Service Quality Improvement and Brand Image of Kulangsu Scenic Spot in Xiamen City, China

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Abstract

Tourism can generate income for every country around the world that has its own unique points of interest. It will make people interested in traveling in that country. Creating a good impression is therefore an issue that every country should focus on. This article aimed 1)To study personal factors affecting the improvement of service quality at Ku Lang Su Scenic Area Spot in Xiamen city 2) To analyze the direct and indirect of the factors affecting service quality improvement and brand image of Kulangsu scenic spot in Xiamen city 3) To construct a model to enhance the customer satisfaction and repeat rate of Kulangsu Scenic Spot in Xiamen city. This study is a mixed methods study. and quantitative studies use convenience sampling. The sample group consisted of 560 tourists who visited the Ku Lang Su scenic spot. The tool used to collect data was a questionnaire survey. Statistical data used in this study include percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The research results were found as follows;

1. Personal information of respondents Most of them are female, 292 people. Most of them have an average age of 18-24 years, 264 people. education is at the bachelor's level, 350 people have a career as a student, 249 people have an income of less than 2000yuan.

2. The building of brand image has a strong positive correlation with the satisfaction of tourists to the intention of re-visiting and recommending them.

3. The improvement of service quality has a strong positive correlation with tourists' satisfaction to their intention to visit again.

Qualitative research results found that service quality has a positive impact on brand image and customer satisfaction from the perspective of improving service quality and building brand image.

Keywords: Service quality; Brand image; Kulangsu scenic spot; Xiamen City

Introduction

Kulangsu Scenic spot in Xiamen, Fujian province, China, was added to the World Heritage List as a "historic international community" on July 8, 2017, making it China's 52nd World Heritage project. Kulangsu Island got its name mainly because of the sound of the waves beating the rocks like a drum. There were famous people beating the waves on the sand. Kulangsu Island, also known as "Qin Island" and "Music Island", has become one of the must-visit attractions in Xiamen and a real name card of Xiamen tourism for its quiet, beautiful and

unique island scenery. The island has a very significant cultural diversity characteristics and modern quality of life, whether teenagers, middle-aged and elderly people, couples, backpackers, etc., can find their favorite on this island, suitable for their own lifestyle. With the collision and exchange of different cultural deposits and values, the characteristic development of Kulangsu provides a representative reference value for the integration of world cultures. According to estimates, the total number of tourists in Fujian Province during the Spring Festival holiday in 2023 was 20.8779 million, with a year-on-year growth of 25.4%. The tourism revenue reached 13.655 billion yuan, up 78.0% year on year. Kulangsu Scenic spot in Xiamen, Fujian province, China, was added to the World Heritage List as a "historic international community" on July 8, 2017, making it China's 52nd World Heritage project. Yun (2011) conducted a field survey on guesthouses in Kulangsu District using the SWOT analysis method and found that the number of guesthouses in Kulangsu District increased rapidly. But internet marketing is lagging behind. She proposed to promote healthy development of guesthouses in Kulangsu by using internet pricing to increase customer loyalty. According to popular searches on Baidu, Xiamen ranks third among the top 10 tourist destinations during China's Spring Festival. In the summary report on 2023 Spring Festival holiday tourism published by Lvmama.com The Gulangsu route in Xiamen is still crowded with passengers during the Spring Festival. Tourists from around the world happily visit the island to experience the unique southern Fujian style. During the 7-day Spring Festival holiday, more than 250,000 people visited Gulangshu Scenic Area And the occupancy rate of many hotels exceeded 95 percent. According to Zhang, 2013 research, the focus is on creating "National important scenic spots" are widely overlooked. which tends to lead to a gradual the decline of the cultural connotation of Gulangsu Island Only by reimagining Gulangsu Island can Gulangsu culture be kept in development and dissemination. Gulangyu Scenic Area received a 327.3% increase in tourists and a 444.0% increase in ticket revenue during the Chinese New Year holiday. Compared with last year, however, the number of tourists in Gulangsu Scenic Area was excessive. The waiting time in queue is too long. and service quality cannot keep up This will inevitably affect the quality of tourists' travel experiences and the image of Gulangsu World Cultural Heritage.

Brand image is the most intuitive impression when the public contacts the brand. The most important and effective way to upgrade the brand is to enhance the brand image (Li et al., 2023). In general, the elements of the scenic spot brand image include four aspects: scenic spot environment, cultural customs, industrial advantages and scenic spot activities. World heritage needs to be properly developed in the process of protection, in order to give tourists a higher reputation. How to strengthen the tourism order management of Kulangsu scenic spot, improve the service quality of the scenic spot, let tourists from all over the world have a higher satisfaction, so as to build a better brand image of Kulangsu and provide representative reference value for the protection and development of the world cultural heritage is the top priority.

Therefore, on the basis of SOR (stimulus - organism - response) theory and SERVQUAL (Zeithaml et al,1990) scale, this study applied the SERVQUAL scale five dimensions to the theoretical research of improving service quality in Kulangsu scenic area. Aiming at the emotional image and brand image in the brand image of tourist destinations, the structural equation model is constructed to analyze the positive influence of brand image on customer satisfaction to the intention of revisiting, and the strategy of improving the service quality of scenic spots and integrating brand image marketing is of unique theoretical and application value.

Research Objectives

1. To study personal factors affecting the improvement of service quality at Ku Lang Su Scenic Area Spot in Xiamen city.

2. To analyze the direct and indirect of the factors affecting service quality improvement and brand image of Kulangsu scenic spot in Xiamen city.

3. To construct a model to enhance the customer satisfaction and repeat rate of Kulangsu Scenic Spot in Xiamen city.

Literature Review

1. Kulangsu Scenic Spot, Xiamen City

Kulangsu scenic spot is located in the southwest of Xiamen Island, with a permanent population of about 16,000 people. It covers a total area of 1.87 square kilometers and is separated from Xiamen Island by the beautiful Egret River 500 meters wide. It is a piece of granite formed more than 100 million years ago. The earth's crust has risen and fallen, the sea has advanced and advanced, and finally separated from the land. In the Song Dynasty, its original name was Yuanshazhou or Yuanzhouzai. Because there is a sea erosion cave in the southwest of Kulangsu Island, which is constantly buffeted by waves. When the tide rises, the waves hit the sea erosion cave, and the sound is like beating drums, so it is named " Kulangsu Island".

In 2005, Kulangsu was selected as one of the "Five Most beautiful Urban Areas in China" by China National Geographic. In 2006, Kulangsu was selected as one of the "Top 50 Places Worth Visiting for Foreigners"; In 2007, it was rated as a national 5A tourist attraction and a national scenic spot. On July 8, 2017, Kulangsu was added to the World Heritage List as an "international historical community", becoming the 52nd World Heritage project in China. In addition, Kulangsu is a total of 150 large and small China's most famous title, such as national scenic area, ISO14000 national demonstration area, national key cultural relic protection units, international safety community honorary title, Siming District and even Xiamen City is the most famous scenic area.

Kulangsu Island, as "the largest of the Five most Beautiful urban areas in China", has numerous scenic spots, such as Sunlight Rock, Shuzhuang Garden, Haoyue Garden, Seabed World, and Organ Museum, etc. With the development of Xiamen Special Economic Zone, various tourism service facilities of Kulangsu Island have been improved day by day. It has become a comprehensive famous scenic tourist area integrating sightseeing, vacation, leisure, entertainment and shopping, attracting more than 4 million tourists from home and abroad every year.

2. Service Quality Theory

Service quality is an important concept in the field of marketing, which is the cornerstone of marketing strategy, and has attracted great attention from practitioners and researchers in the field of marketing. Sasser et al., 1978 a foreign scholar, believed that service quality not only includes the final service result, but also includes the ways and means of providing service. Besides, various characteristics of service such as intangibility, complexity and consumer participation will affect the overall service quality.

The definition of service quality by Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990 emphasizes four basic characteristics of service, namely intangibility, perishable, heterogeneity and synchronization. Intangibility indicates that the service is merely the service reality experienced by the consumer. Although services have intangible characteristics in nature, the tangible characteristics of service providers play a very important role in providing service products or service experiences, Bitner, 1992. Based on this definition, PZB developed a five-dimension scale for measuring service quality, namely the SERVQUAL model. The five

dimensions in this model include tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. This service quality measurement model is widely used to measure service quality in different industry sectors. The SERVQUAL scale is often used by researchers in their studies, although some empirical studies have shown problems in reliability and validity Teas (1993), Qianqian (2020) showed in her review of domestic tourism service quality in the past decade that tourism service quality in a narrow sense refers to the service quality provided by pure tourism practitioners. Tourism service quality in a broad sense includes the quality of tangible facilities, physical products and intangible labor services provided by tourism enterprises. This article agrees with this concept.

3. Brand Image Theory

Aaker (1992) believes that the relationship between brand image and customer perceived value is one of inclusion and subordination. Ziming (2001) divided brand image from five aspects: brand value, brand loyalty, brand cognition, brand association and product attribute cognition (Huimei et al., 2023). Minghua (2002) believes in the comparative study of brand image that brand is to establish a unique impression in the minds of consumers and leave a brand to consumers. From the perspective of information processing, Kapferer (2015) points out that the ultimate result of consumers' perception of brands through perceived value is brand image. Wenxiong & Yifan, 2017 believe that brand image is the most direct reflection of product brand characteristics, and consumers pay more and more attention to brands when purchasing finished products. Luo Bo (2018) both believe that the elements of brand image include four aspects: first, the scenic area environment; Second, cultural customs; Third, industrial advantages; Fourth, scenic activities.

4. Customer Satisfaction Theory

Cardozo, 1965 Early studies on satisfaction mainly focused on products, while Cardozo (1965) believed that improving customer satisfaction would make customers buy again, and would not convert their views on other products. Customer Satisfaction has always been regarded as an important core content in marketing field. The higher the degree of customer satisfaction, the stronger the competitiveness of the enterprise, the greater the market share, the better the benefit of the enterprise, it is self-evident. "Customer is God", "organization depends on the customer" has become the consensus of the business community, let the customer satisfaction has become the marketing strategy of enterprises. Customer satisfaction is an important means to evaluate the performance of enterprise quality management system. Professor Zhao Ping of Tsinghua University has applied the important theory of Chinese customer service satisfaction into the research of contemporary enterprises, and has gradually begun to conduct systematic theoretical research and data analysis on the research results. Therefore, we begin to pay more attention to the research and management practice innovation of customer service quality satisfaction.

5. SERVQUAL Model, is constructed, including tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. In 1988, in order to facilitate practical operation and improve the shortcomings of the model, PZB found through continuous empirical research and further exploration that 97 test items of the service quality gap model were reduced to 54 items, then refined from 54 items to 34 items, and finally simplified to 22 items. Moreover, the 10 dimensions of the original model are reduced to 5 dimensions, namely, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. By means of questionnaire survey and 7-point evaluation system, SERVQUAL evaluation model scale, which is still widely used until now, was formed.

Conceptual Framework

This research is a research study. service quality improvement and brand image of Kulangsu scenic spot in Xiamen city. The researcher defines the research conceptual framework based on the theory of Cronin and Taylor, 1992, The details are as follows.
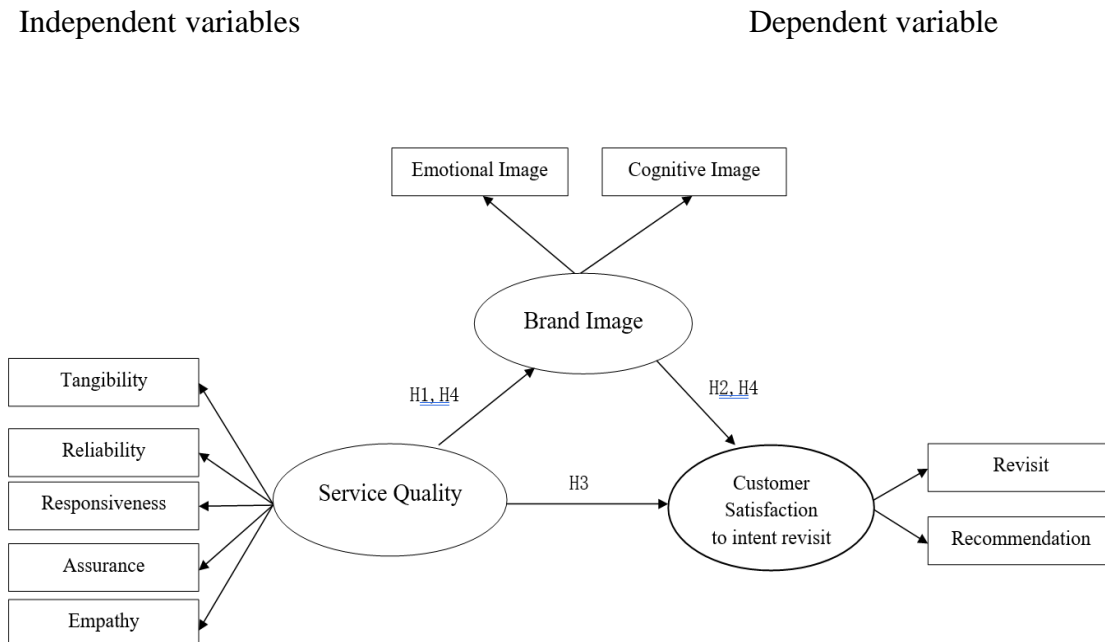
Independent variables   Dependent variable

Fig.1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Quantitative Research

The quantitative sample consisted of tourists who had visited Gulangsu Scenic Area in Xiamen. And because the number of tourists visiting Gulangsu is unknown each day. Therefore, the sample number of questionnaires, 560, received in the specified time was taken as the sample number.

Research Tools in Quantitative Research

The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part of the questionnaire is the tourist's personal information, including gender, age, education, occupation, and travel style. and income level, the second part of the questionnaire was on the enhancement factors of service quality. brand image and repetition rate. And the third part asked about measuring emotional images, perception images, and the rate of revisiting the brand image.

A seven-point scale was used. Respondents rated each item on a scale of 1-7, meaning from strongly disagree to strongly agree:

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Slightly disagree
3 = Disagree
4 = Not sure
5 = agree
6 = Somewhat agree
7 = Strongly agree

Data analysis in Quantitative research

The researcher used a structural equation modeling (SEM) analytical package to develop a causal relationship model and check the consistency of this model with empirical data.

Research tools

Tools used to collect data include: Audio recording and SSI (Semi Structured Interview) to take notes from experts.

Data analysis

The researcher checked the completeness of the answers. If there are still some questionnaires that are incomplete or defective, Researchers will continue to screen and collect new samples until there are enough to distribute and then analyze the data further.

Research Results

Objective 1. Results of analysis of personal data of respondents

Table 1. Analysis of the general data of the respondents

Gender	Amount (N=560)	Percentage
Male	268	47.9
Female	292	52.1
Total	**560**	**100.00**

From the table, it is found that the basic information of tourists is 268 males, accounting for 47.9%, and 292 females, or 52.1%.

Table 2. Number and percentage of females classified by age

Age	Amount (N=560)	Percentage
1Under 18 years old	8	1.4
18—24 years old	264	47.1
25—35 years old	109	19.5
36—50 years old	138	24.6
Over 50 years old	41	7.3
Total	**560**	**100.00**

From Table 2, in terms of age, the main age group is 18-24 years, followed by 36-50 years and 25-35 years. The number of people over 50 years and under 18 years is relatively small. This shows that the majority of young and middle-aged tourists in the scenic spots. Most minors are accompanied by their parents. And there are not many tourists who play alone.

Table 3 Number and percentage of respondents by educational background

Educational Background	Amount (N=560)	Percentage
Senior high school and below	65	11.6
Junior college	88	15.7
undergraduate	350	62.5
Master degree or above	57	10.2
Total	**560**	**100.00**

From Table 3, it is found that the majority of respondents are bachelor's degrees. College education accounted for 62.5%, college education accounted for 15.7%, master's degree or higher 10.2%, high school or lower 11.6%, indicating that the interviewees generally had a high level of education and accepted the questionnaire well.

Table 4. Number and percentage of respondents by occupation

Occupation	Amount (N=560)	Percentage
Student	249	44.5
Company employee	135	24.1
Government and public institution employees	56	10
Individual industrial and commercial enterprises	23	4.1
Freelancer	42	7.5
Retirees	13	2.3
Other	42	7.5
Total	**560**	**100.00**

From Table 4. In terms of occupation, the majority of respondents were students or company employees. Accounting for 68.6 percent

Table 5. Number and percentage of respondents by type of income level

Income	Amount (N=560)	Percentage
Less than 2000 yuan	174	31.1
2000—3999 yuan	93	16.6
4000—5999 yuan	72	12.9
6000-7999 yuan	62	11.1
Over 7999 yuan	159	28.4
Total	**560**	**100.00**

From Table 5, regarding income, it is found that respondents with incomes below 2,000 yuan and above 7,999 yuan are quite large. This accounted for nearly 60%, which corresponds to the majority of young and middle-aged tourists in the scenic spot.

Objective 2. The results of the analysis of the service quality of the respondents

Table 6. Service quality

	Number	Minimum value	Maximum value	Average value	Standard deviation
Tangibility	560	1	7	5.276	1.289
Reliability	560	1	7	5.345	1.198
Responsiveness	560	1	7	5.390	1.243
Assurance	560	1	7	5.381	1.262
Empathy	560	1	7	5.206	1.276
Emotional image	560	1	7	5.385	1.293
Cognitive image	560	1	7	5.266	1.243
Customer satisfaction to intent revisit	560	1	7	5.414	1.441

From Table 7, it was found that reliability, responsiveness, confidence, empathy, emotional image, cognitive image, and replay rate were equal to 5.276, 5.345, 5.390, 5.381, 5.206, 5.385, 5.266, and 5.401, respectively. which is higher than the median These results This indicates that the scores on these variables are higher than the mean level of the Likert 7 review subscale, indicating that they are tangible. Trust, responsiveness, confidence, empathy, emotional imagery, cognitive imagery, and repeat visit rates. There is a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

Discussions

The brand image is effective or depends on the quality it has. And means when the quality-of-service increases, for example, the tactile embarrassment caused by the will and the need for knowledge in the service. responsibility Confident and understanding. Including brand image is affected by or depends on the quality of service, which means when the quality-of-service increases, such as trust, quality from the touch from the feeling Emotions and Awareness in Service Responsibility, Confidence and Understanding. According many researchers as Zhenqiang (2022) studied the purchase intention of live streaming e-commerce consumers and its influencing factors based on SOR theory. Ziying (2022) studied the impact of short video marketing on consumers' purchase intention based on SOR theory. Jing (2022) studied the impact of virtual travel experience on on-site travel intention based on SOR theory.

Knowledge from Research

From the research study on Service quality improvement and brand image of kulangsu scenic spot in xiamen city, Found new knowledge according to the picture below
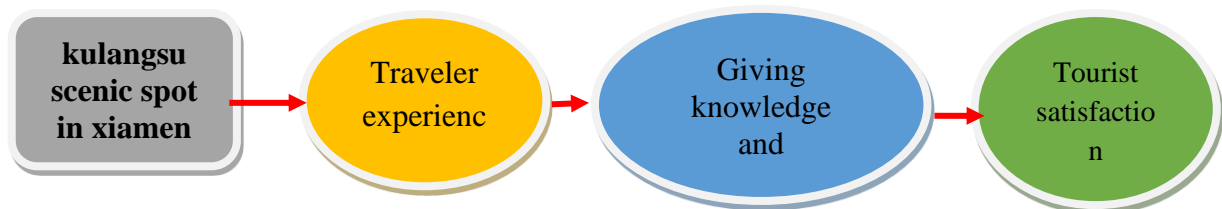

Fig. 2 shows the new knowledge gained from the research

Conclusion

From the research study, it was found that the experience that tourists received from visiting Kulangsu scenic spot in Xiamen city, and the quality of good service, caring and understanding the needs of tourists, including knowledge of history understanding tourists makes tourists very satisfied and want to come back to use the service again if they have the opportunity.

Suggestions

In this research study, the researcher studied the issue, Service quality and brand image only, Therefore, the next research study should study other issues, such as factors affecting satisfaction or factors that promote novel experiences. to tourists or issues regarding special groups of tourists such as the elderly or disabled tourists.

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