty and hence supports H_3 .

Table 2-3 Analysis of Third Multiple Regression

Model 3		Dependent variable: Customer loyalty				
Independent variable	β	t	R^2	F	VIF	significance
Experiential marketing	.762	10.814	.553	129.073	1	.000

Source: this study

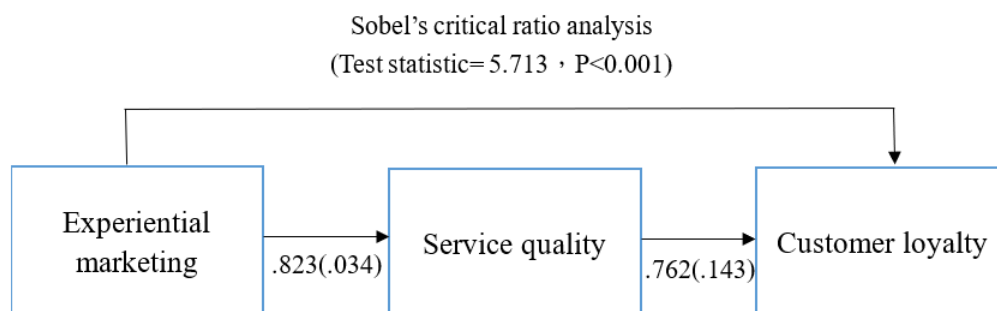
Note: $P^* < 0.05$; $P^{**} < 0.01$ $P^{***} < 0.001$

In sum, the above Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 show the main effects of the research models and the support for each hypothesis (detailed in Figure 4.1).

Mediating Effects

To take a step further, this study applied Sobel's critical ratio analysis to examine whether Service quality exhibits mediating effects. The results, as shown in Figure 4.2, indicate that service quality has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between experiential marketing and customer loyalty. In other words, all the three preceding hypotheses must hold true at the same time: (1) Experiential marketing has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty; (2) Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on service quality; (3) Service quality has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty. Service quality serves both as the dependent variable for experiential marketing and the independent variable for customer loyalty. Hence, the validity of H_4 is confirmed.

Figure 4.2 Sobel's Critical Ratio of the Data Path Analysis (Test Results on Mediating



Moderating Effects

As show in the Analysis of the Fourth Multiple Regression (Table 2.4) and Figure 6, the independent variables in the fourth regression equation are "experiential marketing", "service quality", and "experiential marketing * service quality". The dependent variable is "customer loyalty". The analysis indicates that service quality and experiential marketing have moderating effects on customer loyalty. In other words, service quality and experiential marketing exhibit a positive interaction with or a synergistic impact on customer loyalty. Hence, H_5 is supported.

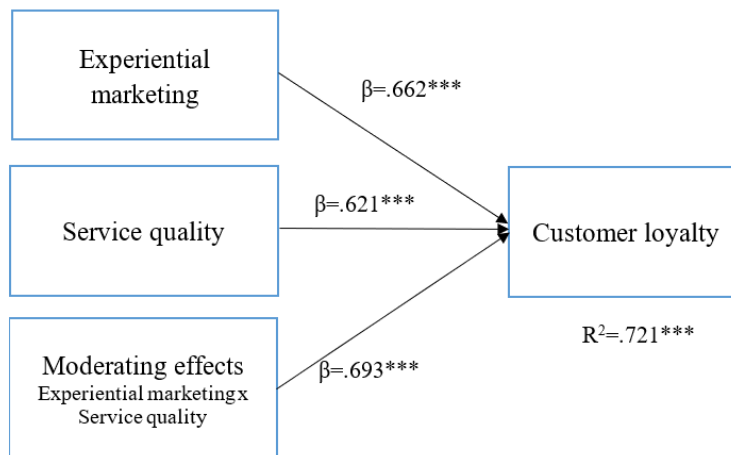
Table 2-4 Analysis of Fourth Multiple Regression

Moderating effects		Dependent variable: Customer loyalty				
Independent variable	β	t	R^2	F	VIF	significance
Experiential marketing	.662	6.173			3.142	.000
Service quality	.621	6.223			3.231	.000
Service quality*Experiential marketing	.693	6.562			3.644	.000
Overall effects			.721	81.332		.000

Source: this study

Note: $P^* < 0.05$; $P^{**} < 0.01$; $P^{***} < 0.001$

Figure 6: Research Theoretic Model: Moderating Effects



V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In summary, the research findings on consumers' perception of experiential marketing and service quality during the purchase process offered by three major coffee chains in Taiwan and the establishment of consumer loyalty and support as the psychological contracts between consumers and these three major coffee chains suggest the following:

(1) H_1 : Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty (accepted).

This hypothesis is consistent with the perspectives of the authors mentioned in the above literature review. The managerial implication of this hypothesis is that companies must emphasize consumers' sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational experiences in order to enhance consumer loyalty and consequently willingness to repurchase.

(2) H_2 : Experiential marketing has positive and significant influence on service quality (accepted).

This hypothesis is also consistent with the perspectives of the authors mentioned in the above literature review. The managerial implication of this hypothesis is that companies must emphasize consumers' sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational experiences in order to enhance service quality. This will allow consumers to feel that the service quality received is reliable, responsive, assuring, caring and tangible.

H_3 : Service quality has positive and significant influence on customer loyalty (accepted).

This hypothesis is again consistent with the perspectives of the authors mentioned in the above literature review. The managerial implication of this hypothesis is that companies must emphasize the reliability, responsiveness, assurance, daringness and tangibility of service quality in order to enhance customer loyalty and hence repurchase intentions.

H_4 : Service quality has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between experiential marketing and customer loyalty.

This hypothesis is also consistent with the perspectives of the authors mentioned in the above literature review. The managerial implication of this hypothesis is that companies cannot afford to overlook the importance of service quality enhancement. As service quality is the dependent variable of experiential marketing as well as the independent variable of customer loyalty, it is essential to emphasize consumers' sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational experiences in order to boost customer loyalty and hence repurchase intentions.

H₅: Experiential marketing and service quality have moderating effects on customer loyalty.

The managerial implication of this hypothesis is that experiential marketing and service quality have a positive interaction with or a synergistic impact on customer loyalty. To enhance customer loyalty, encourage repurchase intentions and boost sales, it is necessary for companies to ensure experiential marketing and better service quality so as to create synergies.

In sum, all the research hypotheses are accepted.

It is worth noting the results on H₅ regarding the moderating effects of service quality on experiential marketing and customer loyalty contradict Kan's study (2023). This may be attributed to differences in the context of the participants, sampling methods, and the population of this study. Therefore, it is recommended that readers or future researchers with a sincere research attitude and in the spirit of academic freedom continue to employ confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for verification. Finally, the findings of this study may serve as a reference to management and marketing of the three major coffee chain operators.

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