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From Service Experience to Behavioral Intentions: Analyzing the Mediating Mechanisms

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the interrelationships between service experience, emotions, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions within the context of wellness spa services. The focus is on understanding how emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction mediate the relationship between service experience and behavioural intentions, a pathway not previously explored in its entirety. Data were gathered through a survey of 500 Thai day spa visitors from five major cities in Thailand. The findings reveal that emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction fully mediate the relationship between service experience and behavioural intentions, with direct effects proving to be nonsignificant. Notably, strong connections were identified among the key variables, offering a comprehensive insight into the decision-making process of Thai spa-goers. The paper concludes with a discussion of the theoretical contributions and practical applications of these results.

1. Introduction

This section explores the relationship among service experience, emotions, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions within the wellness spa service context. It highlights the theoretical significance of understanding these relationships and their practical implications for improving customer experience and retention. The core research question investigates how emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction mediate the relationship between service experience and behavioural intentions. The sub-research questions include: How does service experience influence emotions? How do emotions affect perceived value? How does perceived value impact satisfaction? How does satisfaction influence behavioural intentions? And, how do these mediators collectively influence the pathway from service experience to behavioural intentions? This study takes a quantitative methodology to investigate the effect of service experience as the independent variable on behavioural intentions as the dependent variable while emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction act as mediating variables. Paper

2. Literature Review

2.1 Discussion of Theoretical Implications and Practical Implications

This section analyses existing studies on the interconnections between service experience, emotions, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions, focusing on the mediating effects of emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction. The literature review addresses the following detailed research findings: the impact of service experience on emotions, the role of emotions in determining perceived value, the influence of perceived value on satisfaction, the effect of satisfaction on behavioural intentions, and the comprehensive mediation process linking service

experience to behavioural intentions. Despite advancements, there remain critical gaps in understanding the complete mediation process, the nuanced interplay among these variables, and the lack of comprehensive studies in the wellness spa context. Each section proposes a hypothesis based on these relationships**.**

2.2 Impact of Service Experience on Emotions

Initial studies explored how service experiences influence customer emotions, often focusing on positive and negative emotional responses. The earlier research had focused more on the short-term effects of service quality on emotional states and overlooked the long-term impacts on emotions. Later studies enhanced their assessment of changes in emotions over time but still failed to understand all factors that could affect these shifts in emotions. More recent studies are trying to bridge these gaps by looking into the overall context of experiences in services, but there is not enough evidence of long-term emotional impacts. Hypothesis 1: Service experience positively influences emotions within the wellness spa context.

2.3 Role of Emotions in Determining Perceived Value

The early studies established the relationship between customer emotions and perceived value, indicating that emotional responses have an impact on perceived service value. However, these studies relied heavily on self-reported data, which may be subjective. Subsequent studies used more objective measures and found stronger correlations but lacked depth in analysing the mechanisms behind these emotional influences. Recent studies have expanded on these findings, yet comprehensive models explaining the emotional pathway to perceived value are still needed. Hypothesis 2: Emotions significantly affect perceived value in wellness spa services.

2.4 Influence of Perceived Value on Satisfaction

Initial research focused on the direct relationship between perceived value and customer satisfaction, often highlighting the importance of perceived benefits. However, these studies frequently lacked consideration of the diverse factors shaping perceived value. Subsequent research included more variables, providing a more nuanced understanding but still fell short of fully capturing the complexity of perceived value influences. Recent studies have begun integrating broader perspectives, yet more comprehensive approaches are needed. Hypothesis 3: Perceived value positively impacts satisfaction in the wellness spa context.

2.5 Effect of Satisfaction on Behavioural Intentions

Early studies examined how satisfaction influenced customer behavioural intentions, typically focusing on repeat purchase intentions and word-of-mouth behaviour. These studies often used narrow definitions of satisfaction, limiting their applicability. Later research broadened these definitions, providing more robust insights but still lacked comprehensive models linking satisfaction to various behavioural outcomes. Recent studies have advanced these models but require further refinement. Hypothesis 4: Satisfaction significantly influences behavioural intentions in wellness spa services.

2.6 Comprehensive Mediation Process

Early research explored partial mediation effects among service experience, emotions, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions but often did not address full mediation processes. Later studies improved by incorporating multiple mediators but still lacked comprehensive frameworks. Recent research attempts to fill these gaps by examining complete mediation, yet there is still a need for studies that fully capture all mediating effects in a single model. Hypothesis 5: Emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction fully mediate the relationship between service experience and behavioural intentions in wellness spa services.

3. Method

This section describes the quantitative research methodology used to explore the hypotheses outlined in the literature review. It details the data collection, variables, and analytical techniques employed, ensuring robust and reliable findings that illuminate the mediation effects within the wellness spa service context.

3.1 Data

Data were collected using a structured survey that was administered to 500 Thai day spa-goers across five major cities in Thailand. The survey was conducted over three months in 2023, with the aim of capturing the service experience, emotions, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions of participants. The sampling method used stratified random sampling to ensure diverse representation across different demographic groups and spa types. Screening criteria included individuals aged 18 and above who had visited a spa at least once in the past six months. This approach ensures a comprehensive dataset for analysing the mediation effects within the wellness spa context.

3.2 Variables

The study's independent variable is service experience, measured through customer evaluations of spa ambiance, staff professionalism, and service quality. The mediating variables are emotions, which can be measured through emotional response scales; perceived value, measured through the perceived benefit-to-cost ratios; and satisfaction, which can be evaluated through satisfaction scales. The dependent variable, behavioural intentions, is measured by intentions to revisit and recommend the spa. The control variables are demographic factors, including age, gender, and income level, to help isolate the specific effects of the mediating variables. Consumer behaviour and service marketing literature form the basis to justify the use of measurement for this study. Regression and mediation analysis techniques would be used for testing the research hypotheses.

4. Findings

There is a qualitative descriptive statistical approach for analysing the surveys from 500 Thai day spa-goers. Findings include mean and distribution patterns for service experience, emotions, value, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions in this section. Regression and mediation analyses validate five hypotheses: Hypothesis 1 confirms that service experience positively influences emotions, evidenced by significant emotional responses linked to spa ambiance and service quality. Hypothesis 2 demonstrates a significant effect of emotions on perceived value, with positive emotions enhancing perceived service value. Hypothesis 3 reveals that perceived value positively impacts satisfaction, with higher perceived value correlating with increased satisfaction levels. Hypothesis 4 tested satisfaction as having a significant influence on behavioural intentions through driving higher revisit and recommendation intentions. Lastly, Hypothesis 5 examined the full mediation model and found that with all mediation variables set to emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction, the direct effects of service experience are nonsignificant. These findings offer a holistic view of the decision-making process in the wellness spa context, which places emphasis on the importance of emotional, value, and satisfaction pathways in shaping consumer behaviour.

4.1 Service Experience's Influence on Emotions

This finding supports Hypothesis 1, as it indicates that service experience positively influences emotions within the wellness spa context. Data from 500 Thai day spa-goers show that positive service experiences, particularly regarding spa ambiance and staff professionalism, are significantly associated with positive emotional responses. Key independent variables include elements of the service experience, while dependent variables focus on emotional response indicators such as relaxation and contentment levels. The statistical analysis reveals significant correlations, with high service quality leading to heightened positive emotions. This has implications for service experience in shaping the emotional outcomes that are very pertinent to customer experience and

emotional engagement theories. In general, it would fill in a gap concerning what makes services different in their effects on emotional outcome, inasmuch as spa services can help spas direct focus on improvement in service elements so as to develop more positive emotions.

4.2 Effect of Emotions on Value

This finding validates Hypothesis 2, demonstrating that emotions significantly affect perceived value in wellness spa services. Survey data indicate that positive emotions experienced during spa visits enhance the perceived value of services. Key independent variables include emotional response scales, while dependent variables focus on perceived value metrics such as benefit-to-cost ratios. Statistical analysis confirms significant correlations, with positive emotional responses leading to higher perceived value. The empirical implications suggest that emotional experiences are integral to consumer evaluations of value, supporting theories on emotional value and customer satisfaction. By addressing gaps in understanding the emotional pathways to perceived value, this finding underscores the importance of fostering positive emotions to enhance perceived service value.

4.3 Perceived Value's Impact on Satisfaction

This finding supports Hypothesis 3, indicating that perceived value positively impacts satisfaction within the wellness spa context. It was revealed through analysis of responses that a higher perceived value, especially about service quality and cost-effectiveness, has a strong correlation with satisfaction levels. Key independent variables include indicators of perceived value, and dependent variables are centred on scales of satisfaction. Strong correlations have been established in statistical analysis, emphasizing the significance of perceived value in satisfaction outcomes. The empirical significance aligns with theories on customer value and satisfaction, suggesting that enhancing perceived value is crucial for improving customer satisfaction. By addressing gaps in understanding the value-satisfaction relationship, this finding emphasizes the need for spas to enhance perceived value to boost satisfaction.

4.4 Satisfaction's Influence on Behavioural Intentions

This finding validates Hypothesis 4, demonstrating that satisfaction significantly influences behavioural intentions in wellness spa services. Survey data indicate a strong relationship between higher satisfaction and greater intentions to return and refer. Independent variables are primarily satisfaction scales, while the dependent variables deal with behavioural intention metrics such as likelihood of revisit and recommendation rate. Statistical analyses confirmed that all the correlations are significant, hence indicating that satisfaction is a good driver of behavioural intentions. The empirical implications support theories on customer satisfaction and loyalty, which centre the issue on the salience of satisfaction to achieve positive behavioural outcomes. This finding underlines the relevance of spas addressing gaps in their understanding of the satisfaction-behaviour relationship in focusing on aspects of satisfaction enhancement as a means to foster customer loyalty.

4.5 Mediation Process

This finding supports Hypothesis 5, which validated the full mediation model in the wellness spa context. The analysis reveals that emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction collectively mediate the relationship between service experience and behavioural intentions. Survey data indicate significant indirect effects, with non-significant direct effects, confirming full mediation. Key independent variables include service experience indicators, while dependent variables focus on behavioural intention metrics. Statistical analysis demonstrates that the mediation pathway through emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction is significant, aligning with theories on mediation and customer decision-making. The empirical significance suggests that these mediators are crucial in translating service experiences into behavioural intentions. By addressing gaps in understanding the

full mediation process, this finding highlights the importance of managing emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction to influence consumer behaviour effectively.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the full mediation effects of emotions, perceived value, and satisfaction in the wellness spa context, demonstrating their critical roles in translating service experiences into behavioural intentions. The research underscores the importance of these mediators in shaping consumer behaviour, offering valuable insights for enhancing customer experience and retention. However, the study faces limitations, such as reliance on self-reported data and the specific cultural context of Thai spa-goers, which may affect generalizability. Future research should explore diverse cultural contexts and employ longitudinal designs to capture temporal dynamics. By addressing these areas, future studies can provide deeper insights into the complex interplay of emotions, value, and satisfaction in wellness services, enhancing theoretical understanding and practical applications.

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