

ANTECEDENTS OF DESTINATION LOYALTY

By

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To my family

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ANTECEDENTS OF DESTINATION LOYALTY

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The primary objectives of this study were to investigate and develop a theoretical relationship among destination image, service quality, and perceived value, and to empirically test the constructs that are likely to affect tourist satisfaction, which in turn influence revisit intentions and Word-of-Mouth (WOM). To achieve these purposes, measurement scales for destination image, service quality, perceived value, loyalty were developed relying on previous studies across various contexts. Then, the measurement scales were tested and validated through multiple CFAs. Next, the structural nature of the relationship of destination loyalty, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and destination loyalty constructs were explored.

The results of empirical study indicated that destination image influences on service quality, perceived value and destination loyalty. These findings were not evident in previous studies. Also, service quality was found to exert a positive influence on perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty, respectively. In addition, the findings revealed that perceived value has a significant effect on satisfaction and loyalty. It is worth noting that destination image and perceived value were included into the “quality-satisfaction-loyalty” paradigm.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly saturated marketplace, competitive destinations should redesign their marketing strategies to increase customer loyalty and build long-term relationships with their customers (Baloglu, 2001; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). A review of the literature on loyalty reveals that repeat purchases and/or visits have often been regarded as desirable (Alegre & Juaneda, 2006; Oppermann, 2000) because it is believed that the marketing costs needed to attract repeaters are lower than those required for first-time tourists (Alegre & Juaneda, 2006). Fornell and Wernerfelt (1987) have found that maintaining existing customers generally has a much lower associated cost than recruiting new ones. Reichheld (1996) has documented that a 5% increase in customer retention can generate profit growth of 25-95% across a range of industries. Thus, a larger proportion of gross profit counts towards the bottom line (Chi & Qu, 2008). In addition, loyal customers are more likely to act as free word-of-mouth (WOM) advertising agents that informally bring networks of friends, relatives and other potential consumers to a product/service (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). In fact, WOM referrals account for up to 60% of sales to new customers (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). With such exceptional returns, loyalty becomes a fundamental strategic component for organizations.

The implications of loyalty in consumer behavior have been examined in numerous studies. In the context of travel and tourism, a plethora of studies on tourist satisfaction are available; but tourist loyalty has received less attention in the destination literature (Baloglu, 2001; Baloglu & Erickson, 1998; Beaman, Huan & Kozak, 2002; Bigné, Sánchez & Sánchez, 2001; Darnell & Johnson, 2001; Fyall, Callod & Edwards, 2003; Kozak 2001; Oppermann, 1999, 2000; Yoon et al., 2005). Therefore, the time is ripe for academics and practitioners to conduct additional studies on loyalty in order to facilitate greater understanding of this concept, to better

comprehend the role of satisfaction in developing loyalty, the impact of antecedents of satisfaction determinants on customer loyalty, and their interrelationships.

In the tourism context, understanding the determinants of tourist loyalty has been accepted as an important phenomenon at the management level as a whole and for individual attractions (Darnell & Johnson, 2001). Given the potential role of tourist loyalty, one should not be surprised that a number of studies shed light on the major influencing factors that lead to customer retention (Chi & Qu, 2008), though most do not focus on destinations. A great deal of research has been devoted to investigating the antecedents of repeat purchase intentions including satisfaction (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Kozak, 2001; Petrick, Morais, & Norman, 2001), quality constructs (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Chen & Gursory, 2001; Yuksel, 2001), perceived value (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2007; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Petrick & Backman, 2002), and destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Court & Lupton, 1997; Chon, 1992; Chi & Qu, 2008).

Past studies (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Chi & Qu, 2008) have suggested that destination images influence travelers in the process of selecting a destination, the subsequent evaluation of the trip and in their future intentions. Destination image facilitates a positive influence on perceived quality, satisfaction and intentions to return to a destination (Bigne et al., 2001; Chi & Qu, 2008; Court & Lupton, 1997). A positive image deriving from positive travel experiences results in a positive evaluation of a destination. Tourist loyalty would improve if destination image has a direct effect on behavioral intentions through quality, perceived value and satisfaction, which in turn affects behavioral intentions. In other words, more favorable images will lead to a higher likelihood of returning to the same destination.

Many researchers have suggested that destination image has played a pivotal role in tourist behaviors (Bigne et al, 2001; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2005). In general, tourist behaviors are composed of three stages from the choice of a destination to visit, resultant evaluation and to subsequent behavioral intentions. The resultant evaluations include the travel experience or perceived service quality during the stay, perceived value and overall satisfaction while the subsequent behavioral intentions include intentions to revisit and the willingness to recommend to others. The interrelationship between quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions has been studied in the field of hospitality and tourism for the last two decades (Backman & Veldkamp, 1995; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Oh, 1999). However, perceived value has only recently been studied by tourism researchers (Murphy, Pritchard, & Smith, 2000; Oh, 1999, 2000; Petrick, 2004; Petric & Backman, 2002; Petrick, Morais, & Norman, 2001; Tam, 2000).

Some researchers even suggested that perceived value measurements should be associated with measures of satisfaction (Oh, 2000; Woodruff, 1997) and that perceived value plays a moderating role between service quality and satisfaction (Caruana, Money, & Berthon, 2000). Furthermore, perceived value associates the benefits received with the price paid (Zeithaml, 1988) and is distinguished from service quality and satisfaction. Empirical research has also found that perceived value has positively influenced both future behavioral intentions and actual behaviors. Therefore, service evaluation variables (e.g., service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction) have been found to be good predictors of destination loyalty (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bojanic, 1996; Cronin et al., 2000; Petric, 2004; Tam, 2000).

Although theory-based research efforts have developed the understanding of key service-oriented constructs in hospitality and tourism contexts, there continues to be a need to refine

theories and methodologies by introducing new variables and/or modified frameworks to enhance the predictive power of these models (Hutchison, Lai, & Wang, 2009; Oh & Parks, 1997). For example, service quality has been exclusively investigated as the single antecedent to customer satisfaction in most hospitality and tourism service evaluation research, and other constructs have been examined to improve the accuracy of predictions. For instance, perceived value has been empirically examined as a second proposed antecedent variable to satisfaction in recent studies (Oh, 1999; Petrick, 2004; Tam, 2000).

By understanding the relationships between destination loyalty and its determinants within an integrated approach, destination tourism managers would better know how to build an attractive image and improve their marketing efforts to maximize their use of resources. Therefore, the objective of this study is to empirically investigate a proposed model of tourist consumption processes by including destination image and perceived value into the “quality-satisfaction-loyalty” paradigm. The second purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between destination image and evaluative factors (e.g., service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction) in their prediction of intentions to repurchase and positive word-of-mouth publicity. To accomplish this aim, this study provides a thorough review of the literature on destination image, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty including empirically tested relationships among these constructs, and seeks to test the most promising models.

## CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The fundamental objective of this study was to develop and test an integrative model, which represents the elements contributing to the building of destination loyalty: destination image, perceived quality, perceived value, and overall satisfaction. Previous studies reveal that customer loyalty is influenced by customers' satisfaction (Bitner, 1990; Dick & Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999), and satisfaction is affected by destination image (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Gallarza & Saura, 2006), perceived value (Petrick, 2004; Petrick & Backman, 2002), and perceived quality (Bigné et al., 2001). The hypothesized causal relationships between satisfaction and destination loyalty is referred to as tourism destination loyalty theory (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Below is a comprehensive overview of those constructs and of the interrelationships of the constructs in a model proposed later.

### **Destination Image**

#### **Definition of Destination Image**

Many authors agree that tourism destination image research emerged from Hunt's 1975 seminal publication (Echtner & Ritchie 1991, Fakeye & Crompton 1991; Gallarza, Saura, & García, 2002; Reilly, 1990). According to Pike's (2002) study, over 142 papers concerning tourism destination image have been published in tourism journals or major conference proceedings since 1973. This history and abundance of articles verifies there is agreement on the significance and worth of the study of destination image.

Within social psychology, the term image has referred to a reflection or representation of sensory or conceptual information that builds on past experience and governs an individual's actions (Stringer, 1984). Tyagi (1989) also connoted that image is not a static or objective phenomenon because it changes as unexpected conditions emerge. Thus, image evolution has

been critical topic of study (Chon, 1991; Gallarza et al., 2002; Gunn, 1972; Kim & Morrison, 2005). The definition of tourist destination image most commonly cited is that by Crompton (1979, p.18) “the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination”. This definition relates to the individual, whereas other definitions acknowledge that images can be shared by groups of people (Jenkins, 1999). His definition has led to many researchers paying attention to image as a salient concept in understanding the destination selection process of tourists (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Pike, 2002).

### **Why Study Tourist Destination Image?**

Tourist destination image is important because it influences both tourists’ decision-making (Chon, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie 1991; Gunn, 1972; Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1982) and behavior at a particular destination (Crompton, 1979; Jenkins, 1999). Also understanding current destination images and creating appropriate images in the mind of potential visitors is an immensely important part of successful positioning and marketing strategies (Echtner & Ritchie 1993). Selby and Morgan (1996) indicated, “Understanding the differing images that visitors and non-visitors have of a destination is invaluable, enabling the salient attributes of the naïve image and the re-evaluated image to be incorporated into tourism marketing planning” (p.288). Marketers can also utilize destination images to boost satisfaction and to encourage re-visits of destinations.

National tourist organizations, such as the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), track images held by potential visitors in the international marketplace (Lee et al., 2005). Market segmentation through these analyses is utilized in market promotions (Jenkins, 1999). Growth in international visitors after the 2002 World Cup indicates that Korea has a positive image compared with other Asian destinations (Lee et al., 2005). However, other factors including motivations, distance and price may be more significant in the tourist’s general

decision-making process (Ahmed, 1991; Jenkins, 1999). The current study does not cover this topic since these variables are beyond the scope of this study.

### **Image Formation**

A considerable amount of research has discussed the management and formation of destination images and many authors have attempted to conceptualize the components of destination images (Um & Crompton, 1990; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). In addition, many researchers have investigated the image formation process, beginning with Gunn's (1972) seven stage theory on induced and organic image. He elaborated that travelers' experience development on the basis of seven stages of imagery change. This includes the accumulation of mental images about a vacation experience (1<sup>st</sup> stage), change in those images through additional information (2<sup>nd</sup> stage), choosing to take a vacation trip (3<sup>rd</sup> stage), travel to the destination (4<sup>th</sup> stage), participation at the destination (5<sup>th</sup> stage), return travel (6<sup>th</sup> stage) and new accumulation of images based on the travel experience (7<sup>th</sup> stage).

As a consequence, Gunn (1972) recommended that destination images could be tailored or altered over the seven stages. He suggested that destination images evolve at two levels-organic images and induced images. That is, the organic image an individual holds of a destination arises from a long history of non-tourism specific information, such as history and geography books, newspaper reports, magazine articles, and television reports that were not intended as tourism-specific. Thus, individuals who have never visited a destination nor have sought out any tourism-specific information will likely have some kind of information stored in their memory. This might be an incomplete image, to which the traveler adds other bits and pieces.

An induced image is derived from a conscious effort of tourism promotion directed by tourism organizations. While the organic image is usually beyond the control of the destination marketers, induced images are directed by the destination's marketing efforts. It can be built

upon colorful brochures distributed at Visitor Information Centers, information available at travel agencies, travel articles in magazines, TV advertisements; the Internet and other activities a tourism organization might choose to promote the destination (Gunn, 1972).

The role of information sources in this formation is also emphasized in Fakeye and Crompton's (1991) model. Adapting Gunn's (1972) notion of organic and induced images, their model described tourists developing organic images of a set of alternative destinations from various non-tourism information sources. When they desire to travel, they may get involved in active information search and consult specific information sources (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). As a result, they add another level of information to their destination image, which of the complex image to conceptualize the formation of destination images.

A complex image is formed when a tourist visits a destination. In addition, Fakeye and Crompton investigated differences among prospective, first-time visitors and repeat visitors in images of the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas. Major differences among the three groups were found on five extracted image factors. For instance, repeat visitors perceived the highest image level for social opportunities and attractions factors, followed by first-time and prospective visitors. Gartner (1993) also noted that the type and amount of external stimuli (information sources) received influences the formation of image.

### **Measurement of Image**

The measurement of destination images has been of great interest to tourism researchers and practitioners (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). An accurate assessment of destination image is key to designing an effective marketing and positioning strategy (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). Echtner and Ritchie (1991) identified two basic approaches to the measurement of image: structured and unstructured. The structured methodology involves various image attributes distinct and integrated into a standardized instrument, usually with a set of semantic differential

or Likert scales. Most studies adopting a structured measurement technique have employed both dimensions that consist of cognitive and affective images (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martín, 2004; Milman & Pizam, 1995). The unstructured approach employs an alternative form of measurement using free form descriptions to measure image. These studies argue that measuring image by specified attributes is more likely to fail to capture the “complexity” of image. Some researches used an unstructured approach to measure destination image (Dann, 1996; Reilly, 1990).

Echtner and Ritchie (1993) manifested that a combination of structured and unstructured approaches are necessary to accurately measure destination image. They indicated that responses to open-ended image questions provided more holistic characteristics of the destination image and allowed unique images of each destination under study to emerge. Murphy (1999) and Hsu, Wolfe, and Kang (2004) also employed a combination of structured and unstructured methods of destination image measurement and concluded that the dual approach provided insight into destination images.

### **Service Quality**

Research concerning the nature and measurement of service quality and customer satisfaction is prevalent in the marketing literature (Cronin & Taylor, 1994; Oliver, 1980; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988, 1994). In the tourism industry, customer perceptions of satisfaction service quality are important to successful destination marketing because of their influence on the selection of destinations (Ahmed, 1991), the consumption of goods and services at destinations, and the decision to return to a destination (Stevens, 1992). As a result, researchers have attempted to adapt service quality and customer satisfaction theories to hospitality and tourism industry settings. For example, researchers have tested the SERVQUAL

framework in restaurants (e.g., Bojanic & Rosen, 1994), lodging (e.g., Saleh & Ryan, 1992), and destinations (e.g., Pizam, Neumann, & Richel, 1978).

Quality has been considered to be one of the critical antecedents of both satisfaction (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Caruana, Mondy, & Berthon, 2000; Cronin & Taylor, 1992, 1994), perceived value (Baker et al, 2002; Fornell et al., 1996; Petrick & Backman, 2002) and to be a good predictor of repurchase intentions (Baker & Crompton; Getty & Thompson, 1994). The theoretical justification for the linkages between quality, value, and satisfaction is derived from Bagozzi's (1992) coping framework, which suggests the initial service evaluation (i.e., appraisal) leads to an emotional reaction that, in turn, drives behavior (Gotlieb, Grewal, & Brown, 1994). The adaptation of Bagozzi's (1992) framework to a service context suggests that the more cognitively-oriented service quality and value appraisals precede satisfaction (Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1994; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Gottlieb et al., 1994; Woodruff, 1997). By the same token, service quality has been referred to as a customer's evaluation of a service encounter at a specific point in time, whereas satisfaction has involved both end state and process judgments and reflected emotional states of mind created by exposure to service experiences (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Cronin & Taylor, 1994).

Prior research has discussed that there is a relationship between quality and perceived value (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Cronin et al., 2000; Grewal, Monroe, & Krishnan, 1998; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Zeithaml, 1988). This study proposes that quality is not embedded in perceived value, but it is a direct antecedent and is generally the best predictor of perceived value.

### **Measurement of Service Quality**

One of the most extensively used measures of service quality is SERVQUAL (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Oh, 1999). The SERVQUAL questionnaire was developed by Parasuraman,

Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) and conceptualizes service quality as the difference between consumers' expectations and their assessments of service performance. Thus, if service performance meets expectations, the expectation is confirmed.

Even though the SERVQUAL questionnaire has been extensively used to measure service quality, many researchers have criticized its applicability (Oh, 1999). Research has shown that the SERVQUAL conceptualization of service quality (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) and the relevance of the disconfirmation of expectations as the basis for measuring service quality are inadequate (Carman, 1990). In the marketing literature, it has been suggested that a simple performance-based measure of service quality is superior and that the current conceptualization confounds satisfaction and attitude (Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

Cronin and Taylor (1992) proposed that service quality should be conceptualized and measured as an attitude. They further suggested that the SERVQUAL questionnaire is a better measure of service quality if used as a performance-based measure, without a comparison of expectations. They empirically examined the performance-only model (SERVPERF) to SERVQUAL in four industries (banking, pest control, dry cleaning, and fast food) (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). By reducing the number of items from 44 to 22 (50%), they found that the structural model of SERVPERF was superior in all four industries,. Crompton and Love (1995) and Petrick and Backman (2002) also found that performance-only measures are superior to contrast measures utilizing expectations.

Recent conceptualizations suggest alternative measures of service quality are more appropriate than utilizing SERVQUAL (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Oh, 1999). Petrick and Backman's (2002) SERV-PERVAL scale measures quality based on Zeithaml's (1988) definition stating that quality is a consumer's judgment about a product's or service' overall

excellence or superiority. Utilizing this definition, the resultant items that measure quality are related to the reliability of service. Given that reliability has consistently been found to be the most important dimension of quality for recreation and tourism managers (Asubontegn, McCleary, & Swan, 1996; Backman & Veldkamp, 1995; Howat, Crilley, & Milne, 1995; Knutson, Stevens, & Patton, 1995; Ostrowski, O'Brien, & Gordon, 1994) and that performance-only measures have been found to be superior to expectation disconfirmation measures (Cronin & Love, 1995; Petrick & Backman, 2002), the current study operationalizes quality with the use of a quality dimension adapted from Cronin et al., (2000) and Gallarza and Saura (2006) which are consistent with the SERVQUAL dimensions.

### **Perceived Value**

In recent years, perceived value has been the object of attention by marketing managers and researchers as one of the most influential measures of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Parasuraman, 1997; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Patterson & Spreng, 1997; Sweeney, Soutar, & Johnson, 1996). Perceived value not only affects customer choice behavior at the pre-purchase stage, but also influences satisfaction and intentions to recommend and repurchase at the postpurchase stage (Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000). While some marketing researchers have examined the relationships among perceived value, customer satisfaction and/or behavioral intentions (Cronin et al., 2000; Patterson & Spreng, 1997; Woodruff, 1997), research on perceived value as related to customer satisfaction and/or behavioral intentions has not been given much attention in the tourism literature (Petrick & Backman, 2002).

In previous literature, perceived value has been operationalized with a single-item scale, such as value for money (Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Sweeney et al., 1996). The use of a single-item scale does not address this concept in its entirety, as perceived value is constructed with

multiple dimensions (Al- Sabbahy, Ekinici, & Riley, 2004). Therefore, measuring multiple components of perceived value has been recommended by many researchers (Gallarza & Saura, 2006 ; Sánchez, Callarisa, Rodríguez, & Moliner, 2006 ; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Sweeney et al., 1996). The purpose of this study is to identify the multiple dimensions of perceived value for tourism in Orlando while investigating how that value influences visitors' satisfaction and recommendations to others, using a structural equation model.

### **Definition of Perceived Value**

While perceived value has received increased attention, no clear and widely accepted definition of the concept exists (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Zeithaml, 1988). Perceived value has been conceptualized as: customer utility, perceived benefits relative to sacrifice, psychological price, worth and quality (Woodruff, 1997). This variability impedes consensus on its definition. Furthermore, perceived value varies depending on the types of products or services offered (e.g., manufactured products or tourism products) and the personal characteristics of customers (Zeithaml, 1988).

The role of perceived value in consumer behavior has received far less attention than quality and customer satisfaction (Tam, 2000), perhaps due to the lack of adequate concept measures (Petrick, 2004). Perceived value is operationalized in some hospitality and marketing literature with a single-item scale which attempts to measure overall customer value in terms of 'value for money' (Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Sweeney et al., 1996). Bolton and Drew (1991), however, note that perceived value should not be viewed as the outcome of a trade-off between a single overall quality and sacrifice, because perceived value is more complex. Al-Sabbahy et al. (2004) also insist that the single item scale does not fully address the concept of perceived value. Thus, many researchers have recommended that perceived value be measured with a multiple-

item scale (Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Sánchez et al., 2006; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Sweeney et al., 1996).

One of the most frequently used definitions of perceived value is that of Zeithaml (1988). Zeithaml (1988, p. 13) identifies four aspects of value in an exploratory study: (1) low price, (2) whatever I want in a product, (3) the quality I get for the price I pay, and (4) what I get for what I give. Then, Zeithaml (1988, p. 14) incorporates these four aspects of consumer value into one overall concept: “perceived value is the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given.” McDougall and Levesque (2000) followed Zeithaml’s definition in considering perceived value to be the consumer’s overall evaluation of what is received and what is given.

Grewal, Monroe, and Krishnan (1998) separate perceived value into two components—acquisition and transaction values. They define perceived acquisition value as the perceived net gains from the products or services customers acquire. Perceived transaction value is defined as the perceived psychological satisfaction gained from getting a good deal. These definitions of perceived value are adopted by Al-Sabbahy et al. (2004), who measured (with some modification) the hospitality industry.

Woodruff (1997) suggests that customers may perceive value differently at the stage of purchasing a product or service than during or after its use. With this notion, Woodruff developed a customer value hierarchy model. He argued that consumers may first desire a certain value (desired value) and subsequently evaluate the product or service as experienced (received value).

Parasuraman and Grewal (2000) propose four types of perceived value: acquisition, transaction, in-use and redemption value. They define the perceived acquisition and transaction

values similarly to those of Grewal et al. (1998). The perceived in-use value as defined as the utility gained from the use of the product and services, and the perceived redemption value as residual gain at the end of the product's life or the termination of services. They note that acquisition and transaction values occur during and immediately following the purchase stage, whereas in-use and redemption values take place at a later stage. Thus, they imply that these types of perceived values are a dynamic construct which may change longitudinally.

Among the latest studies are Sweeney and Soutar's (2001) perceived value scale (so-called PERVAL scale). They developed questionnaire items intended to measure four dimensions of customers' perceived value: (1) six items of quality (functional value), (2) five items of emotional value, (3) four items of price (functional value), and (4) four items of social value. The results of this study indicate that these multiple value dimensions performed better than a single value item such as 'value for money' when explaining consumer choices.

Following Sweeney and Soutar (2001) study, Sánchez et al. (2006) developed perceived value more extensively in terms of functional, emotional and social values in a tourism package product. An initial 40 items of perceived value were reduced to 24 items and grouped into six dimensions of values: (1) four relating to functional values of the travel agency (installations), (2) four relating to functional values of contact personnel of the travel agency (professionalism), (3) four relating to functional values of the tourism package purchased (quality), (4) three relating to the functional value of prices, (5) five relating to emotional values, and (6) four relating to social values.

In sum, a review of the literature assures us that multiple items of perceived value explain tourist satisfaction and choice of a destination better than single items of perceived value. Items of perceived value have been identified as forms of emotional, functional and overall value

which can be applied to the value attached to specific destinations. For example, the functional value for a destination can be measured by the following items—‘visiting the place is reasonably priced,’ ‘visiting the place is economical,’ ‘the place is a good quality tourism product’ and ‘while visiting the place, I received good service.’ These items explain how tourism destinations functionally affect the tourists’ perceived value of visiting that destination. If visiting the place gives the tourist pleasure, then that visit influences the tourist’s emotional aspects of perceived value. Additionally, tourists can evaluate their overall value of visiting tourism destinations by means of items such as ‘the choice of visiting the destination is the right decision,’ ‘visiting the destination is valuable and worth it’ and ‘visiting the destination is a place where I want to travel.’

The following section reviews previous research on how perceived value is related to customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in marketing and tourism literature.

### **Relationship among Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions**

Perceived value has been found to be a significant predictor of customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Cronin et al., 2000). Ravald and Gronroos (1996) suggest that value is regarded as an important construct of relationship marketing, and one of the most successful competitive strategies. As the most important measure for gaining a competitive edge, perceived value is considered to be an important predictor and the key determinant of customer satisfaction and loyalty (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Petrick & Backman, 2002). Woodruff (1997) contends that measures of received (attribute) value are antecedents to overall customer satisfaction, and these measures are proven to correlate well with such customer behaviors as word-of-mouth and intentions to purchase. Dodds (1991) also conceptualized a model where perceived value is the link between perceived quality, perceived sacrifice, and behavioral intentions.

Cronin et al. (2000) examined the relationship between service quality, service value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in six industries including spectator sports, participant sports, entertainment, fast food, healthcare and long-distance carriers. The results show that service value influences customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (in all industries except health care). Service value is also found to be indirectly related to behavioral intentions through customer satisfaction.

Patterson and Spreng (1997) developed a conceptual model to test the relationships among performance, value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the consulting industry based on functional values. They defined functional value as performance (quality) and price (sacrifice). The results of the study indicated that value had a strong and significant effect on satisfaction, which indirectly affected repurchase intentions. However, value was not found to directly affect repurchase intentions.

McDougall and Levesque (2000) investigated the relationship among three elements of value (core quality, relational quality and service value), customer satisfaction and future intentions across four services (dentist, hairstylist, auto repair and restaurant). The results revealed that all three variables of core quality, relational quality and service value significantly affected customer satisfaction which subsequently affected future intentions. The findings indicated that perceived value had the largest impact on potential demand for restaurants, followed by auto repair, dentist and hairstylist. This implies that restaurant managers should be concerned about “value for money” perceived by customers. Thus, they recommend researchers incorporate perceived value into conceptual models to understand key determinants of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Eggert and Ulaga (2002) proposed two types of conceptual models. The first model is related to the mediated impact model, which aims to test relationships among customer perceived value, satisfaction and repurchase and word-of-mouth. The second model was related to the direct model, which aimed to test the direct relationships between perceived value, repurchase, and word-of-mouth without satisfaction. The researchers conceptualized and measured perceived value as a cognitive variable, satisfaction as an affective construct and repurchase and word-of-mouth as cognitive constructs. The test results of the mediated impact model indicate that customer-perceived value had a significant positive impact on satisfaction, which in turn influenced repurchase and willingness to initiate word-of-mouth recommendations. The test results of the direct impact model also indicate that customer-perceived value has a significant positive impact on repurchase and word-of-mouth. The findings indicate that all substantive relationships in both models are statistically significant, but the mediated impact model performs better than the direct impact model.

Petrick, Morais, and Norman (2001) examined the relationships between past visits, perceived value and satisfaction to intentions to revisit a destination. The results show that all three variables have an effect on revisit intentions to the destination, but these variables have no effect on intention to revisit for a show or to book a package. The findings suggest that perceived value along with the other two variables are good predictors of revisit intentions to the destination.

Based on the definition of perceived value suggested by Grewal et al. (1998), Petrick and Backman (2002) investigated the relationship between the construct of perceived value (acquisition and transaction value) and golf travelers' intentions to revisit. The results of the study show that the relationship between transaction value and intentions to revisit was

statistically significant. However, the relationship between acquisition value and intentions to revisit was not significant. The researchers also examined the effect of demographic variables on golf travelers' perceived value. The results indicate that of the demographic variables examined, only age had an effect on perceived value, with older participants reporting lower values. These results appear to be somewhat different from those in the study of Grewal et al. (1998), which found that both acquisition and transaction value had a significant effect on willingness to buy in two data sets (student group and employee group), but transaction value had no effect on willingness to buy in employee group data. Based on the test results of the relationship between value and willingness to buy, the study by Sweeney et al. (1996) also demonstrated that perceived value had the greatest influence on willingness to buy.

Al-Sabbahy et al. (2004) tested the validity and reliability of the perceived value dimensions (acquisition and transaction values) in the evaluation of the hospitality industry proposed by Grewal et al. (1998). The results of the study show that the correlation between overall value, perceived acquisition value and transaction value was extremely high, indicating that both scales measured the same construct. Also, only one factor was extracted when the discriminant validity of both scales was tested using principal component analysis. The findings cast doubt on the discriminant validity of the scale and the multidimensionality of perceived value (acquisition and transaction value). As justification for the lack of discrimination between the two types of values, the researchers suggested that transaction value might be confused with acquisition value.

Gallarza and Saura (2006) explored the relationship among perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty for university students. The results of the study indicated that perceived value was significantly related to tourists' satisfaction, which in turn influenced their loyalty.

To this point, the literature review suggests that perceived value has a significant effect on customer satisfaction, which in turn influences behavioral intentions such as word-of-mouth intentions and intentions to purchase. Based on the past research findings, this study proposed a conceptual model (see figure 1).

## **Satisfaction**

### **Definition of Satisfaction**

Satisfaction is another critical concept that has received much attention in general consumer behavior research as well as tourism research because it influences the choice of destination and the understanding of satisfaction provides managerial guidance in the industry (Danaher & Haddrell, 1996; Kozak, 2001). Tse and Wilton (1988) defined satisfaction as “the consumer’s response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption” (p.204). On the other hand, Oliver (1997) defined satisfaction as customers’ judgments about products or service fulfillment. Existing literature has indicated wide variability in the definitions of satisfaction. The lack of agreement among these definitions impedes research into consumer satisfaction. After making a thorough literature review of conceptual and operational definitions, Giese and Cote (2000) concluded three general components were shared by the definitions: (1) consumer satisfaction is an emotional response; (2) the response refers to a specific focus; (3) the response is determined by limited time. With these in mind, the authors identify that specific definitions of consumer satisfaction should be used based on the context, taking into account the above dimensions.

Various frameworks and theories have been developed over the years to explain customer satisfaction. Most of the studies conducted to evaluate consumer satisfaction have utilized models of expectation/disconfirmation, which postulates that satisfaction is a result of the

discrepancy between expectations and perceived performance, so that the consumer will feel satisfied whenever performance exceeds expectations. According to the expectation/disconfirmation model contributed by Oliver (1980), consumers develop expectations about a product before purchasing and subsequently, they compare their actual experience with expectations. A positive disconfirmation occurs if the actual performance/experience is higher than their expectation; that is the consumer is highly satisfied and willing to purchase the product again. However, if the actual performance is below his/her expectations, this leads to negative disconfirmation, which means that the consumer is unsatisfied and will most likely look for other alternatives for the next purchase. Research by Chon (1989) also contended that tourist satisfaction is a function of the goodness of fit between tourist expectations about the destination and the perceived evaluative outcome of the experience at the destination area, which is simply the result of a comparison between their previous images of the destination and what they actually see, feel, and achieve at the destination.

With reference to the measurement of consumer satisfaction, there is wide acceptance of multiple-item measures. Still, many studies have operationalized overall satisfaction, using a single item scale ranging from very unsatisfied to very satisfied (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Howat, Murray, and Crilley, 1999; Parasuraman et al., 1994). Bigne et al. (2001) argued that tourist satisfaction can be measured either using specific service elements or a single global item. Bigne et al.'s (2001) argument has been justified by empirical studies that used a single item measuring overall satisfaction in the tourism literature (Castro et al., 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007). However, based on the notion that satisfaction is a multi-dimensional construct, multi-item scales have been frequently used in marketing (Oliver and Swan, 1989; Parasuraman et al., 1994) and tourism (Lee et al., 2007; Yoon & Uysal., 2005). Even though understanding satisfaction has

generally been based on subjective disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), measuring satisfaction has remained complex and indeterminate (Lee et al., 2005).

### **Relationship between Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty**

High levels of satisfaction at the destination results in increased loyalty and future revisits, and an enhanced reputation, and then ultimately enhanced profitability and political support (Baker & Crompton., 2000). In tourism and leisure research, destination loyalty has been measured as a criterion variable to predict tourist's decision-making. Generally, three forms of measuring destination loyalty have been identified: 1) intention to re/visit, 2) recommend to others, and 3) word-of-mouth.

The relationship of satisfaction to destination loyalty has been well researched in the tourism and leisure literature. Overall, satisfaction has been found to have a substantial impact on destination loyalty such as intentions to visit/revisit and recommend to others (Bigne, Sanchez and Sanchez, 2001; Castro, Armario, and Ruiz, 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Crompton and Love, 1995; Lee, Graefe, and Burns, 2004; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1994; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Although it was found that satisfaction affected destination loyalty directly (Crompton et al., 1995; Lee et al., 2005), a majority of studies found that satisfaction played a mediating role in the relationship between destination image and revisit intentions (Bigne et al., 2001), motivation and destination loyalty (Yoon & Uysal, 2005), perceived value and recommending to others (Lee et al., 2007), overall trip quality and willingness to recommend (Chen & Tsai, 2007), service quality and intention to visit (Castro et al., 2007), and destination image and destination loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008).

Bigne et al. (2001) examined the relationships among destination image, perceived quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions using tourists who visited two famous resorts. The results of the study showed that satisfaction mediated the relationships between destination

image, service quality and behavioral intentions. Yoon and Uysal (2005) developed a conceptual model to test the relationships between motivation, travel satisfaction, and destination loyalty in the context of vacation traveling. Based on a motivation theory suggested by Dann (1981), the authors divided motivation into push and pull motivations. The results of the study indicated that both motivations had effects on travel satisfaction, which in turn affects destination loyalty.

Lee et al. (2007) investigated the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction, and word of mouth in the context of traveling to an unexplored and historical site (i.e., demilitarized zone). The results revealed that perceived values (functional, overall, and emotional) were found to be related to tour satisfaction, which in turn influenced word of mouth. This study confirmed previous studies that indicated that satisfaction was an important construct when considering the relationship between tourists' perceived value and behavioral intentions (Bigne et al., 2001; Cronin et al., 2000).

Chen and Tsai (2007) examined how destination image and evaluative factors such as trip quality and satisfaction affect behavioral intentions for vacationers. The results showed that destination image had a direct effect on behavioral intentions through trip quality and satisfaction, which in turn affected behavioral intentions. Utilizing a market heterogeneity concept, Castro et al. (2007) tested a conceptual model that examined the relationship among destination image, service quality, satisfaction, and future behaviors. On the basis of levels of need for variety (Chen & Paliwoda, 2004), the authors classified the conceptual model into four nested-models. The results showed that in all classifications, except for high need for variety but separate in time, destination image had indirect effects on behavioral intentions through tourist satisfaction levels. Chi and Qu (2008) explored the theoretical relationship among destination image, attribute satisfaction, overall satisfaction, and behavioral loyalty for visitors to a famous spring. The

results indicated that overall satisfaction had been found to have partial mediation in the relationship among destination image, attribute satisfaction, and behavioral loyalty.

In sum, a review of previous research suggests that satisfaction has not only a direct affect on consumer loyalty, but also plays a mediating role in the relationships between various psychological tendencies (e.g., perceived value, destination image, and service quality) and future tourism behaviors (e.g., intention to revisit, recommend to others or word-of-mouth). Based on past research findings, this study proposed a conceptual model (see figure 1).

## **Destination Loyalty**

### **Definition of Destination Loyalty**

Although the loyalty concept has been extensively investigated in the marketing literature, destination loyalty has received relatively little attention. Smith (1998) suggests that loyalty occurs when the customer feels so strongly that s/he can best meet his or her relevant needs that the competition is virtually excluded from consideration and customers buy almost exclusively from their favorite restaurant or hotel. Shoemaker and Lewis (1999) claim that loyalty is the likelihood of customers' returning to a place and those customers' willingness to behave as a partner with the organization (e.g., spend more while in that area and tell management when problems occur).

Oliver (1997, p. 392) defined brand loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior.” This definition manifests the two different aspects of brand loyalty: behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. Behavioral brand loyalty is made up of repeated patronage of the brand while “attitudinal brand loyalty includes a degree of dispositional commitment in terms of some unique value associated with the brand” (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001, p. 82). Attitudinal brand loyalty is investigated

by intention of word-of-mouth communications (Mangold & Miller, 1999), repurchase intentions (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), and willingness to pay premium prices (Zeithmal, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996).

More specifically, loyalty has generally been measured in one of the following ways: (1) a behavioral approach, (2) an attitudinal approach, or (3) a combination approach. The behavioral approach is more related to consumers' brand loyalty and has been operationally characterized as a sequence purchase, proportion of patronage, or probability of purchase. It has been debated that the measurement of this approach lacks a conceptual standpoint, and produces only the static outcome of a dynamic process (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This loyalty measurement does not attempt to explain the factors that affect customer loyalty (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). That is, tourist loyalty to products or destinations may not be enough to explain why and how they are willing to revisit or recommend these to other potential tourists.

On the other hand, in the attitudinal approach, consumer loyalty is an attempt on the part of consumers to go beyond overt behavior and express their loyalty in terms of psychological commitment or statement of preference. Tourists may have favorable attitudes towards a particular product or destination, and express their intention to purchase the product or visit the destination. Thus, loyalty measures consumers' strength of affection toward a brand or product, as well as explaining an additional portion of unexplained variance that behavioral approaches do not address (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Specifically, repurchase intentions or recommendations to other people are usually considered to be two most important consumer loyalty indicators in the marketing literature. Flavian, Martinez and Polo (2001), examining the different characteristics associated with store loyalty in the grocery sector,

suggested that degree of loyalty has been one of the crucial barometers used to measure the success of marketing strategies.

Similarly, tourism destinations can be considered as products, and tourists may revisit or recommend destinations to other potential tourists such as friends and relatives (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). In the last decade, tourism or leisure researchers have incorporated the concept of consumer loyalty into tourism products, destinations, or leisure/recreation activities (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Baloglu, 2001; Iwasaki & Havitz, 1998; Pritchard & Howard, 1997). However, evaluating the usefulness of the concept of loyalty and its applications to tourism products or services has been limited, even though loyalty has been thought of as one of the major driving forces in competitive markets (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

### **Loyalty Versus Satisfaction**

Numerous researchers have investigated the relationship between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Back & Parks, 2003). It is generally believed that satisfaction leads to repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth recommendations, which are primary indicators of loyalty. However, customer loyalty is not the same as customer satisfaction. Customer loyalty is often recognized as being a strategic objective for companies (Oliver, 1999). According to Petrick and Sirakaya (2004), customer loyalty is clearly a critical aspect for companies because it is more desirable, and less expensive, to retain existing customers than to seek new ones. On the other hand, Oliver (1997) proposes that the real value of measuring customer satisfaction is the potential it creates to anticipate clients' post-consumption responses. That is, customer satisfaction measures how well a customer's expectations are met by a given transaction, while customer loyalty measures how likely a customer is to repurchase and engage in partnership activities. Therefore, it is necessary to understand satisfaction as a necessary but not a sufficient

condition for loyalty. In other words, customers can have satisfaction without loyalty, but it is hard to have loyalty without satisfaction.

### **Operationalization of Loyalty**

The theoretical model presented in figure 1 includes two frequently used behavioral intention variables: intentions to revisit and word-of-mouth communications. The following classification is an elaboration of the two proposed behavioral intention constructs included in the study and their relationships with the evaluation variables.

#### **Intention to Revisit**

Cronin, Brady, and Hult (2000) have argued that quality not only has a direct relationship to behavioral intentions, but also is mediated by perceived value and satisfaction in the prediction of consumer behavioral intentions. In addition, some empirical studies have concluded that service quality has a direct effect on behavioral intentions (Cronin et al., 2000; Zeithaml et al., 1996), while others have reported that quality has an indirect effect on behavioral intentions through satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1994; Brady et al., 2001; Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

Also some empirical studies have reported that perceived value and satisfaction are direct antecedents of behavioral intentions (Cronin et al., 2000; Tam, 2000). Babin et al. (2005) in their study of restaurant patrons in Korea with structural equation analyses, demonstrated that both satisfaction and perceived value had positive and significant effects on positive word-of-mouth communications. Other research has suggested that perceived value may be a better predictor of repurchase intentions than either quality or satisfaction (Cronin et al., 2000; Oh, 2000). In a study of fine-dining patrons' pre and post experiences, Oh (2000) concluded that customers' perceptions of value seem to be powerful indicators of customers' patronage over time. That is, when customers expected high value, they expressed strong intentions to patronize the restaurant.

In the tourism literature, a significant relationship among tourist satisfaction, intention to return and positive word-of-mouth communication has been found (Hutchinson, et al., 2009). In addition, satisfied tourists are most likely to recommend destinations they have visited to their friends and relatives (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Kozak and Remington (2000), in a study of tourists visiting Mallorca, Spain, found that the more satisfied the tourists were with their visits, the more likely they were to return and recommend the destination to others. Further, satisfied tourists were more likely to recommend holidays in Mallorca that replicated their visits to the destination. A significant correlation also was found between intention to recommend and intention to visit the destination. Thus, tourists were more likely to recommend the destination to others if they intended to revisit. In a study of entertainment travelers, Petrick et al.,(2001), reported that perceived value and satisfaction could be used to predict travelers' intentions to revisit an entertainment destination. In a study using a sample of golf travelers, Petrick and Bachman (2002) used simple bivariate correlation to determine that overall satisfaction was highly correlated with intentions to revisit.

### **Word-of-Mouth**

The importance of word-of-mouth (WOM) communications for service firms has been well established (Mangold & Miller, 1999). Although WOM can be positive and negative, marketers are more interested in promoting positive WOM, such as recommendations to others. Service quality has been suggested to have a direct effect on word-of-mouth communications. Thus, when customers have positive and/or beneficial service experiences, they should be motivated to encourage their friends and family members to have the same experience (Babin et al., 2005). In a study of hotel guests, Hartline and Jones (1996) reported that high quality service increased word-of-mouth intentions. Boudling, Karla, Staelin, and Zeithmal (1993) empirically demonstrated that the higher the customers' perceptions of a firm's service quality, the more

likely they were to engage in behaviors beneficial to the strategic health of the firm. Thus, service quality should be positively related to WOM praise.

Perceived value and satisfaction also are suggested to influence WOM directly (Brown et al., 2005; Fornell et al., 1996; Lee et al., 2007; Oh, 1999). Consumers who are satisfied with their service experiences may be motivated to spread positive WOM communications to encourage others to have the same experience. Correspondingly, satisfaction has been suggested to relate positively to WOM (Mangold & Miller, 1999). It has been found that when WOM is more positive, consumers are more likely to make purchase recommendations (Mittal, Kumar, & Tsiros, 1999; Wirtz & Chew, 2002).

### **Conceptual Model**

The proposed model is based on the comprehensive and critical literature review above. First, the proposed model simultaneously examines the relationships of destination image, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The model suggests that destination image, service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction all have directional relationships with each other and also serve as antecedents to destination loyalty outcome. Second, in addition to the frequently used service evaluation constructs of quality, value, and satisfaction, the proposed model also posits that destination image is a consequent variable to perceived value and an antecedent variable to both satisfaction and loyalty. Third, a relationship between the three service evaluation constructs (i.e., service quality, value, and satisfaction) and two destination loyalty indicators (i.e., revisit intentions, word-of-mouth referrals) are also proposed.

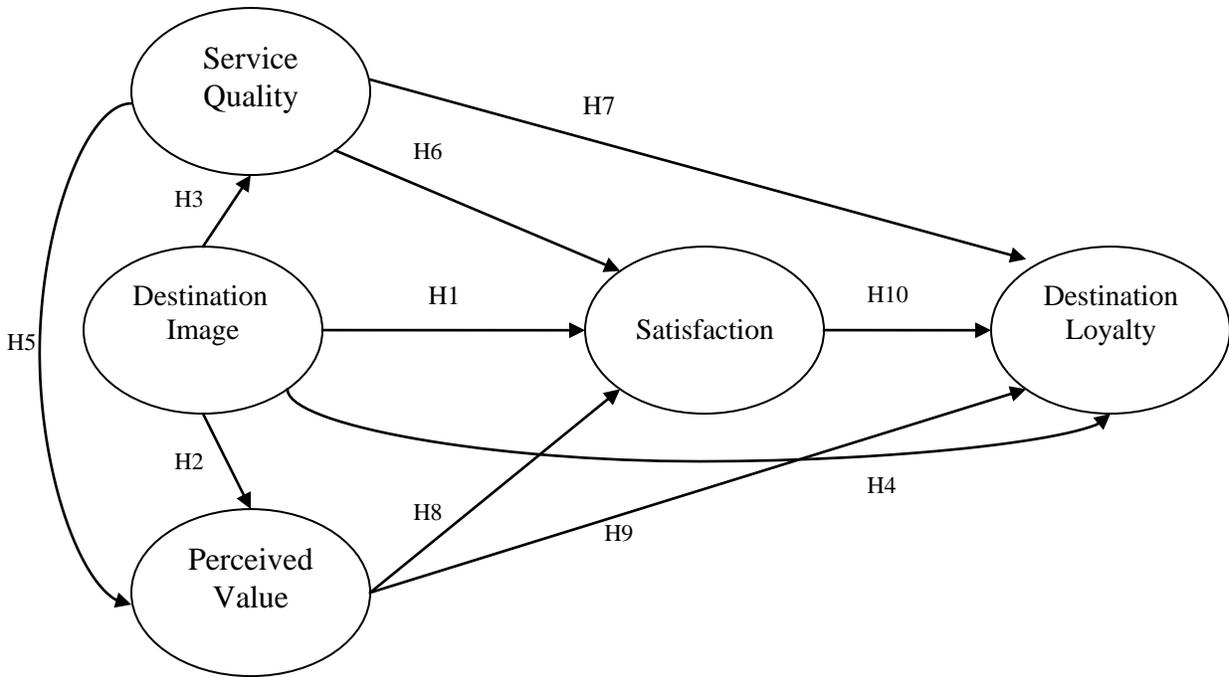


Figure.2-1. Antecedents of Destination Loyalty

### Conceptual Background and Hypotheses

Based on a comprehensive review of previous literature, destination image is defined as an individual mental representation of knowledge (beliefs), feelings and overall perceptions of a particular destination. Destination image affects the destination choice decision-making process and also after decision-making behaviors including on-site experience, satisfaction and future behavioral intentions (Bigne et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2005). An on-site experience can be mainly represented as perceived travel quality. However, these studies indicate the influence of destination image on after-decision-making behaviors has been limited. Following a marketing perspective, Lee et al. (2005) argued that individuals having a favorable destination image would perceive their on-site experience (i.e. perceived quality) positively, which in turn would lead to greater satisfaction levels and behavioral intentions. The first four hypotheses, therefore, would be:

**H1:** The more favorable the destination image, the higher the overall satisfaction

**H2:** The more favorable the destination image, the higher the perceived value

**H3:** The more favorable the destination image, the higher the service quality

**H4:** The more favorable the destination image, the more the destination loyalty.

As aforementioned, service quality and perceived value have been recognized as the antecedents of satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the service fields. In addition, quality, perceived value and satisfaction have been recognized as the antecedents of behavioral intentions. The next nine hypotheses, therefore, would be:

**H5:** Service quality has a direct positive effect on perceived value

**H6:** Service quality has a direct positive effect on customer satisfaction.

**H7:** Service quality has a direct positive effect on destination loyalty

**H8:** Perceived value is a direct antecedent of overall satisfaction

**H9:** Perceived value is a direct antecedent of destination loyalty.

**H10:** Satisfaction has a direct positive effect on destination loyalty.

**H11:** Destination image has an indirect influence on destination loyalty through satisfaction

**H12:** Service quality has an indirect influence on destination loyalty through satisfaction

**H13:** Perceived value has an indirect influence on destination loyalty through satisfaction

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The methods used in this study are presented in the following four sections: (1) construct measurement, (2) study site and sample, (3) procedures, and (4) data analyses. A survey was constructed to assess the influence of satisfaction on destination loyalty as mediated by perceived value and service quality in the context of a tourist destination.

### **Construct Measurement**

This study employed a causal research design using a cross-sectional sample survey. The survey questionnaire was composed of the following major sections: questions that measure the following constructs – destination image, service quality, perceived value, overall satisfaction, destination loyalty, and questions designed to gather tourists' demographic information and travel behaviors. In order to avoid personal biases and suitably quantify qualitative data, 7-point scales were used in this study (Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006). Although a 5-point scale could be acceptable, a wider range allows more effective comparison analyses to more clearly show the differences between scores (Kozak 2001).

#### **(1) Destination Image.**

A combination of structured and unstructured techniques will be used to capture various aspects of the respondents' perceptions of Orlando as a travel destination, including a thorough literature review of previous destination studies, content analyses of tourism literature, promotion brochures, and Orlando websites. Through this process, thirty two cognitive/perceptual evaluation items were generated and were measured on 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) point Likert scales. Also four affective destination image items were employed from Baloglu and McCleary (1999) with semantic differential scales (Pleasant-Unpleasant, Arousing-Sleepy, Relaxing-Distressing, and Exciting-Gloomy). A composite score

of four bipolar scales provides an overall affective evaluation of a given destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Then, unstructured image questions were asked with respondents writing down the first three adjectives or nouns that came to their minds for Orlando.

## **(2) Service Quality**

Service quality is measured based on fifteen aspects of service quality, which are adapted from both Cronin et al. (2000), and Gallarza and Saura (2006). The selected fifteen service quality items were rated on 7-point Likert scales where 1 = very low and 7 = very high. Then, the second measure consisted of three overall direct measures of service quality that are adapted from Cronin et al.'s (2000) work, but are also similar to other overall service quality indicators used elsewhere (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). These three items will be measured using semantic differential scales (Excellent-Poor, Superior-Inferior, and High standards-Low standards).

## **(3) Perceived Value**

Perceived value measures were adapted from Lee et al. (2007). Thirteen items divided into functional, emotional, and overall values were presented. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed based on their visit to the area, and to what extent they agreed that their visit gave them superior net value on each of thirteen items on a 7-point scale, strongly disagree to strongly agree.

## **(4) Overall Satisfaction**

To measure overall satisfaction, there have been debates on using multiple-item measures vs. single-item measures. A number of studies have used a summative overall measure of satisfaction (Lee et al., 2007; Oliver & Swan, 1989; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Many studies have addressed overall satisfaction, using a single item scale ranging from very unsatisfied to very satisfied (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Howat, Murray, and Crilley, 1999; Parasuraman et al., 1994). However, a multiple item overall satisfaction scale was used in this study to capture more

variance in explaining overall satisfaction. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their overall travel experience on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 7 being strongly agree.

### **(5) Destination Loyalty**

Attitudinal measurements, including revisit intentions and recommendations are usually used to infer consumer loyalty, and were found to be the pertinent measure (Chi & Qu, 2008). Prior research has shown that loyal customers are more likely to repurchase a product/service in the future (Petrick et al., 2001; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998). It has also been suggested that loyal visitors are more willing to recommend the product/service to others (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). In addition, good correlation has been found between consumers' repurchase intentions and positive WOM referrals (Oh, 2000; Oh & Parks, 1997). Therefore, repurchase and referral intentions make up the Customer Destination Index (Taylor, 1998). In this study, six-item measures were used to assess tourist destination loyalty as the ultimate dependent construct: tourists' intentions to revisit Orlando and their willingness to recommend Orlando as a favorable destination to others, with 7-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

### **(6) Demographic Information**

For the purpose of sample description, demographic background variables are included in the questionnaire, which consisted of the following variables: gender, ethnicity, age, marital status, household income, and education. Questions were phrased in a close-ended multiple-choice format.

### **Study Site and Sample**

The data for this study was collected using a self-administered questionnaire in an Orlando area commercial airport. According to Forbes, three attractions (5. Disney World's Magic Kingdom; 12. Universal Studios Orlando/Islands of Adventure at Universal Orlando; 13.

SeaWorld Orlando) in Orlando were listed on the top 25 most visited tourist destinations in the USA. Metro Orlando hosted 47.8 million visitors in 2006. In 2006, visitors contributed \$29.8 billion in spending to the Metro Orlando area. According to the report, domestic leisure travel volume in 2006 was 34.5 million visitors. The most popular reason reported for visiting Orlando was for a general vacation (31%), followed by a getaway weekend (14%), and visiting friends and relatives (13%). The average length of stay among overnight domestic leisure visitors was 4.2 nights. Non-Florida residents stayed longer in Orlando (5.7 nights) than their Florida counterparts (2.3 nights). Metro Orlando also welcomed 2.7 million international visitors in 2006, of which 2.0 million were from overseas markets. The United Kingdom remained Orlando's top overseas origin country. The majority of Orlando's overseas travelers were visiting for leisure purposes (81%) while 8% were traveling for business or convention purposes.

The population of this study consisted of tourists who traveled individually or in groups during the Spring season. To improve the representativeness of the sample, surveys were distributed at 12 different gates and different times (e.g., weekdays and weekends) and the interviewer used quota sampling to control for age, gender, and ethnic backgrounds. Given the experiential nature of the study, respondents were only asked to respond to the survey if they had travel experiences in the Orlando area.

### **Procedures**

Following the development of items, the preliminary questionnaire was submitted to a panel of eight experts for content validity testing. The panel included five university professors and three practitioners. Among the university professors, one specialized in natural resources, two in tourism and hospitality management, and two in sport management. Among the practitioners, all three worked in Orlando travel agencies. Each panel member was asked to examine the relevance, representativeness, clarity, test format, and item content throughout the

questionnaire. Following the panel members' feedback, the preliminary questionnaire was modified, revised, and improved, mainly in the areas of item adequacy, factor relevance, and wording clarity. With the modified version of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with Dunnellon (a small city 76 miles northwest of Orlando) Presbyterian Church members who had experience visiting Orlando within the past 6 months ( $n = 26$ ). The purpose of this pilot study was to further examine the content validity, comprehension and estimate the time needed to fill out the questionnaire by the general public. After the pilot study, suggested changes and improvements were minor and they were primarily related to wording clarifications. It took an average of 11 minutes to fill out the questionnaire. The researcher first contacted the data collection location (Sanford International Airport, just north of Orlando) to obtain permission to conduct the study. In a meeting with the marketing and public relation manager, an action plan was submitted including a copy of the survey and agreement that results would be shared with them. The main complication was having the data collector located beyond security checkpoints. This required getting the data collector badged; necessitating a full background check, fingerprinting, etc. It took two weeks for the proper authorizations to be acquired. Then, the data collector took four hours of security classes. After passing those classes, he was finally permitted to interview travelers beyond security checkpoints (i.e., in boarding lounges near departure gates) over a four week period.

### **Data Analyses**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 17.0 (2008) was employed to calculate descriptive statistics for sociodemographics and normality checks in which values of skewness and kurtosis were evaluated. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to derive the underlying dimensions of destination image, and perceived value, primarily to identify unique and reliable simple factor structures that have the potential to be generalized to a universe of

variables from a sample of variables, so as to reduce any redundant data. Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) 7.0 was also utilized to examine psychometric properties of the hypothesized model via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and test the theoretical relationships of the model through structural equation modeling (SEM).

A CFA using the Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation method was employed for the constructs of destination image, service quality, perceived value, overall satisfaction, and destination loyalty, respectively, to examine factor structures of the overall model (Bollen, 1989; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1998). In order to examine overall goodness of model fit, the researcher followed the suggestion of Hair et al. (1998) on using multiple fit indexes, which included the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ), the normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df$ ), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), standardized root mean residual (SRMR), and comparative fit index (CFI) (Bentler, 1990; Bollen, 1989; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Steiger, 1990).

The chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) examines the difference between the expected model and observed model (if any). The normed chi-square is the chi-square statistic per degree of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ) (Kline, 2005). Bollen (1989) suggested that cutoff values of less than 5.0 for the normed chi-square are considered a reasonable fit. Hu and Bentler (1999) indicated that any RMSEA values less than .06 indicate good fit. Any RMSEA values between .06 and .08 are considered an acceptable fit and values of RMSEA between .08 and .10 indicate a mediocre fit. Lastly, a cutoff-value of .95 or higher for CFI in combination with a cutoff value (less than) .09 for SRMR was utilized (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

A total of three reliability tests were used to determine internal consistency of the items accounting for any measurement errors of the indicators: (a) Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), (b) Construct Reliability (CR), and (c) Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The suggested .70 was applied to

determine internal consistency of  $\alpha$  and CR (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) and .50 was adopted for evaluating AVE value.

In order to examine convergent validity of the hypothesized model, two methods were carried out: (a) examination of factor loadings and (b) examination of critical ratios (Kline, 2005). Generally, item loadings equal to or greater than .707 are considered good convergent validity since it indicates that more than 50% of the variance is associated with common variance (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Another way to determine convergent validity is to evaluate critical ratio values. Any values exceeding 2.58 for a two-tail test are considered statistically significant at the .001 level (Arbuckle, 2006).

An examination of discriminant validity was conducted using two methods: (a) examination of interfactor correlation (Kline, 2005) and (b) comparing AVE values with squared correlation of any of two latent constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity is established when interfactor correlation does not exceed .85. A more conservative discriminant validity test is when the squared correlation between any of two constructs is lower than the AVE value of either construct. Finally, a SEM test was conducted to examine the hypothesized structural relationships among destination image, service quality, perceived value, overall satisfaction, and destination loyalty. Path coefficients were used to determine the direct and indirect relationships among the factors.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in the following order: (a) descriptive statistics (b) data screening and test of assumptions (c) exploratory factor analyses (d) confirmatory factor analyses, and (e) structural equation model analyses.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

#### **Demographics**

Participants' ( $n = 581$ ) demographic characteristics are presented in Table 4-1. The majority of the participants were women (59%). The average age was 38 years old ( $M = 38.37$ ,  $SD = 14$ ) and 94% of participants were Caucasian. The average household income was above \$60,000. However, one-third of the average household income was above \$100,000 (32%). Well less than half (38%) of the participants were visiting Orlando for the first time in the last three years, and 27% of participants visited the destination twice during the same period. The type of travel companions most often reported were family with children (53%), followed by family without children (22%), and friends (19%). The most popular reasons reported for visiting Orlando were: vacation/pleasure (80%), followed by visiting friends and relatives (9.3%), and business and professional events (3%). Participants reported visiting Disneyworld, Universal Studios Orlando, and SeaWorld during their visit. The more frequent duration of stays in Orlando were 5 nights (21%), followed by 4 nights (17%), 7 nights (15%), 3 nights (14%), and 6 nights (11%).

#### **Destination Image**

Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation for the destination image variables are presented in Table 4-2. The means of the destination image variables ranged from 4.73 (Orlando had many traffic jams) to 6.26 (Orlando was a pleasing travel destination) with 7

indicating “strongly agree”. All variables (32) had mean scores greater than 4.0 (i.e., midpoint on the 7-point Likert scale), indicating that destination image variables were considered important when making a decision to visit the Orlando area. Standard deviations ranged from .89 to 1.71.

### **Service Quality**

Table 4-3 displays the descriptive statistics for service quality. Means of all items for Service Quality were above 5.00 (4.0 mid-point), indicating that service quality variables were evaluated positively by Orlando visitors and ranged from 5.43 ( $SD = 1.14$ ) for the item “Generally, the employees listened to me and we understood each other” to 6.04 ( $SD = .87$ ) for the item “Orlando offered good quality of lodging facilities”. Standard deviations for the items ranged from .87 to 1.14.

### **Perceived Value**

Descriptive statistics for perceived value are depicted in Table 4-4. All items had mean scores greater than the midpoint of 4 on the 7-point Likert scale, representing that perceived values were generally agreed with when evaluating their Orlando trip. The “Orlando was a destination that I enjoyed” item had the highest mean score ( $M = 6.08$ ;  $SD = .91$ ) and “Orlando was reasonably priced” had the lowest mean score ( $M = 4.74$ ;  $SD = 1.38$ ), though it was generally agreed with. Standard deviations for the items ranged from .91 to 1.41.

### **Satisfaction**

Descriptive statistics for satisfaction are shown in Table 4-5. Means of all items for Satisfaction were above 5.00 (4.0 mid-point) on the 7-point Likert scale, indicating that the three satisfaction measures indicated overall satisfaction with their Orlando area experience. The “Overall I’m satisfied with Orlando” item had the highest mean score ( $M = 5.88$ ;  $SD = .99$ ) and “I’m satisfied with Orlando compared to my expectations before traveling” had the lowest mean

score ( $M = 5.65$ ;  $SD = 1.02$ ), which was still positive. Standard deviations for the items ranged from .99 to 1.02.

### **Destination Loyalty**

Table 4-6 displays the descriptive statistics for destination loyalty. The means of all six destination loyalty items were above the mid-point on the 7-point Likert scale, demonstrating that the respondents tended to agree with indicators of loyalty to Orlando which ranged from 5.25 ( $SD = 1.85$ ) for the item “I have plans to revisit Orlando in the near future” to 5.91 ( $SD = 1.13$ ) for the item “I will say positive things about visiting Orlando to other people”. Standard deviations for the items ranged from 1.13 to 1.85.

### **Data Screening and Test of Assumptions for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**

The assumptions of multivariate normality and linearity were evaluated through descriptive statistics using SPSS and CFA using AMOS. The analyses were performed on the total sample ( $N = 581$ ). No standardized score for any variable was above 3.29 and no standardized score was below -3.29, which were the suggested cut-off values for potential outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Skewness and kurtosis values for the 69 manifest variables ranged from -.459 to -1.490 and -.055 to 2.904, respectively, which were well within the acceptable thresholds. There was no evidence that both univariate and multivariate normality assumptions for observed variables were violated.

### **Exploratory Factor Analyses**

#### **Destination Image**

An exploratory factor analysis using a principal component extraction method and a varimax rotation of 33 destination image items was conducted on a random sample ( $n = 290$ ) from the 581 total respondents. Prior to running the analysis with SPSS, the data was screened by examining descriptive statistics on each item, interitem correlation, and possible univariate and

multivariate assumption violations. From this initial assessment, all variables were found to be interval-like, variable pairs appeared to be normally distributed, and all cases were independent of one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of sampling adequacy was .922, indicating that the present data were suitable for principal component analysis. Similarly, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was 4967.902 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating sufficient correlation between the variables to proceed with the analysis.

Using the Kaiser-Guttman retention criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, a six-factor solution provided the extraction. The scree plot test also suggested that a six-factor model was the most interpretable. These six factors accounted for 64% of the total variance. Table 4-7 presents 24 items, their factor loadings, communality estimates and Cronbach's alphas. Communalities were fairly high for each of the 24 items, with a range of .54 to .80. Cronbach's coefficient alpha ranged from .81 to .91 among the six factors, indicating that they were all internally consistent and reliable.

Based on the predetermined criterion of an item loading equal to or greater than .40, one item was eliminated (i.e., Orlando was a safe place to visit). Eight other items were removed due to having only one or two items load on the respective factors (i.e., Orlando had many interesting places, Orlando offered good nightlife and entertainment, Orlando offered easy access to the area where I wanted to visit, Orlando offered appealing local food, Orlando offered convenience of local transportation, Orlando was a relaxing place, Orlando was a restful place, and Orlando offered variety of special events/festivals). Consequently, the six remaining factors were labeled as Travel Atmosphere (8 items), Travel Information (3 items), Travel Environment (4 items), Shopping (3 items), Community Attitude (3 items), and Accessibility (3 items). The rationale used in naming these six factors was guided in part by the recommendations of Chi and Qu (2008) in

which sorted factor loadings in excess .66 were used to “drive” the process of labeling and interpreting each factor. The present six-factor model was deemed the best solution because of its conceptual clarity and ease of interpretability.

### **Service Quality**

An exploratory factor analysis using a principal component extraction method and a varimax rotation of 15 service quality items was conducted on a random sample ( $n = 290$ ) of the 581 total respondents. Prior to running the analysis with SPSS, the data was screened by examining descriptive statistics on each item, interitem correlation, and possible univariate and multivariate assumption violations. From this initial assessment, all variables were found to be interval-like, variable pairs appeared to be normally distributed, and all cases were independent of one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of sampling adequacy was .947, indicating that the data were suitable for principal component analysis. Similarly, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity (BTS) was 3218.98 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating sufficient correlation between the variables to proceed with the analysis.

Using the Kaiser-Guttman retention criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, a two-factor solution provided the extraction. The scree plot test also suggested that a two-factor model was the most interpretable. These two factors accounted for 68% of the total variance. Table 4-8 presents 15 items, their factor loadings, communality estimates and Cronbach’s alphas. Communalities were fairly high for each of the 15 items, with a range of .57 to .76. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the factors were .95 and .89, respectively, indicating that they were both internally consistent and reliable.

### **Perceived Value**

An exploratory factor analysis using a principal component extraction method and a varimax rotation of 13 service quality items was conducted on a random sample ( $n = 290$ ) of

the 581 total respondents. Prior to running the analysis with SPSS, the data were screened by examining descriptive statistics on each item, interitem correlation, and possible univariate and multivariate assumptions violations. From this initial assessment, all variables were found to be interval-like, variable pairs appeared to be normally distributed, and all cases were independent of one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of sampling adequacy was .910, indicating that the present data were suitable for principal component analysis. Similarly, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was 2110.81 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating sufficient correlation between the variables to proceed with the analysis.

Using the Kaiser-Guttman retention criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, a two-factor solution provided the extraction. The scree plot test also suggested that a two-factor model was the most interpretable. These two factors accounted for 62% of the total variance. Table 4-9 presents 11 items, their factor loadings, communality estimates and Cronbach's alphas. Communalities were fairly high for each of the 11 items, with a range of .46 to .72. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the factors were .92 and .79, respectively, indicating that they were both internally consistent and reliable.

Two items were removed due to having only one or two items loaded on the respective factors (i.e., The level of service I experienced was a good value, and Compared to other tourism destinations I have visited, Orlando was a good value for the money). Consequently, the two factors were labeled as Overall Value (8 items), and Financial Value (3 items).

### **Loyalty**

An exploratory factor analysis using a principal component extraction method and a varimax rotation of 6 loyalty items was conducted on a random sample ( $n = 290$ ) of the 581 total respondents. Prior to running the analysis with SPSS, the data was screened by examining descriptive statistics on each item, interitem correlation, and possible univariate and multivariate

assumption violations. From this initial assessment, all variables were found to be interval-like, variable pairs appeared to be normally distributed, and all cases were independent of one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of sampling adequacy was .844, indicating that the data were suitable for principal component analysis. Similarly, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was 1673.84 ( $p < .001$ ), indicating sufficient correlation between the variables to proceed with the analysis.

Using the Kaiser-Guttman retention criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, a two-factor solution provided the extraction. The scree plot test also suggested that a two-factor model was the most interpretable. These two factors accounted for 89% of the total variance. Table 4-10 presents 6 items, their factor loadings, communality estimates and Cronbach's alphas. Communalities were extremely high for each of the 6 items, with a range of .85 to .92. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the factors were .94 and .92, respectively, indicating that they were both internally consistent and reliable.

### **Measurement Models: Confirmatory Factor Analyses**

#### **Destination Image**

Prior to testing the structural equation model of destination image, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of each construct was used to determine which variables should be included in the models based on good fits. The second data set for the destination image variables was submitted to a CFA, using Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation. Goodness of fit indexes revealed that the six-factor and 24-item measurement model did not fit the data well (Table 4-11). The chi-square statistic had a significance level of 0.01. This statistic failed to support the criterion that the differences between the proposed model and the observed data were non-significant. The chi-square statistic is used to test for differences between the predicted and the observed relationships

(correlations/covariances). However, it is generally agreed that the  $\chi^2$  value should be used as a guide rather than an absolute index of fit due to its sensitivity to sample size and model complexity (Kline, 2005). Therefore, alternative fit indices were examined, including the normed chi-square, RMSEA, SRMR, CFI and GFI. A value of the normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 3.03$ ) was slightly above the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the six-factor model showed a mediocre fit (RMSEA = .8 to .10; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Although the value of SRMR (.087) was within the range of acceptable fit ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005), the CFI value of .89 was lower than the recommended cut-off ratio ( $>.90$ ; Hu & Bentler, 1999), indicating an overall lack of fit to the data. The model fit tests suggested a need for respecification. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), model respecification is needed if the proposed model does not fit the data well. Poor indicator loadings also supported model respecification. Adopting a conservative criterion in order for a scale to possess good convergent validity, an indicator loading should be equal to or greater than .707 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982). Of 24 items, three were below .707, indicating a lack of convergent validity. Therefore, three items were eliminated (Orlando was a good place to travel, Everything was fascinating, and Orlando had limited parking areas). After careful consideration of both statistical and theoretical justifications, a decision was made to remove two more items, which were items (Orlando had many traffic jams and Orlando was crowded) that formed the Accessibility factor, which is now eliminated

As a result of the model respecification, a five-factor model with 19 items was conceptualized: Destination Atmosphere (6 items), Travel Information (3 items), Travel Environment (4 items), Shopping (3 items), and Community Attitude (3 items). This was consistent with the recommendations made by Bollen (1989) that each factor consists of at least

three items. A five-factor model with 19 items was submitted to a CFA. Overall goodness of fit revealed that the five-factor model fit the data reasonably well (Table 4-11). The chi-square statistic was nonsignificant ( $\chi^2 = 414.089, p < .079$ ). The normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 2.91$ ) was lower than the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the five factor model had an acceptable fit (RMSEA = .069; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.065) was of a magnitude ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005). CFI was .931, which was considered acceptable (Kline). TLI was .923, indicative of an acceptable model. Overall, the model fit for the five-factor model improved substantially, indicating acceptability.

The convergent validity of the measurement scale was examined via the following tests. For each variable, the *t* value associated with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level (Table 4-16). The results indicated that all variables were significantly related to their specific constructs, verifying the posited relationships among indicators and constructs.

The construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also computed for the latent constructs. For both CR and AVE, all constructs surpassed the threshold value of .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the five factors for the destination image construct were significant in terms of how the measurement model was specified.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established when the latent constructs' AVE values were compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding constructs, and none of the squared correlations surpass the AVE. These tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the destination image construct.

### **Service Quality**

The second data set for the service quality variables was submitted to a CFA, using Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation: Performance-based quality (10 items) and Product-based

quality (5 items). Overall goodness of fit revealed that the two-factor model fit the data reasonably well (Table 4-12). The chi-square statistic was nonsignificant ( $\chi^2 = 215.979, p < .179$ ), indicating that the model fits the data. The normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 2.43$ ) was lower than the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the two factor model had an acceptable fit (RMSEA = .073; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.050) was of sufficient ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005). CFI was .931, which was considered acceptable (Kline). GFI was .934 as indicative of an acceptable model. Also NFI was .922, supporting the finding that this model fits the data.

The convergent validity of the measurement scale was examined via the following tests. For each variable, the  $t$  value associated with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level (Table 4-18). The results indicated that all variables were significantly related to their specific constructs, verifying the posited relationships among indicators and constructs.

The construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also computed for the latent constructs. For both CR and AVE, all constructs surpassed the threshold value of .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the two factors for service quality construct were significant in terms of how the measurement model was specified.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established when the AVE values for the latent constructs are compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding constructs, and none of the squared correlations surpass the AVE. These tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the service quality construct.

### **Perceived Value**

The second data set for the perceived value variables was submitted to a CFA, using Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation. Goodness of fit indexes revealed that the two-factor and 11-item measurement model did not fit the data well (Table 4-13). The chi-square statistics had a

significance level of  $\leq 0.01$ . This statistic failed to support concluding that the differences between the proposed model and the observed data were non-significant. The chi-square statistic is used to test the difference between the predicted and the observed relationships (correlations/covariances). However, it is generally agreed that  $\chi^2$  value should be used as a guide rather than an absolute fit index due to its sensitivity to sample size and model complexity (Kline, 2005). Therefore, alternative fit indices were further examined, including the normed chi-square, RMSEA, SRMR, CFI and GFI. The value of the normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 3.386$ ) was above the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the two-factor model showed a mediocre fit (RMSEA = .8 to .10; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Although the value of SRMR (.097) was within the range of acceptable fit ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005), the CFI value of .902 was lower than the recommended cut-off ratio ( $> .90$ ; Hu & Bentler, 1999), indicating an overall lack of fit to the data. The model fit tests suggested a need for respecification. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), model respecification is needed if the proposed model does not fit the data well. Poor indicator loadings also supported model respecification. Adopting a conservative criterion for the scale to have good convergent validity, an indicator loading should be equal to or greater than .707 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1982). Of the 11 items, four items were below .707, indicating a lack of convergent validity. Therefore, four items were eliminated (Visiting Orlando gave me pleasure, Orlando was a destination that I enjoyed, visiting Orlando made me feel better, and after visiting Orlando my image of Orlando has improved.). After careful consideration of both statistical and theoretical justifications, a decision was made to keep the other 7 items.

As a result of the model respecification, a two-factor model with 7 items was conceptualized: Overall value (4 items), and Financial value (3 items). This was consistent with

the recommendations made by Bollen (1989) since each factor consisted of at least three items. A two-factor model with 7 items was further submitted to a CFA. Overall goodness of fit revealed that the two-factor model fit the data reasonably well (Table 4-13). The chi-square statistic was nonsignificant ( $\chi^2 = 35.75, p < .058$ ). The normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 2.75$ ) was lower than the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the two factor model had an acceptable fit (RMSEA = .069; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.087) was acceptable ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005). CFI was .926, which acceptable (Kline, 2005). GFI was .922, indicative of an acceptable model. Overall, the model fit for the two-factor model improved drastically, indicating acceptability.

The convergent validity of the measurement scale was examined via the following tests. For each variable, the *t* value associated with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level (Table 4-20). The results indicated that all variables were significantly related to their specific constructs, verifying the posited relationships among indicators and constructs.

The construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also computed for the latent constructs. For both CR and AVE, all constructs surpassed the threshold value of .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that two factors for perceived value construct were significant in terms of how the measurement model was specified.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established when the AVE values for the latent constructs are compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding constructs, and none of the squared correlations surpass the AVE. These tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the perceived value construct.

## **Loyalty**

The second data set for the loyalty variables was submitted to a CFA, using Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation: Revisit Intentions (3 items) and WOM (3 items). The overall

goodness of fit revealed that the two-factor model fit the data reasonably well (Table 4-14). The chi-square statistic was nonsignificant ( $\chi^2= 15.235, p < .065$ ), indicating that the model fits the data. The normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 1.904$ ) was lower than the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the two factor model had a good fit (RMSEA = .056; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.047) was acceptable ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005). CFI was .971, which was good (Kline, 2005). GFI was .953, indicative of a good model. Also NFI was .965, supporting the finding that this model fits the data.

The convergent validity of the measurement scale was examined via the following tests. For each variable, the  $t$  value associated with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level (Table 4-22). The results indicated that all variables were significantly related to their specific constructs, verifying the posited relationships among indicators and constructs.

The construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also computed for the latent constructs. For both CR and AVE, all constructs surpass the threshold value of .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the two factors of the loyalty construct were significant in terms of how the measurement model was specified.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established when the AVE values for the latent constructs are compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding constructs, and none of the squared correlations surpass the AVE. These tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the loyalty construct.

### **Structural Model**

The most obvious examination of the structural model involves the significance tests for the estimated coefficients (paths), which provide the basis for accepting or rejecting the proposed relationships between latent constructs. Prior to estimating path coefficients for the hypothesized structural model, a structural model with five constructs was estimated using Maximum

Likelihood (ML) estimation. Although the chi-square test was significant ( $\chi^2 = 1729.128$ ,  $p < .001$ ), the results yielded acceptably high goodness-of-fit indices (Table 4-15), indicating that the hypothesized model fit the observed data. The normed chi-square ( $\chi^2/df = 2.802$ ) was lower than the suggested cut-off value (i.e.,  $< 3.0$ ; Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value indicated that the structural model had a good fit (RMSEA = .058; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR (.047) was of a good value ( $\leq .10$ ; Kline, 2005). CFI was .943, which was good (Kline). GFI was .931 as indicative of a good model. Also NFI was .930, supporting this model fits the data.

The convergent validity of the structural model was examined via the following tests. For each factor, the  $t$  value associated with each of the loadings was significant at the 0.01 level. The results indicated that all factors were significantly related to their specific constructs, verifying the posited relationships among indicators and constructs.

The construct reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE) were also computed for the latent constructs. For both CR and AVE, all constructs surpassed the threshold values of .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that all factors in the hypothesized structural model showed acceptable reliability.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be established when the AVE values for the latent constructs are compared to the squared correlations between the corresponding constructs, and none of the squared correlations surpass the AVE. These tests indicated that the discriminant validity was upheld for the destination image construct. Having satisfied the psychometric properties of the measurement model, it was appropriate to proceed to examine the structural relationship among the different sets of factors.

The hypothesized structural model was estimated to examine the hypotheses with regard to the effect of destination image, service quality and perceived value factors on destination

loyalty as mediated by satisfaction (Table 4-24). The tested model included a total of 11 latent constructs and 3 manifest variables (Figure 4-5). More specifically, there were five latent variables representing destination image, two latent variables for service quality, perceived value and destination loyalty, respectively. Nine out of ten direct effect of hypotheses (paths) were found to be significant, excepting the effect of destination image on satisfaction ( $\beta = .097$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.29).

The standardized direct effects of destination image had a positive influence on service quality ( $\beta = .567$ ,  $t$ -value = 6.47), perceived value ( $\beta = .725$ ,  $t$ -value = 12.29), and destination loyalty ( $\beta = .476$ ,  $t$ -value = 6.72), respectively. These results indicated that when destination image increased by one standard deviation, service quality also increased by .567 standard deviations, as well as perceived value .725 and destination loyalty .476. Therefore, hypothesis 2, 3, and 4 were supported.

The standardized direct effects of service quality were found to exert a positive influence on perceived value ( $\beta = .271$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.23), satisfaction ( $\beta = .171$ ,  $t$ -value = 2.29), and destination loyalty ( $\beta = -1.55$ ,  $t$ -value = -2.14), respectively, indicating that when service quality increased up by one standard deviation, perceived value increased also by .271 standard deviation as well as satisfaction .171, but destination loyalty decreased by -1.55. Therefore, hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 were all supported.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 dealt with the direct effects of perceived value on satisfaction and destination loyalty. The findings revealed that the direct effects of perceived value had a positive relationship with satisfaction ( $\beta = .735$ ,  $t$ -value = 11.789) and destination loyalty ( $\beta = .445$ ,  $t$ -value = 5.89), respectively, indicating that when perceived value increased by one standard deviation, satisfaction increased also by .735 as well as destination loyalty by .445.

Hypothesis 10 dealt with the direct effect of satisfaction on destination loyalty. The finding revealed that the direct effect of satisfaction had a positive relationship with destination loyalty ( $\beta = .344$ ,  $t$ -value = 6.359), indicating that when satisfaction increased by one standard deviation, destination loyalty increased also by .344.

One of major purposes of this study was to examine the mediating effect of satisfaction. A total of three mediating analyses were conducted. It was found that satisfaction played a mediating role in all three in the relationships between destination image and destination loyalty ( $\beta = .034$ ,  $p$ -value < .05), service quality and destination loyalty ( $\beta = .011$ ,  $p$ -value < .05), and perceived value and destination loyalty ( $\beta = .098$ ,  $p$ -value < .01). These results indicated that destination loyalty was expected to enhance by .034, .011 and .098 standard deviations for every increase in destination image, service quality, and perceived value through its prior effect on satisfaction. Therefore, hypotheses 11, 12, and 13 were supported.

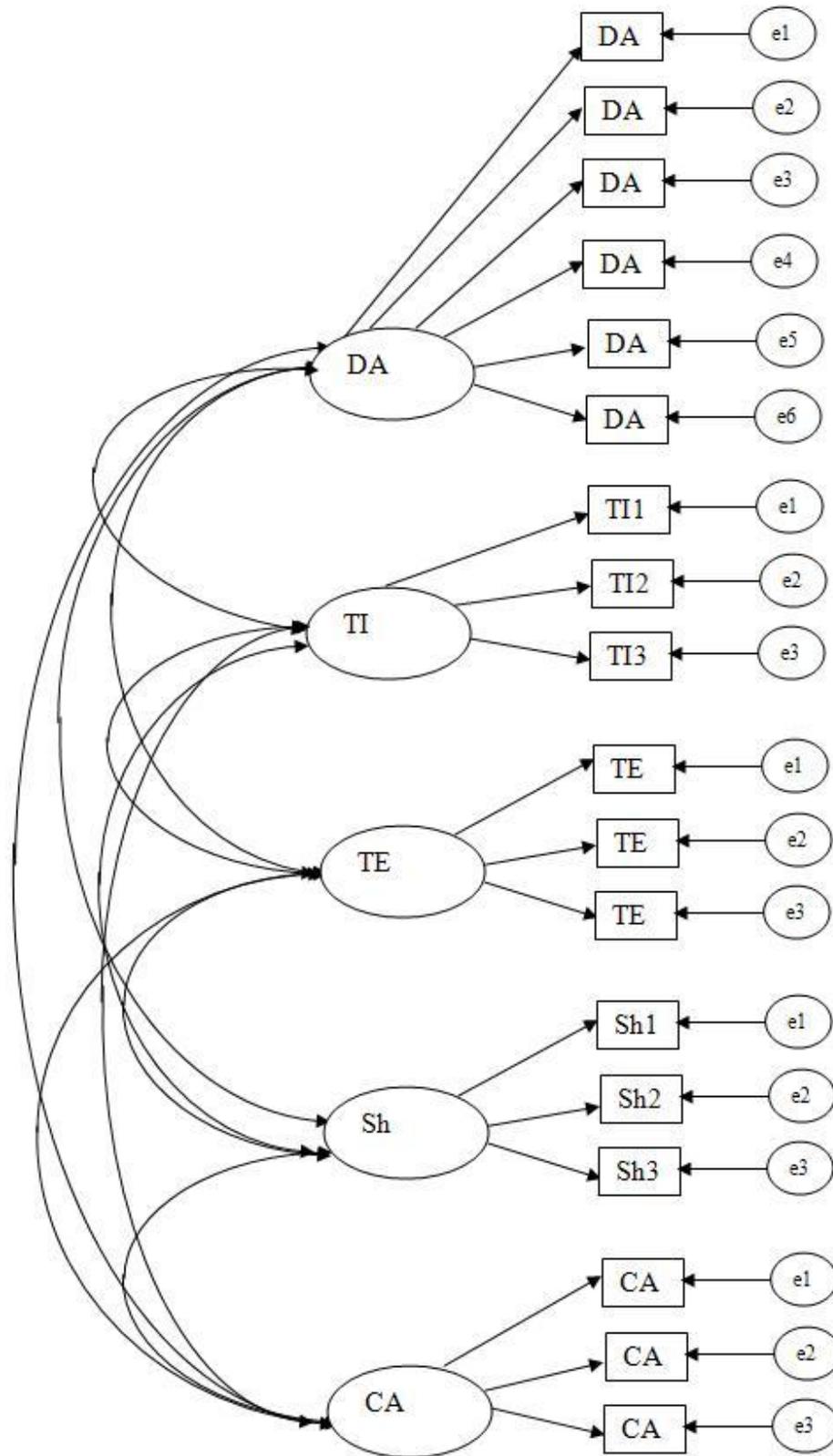


Figure 4-1. First-order confirmatory factor analysis for Destination Image

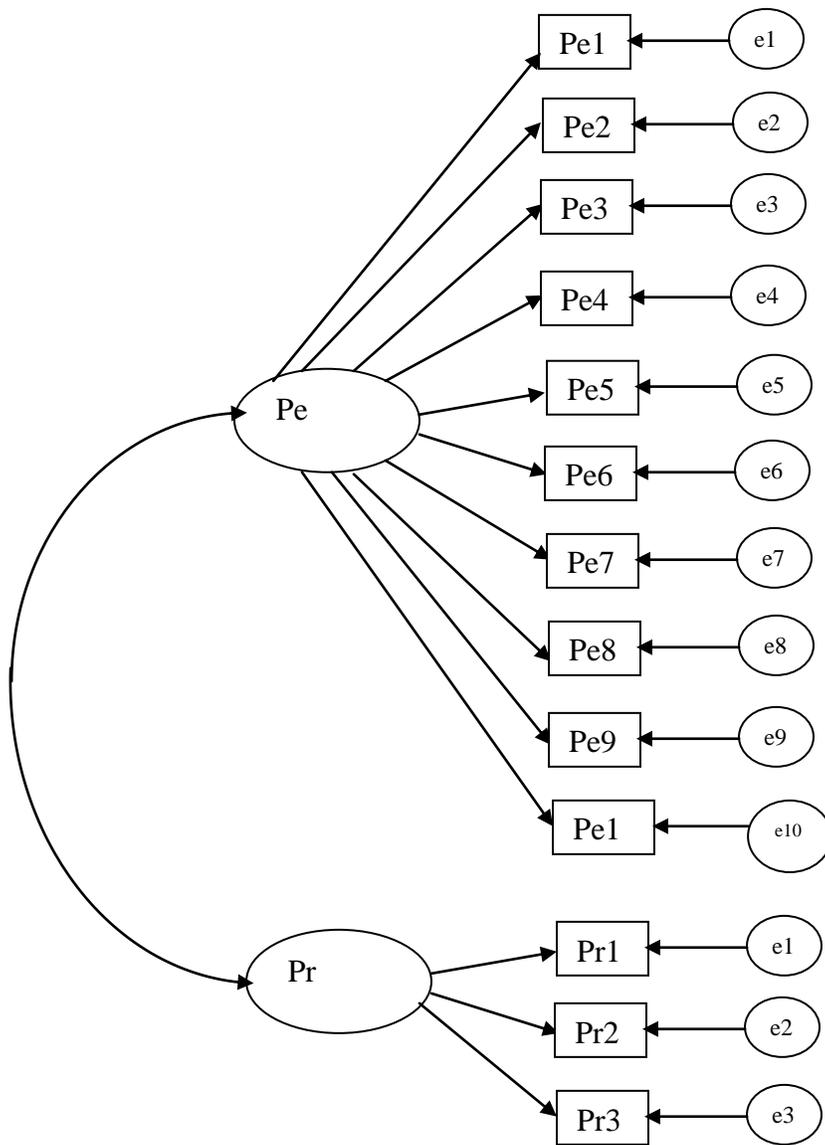


Figure 4-2. First-order confirmatory factor analysis for Service Quality

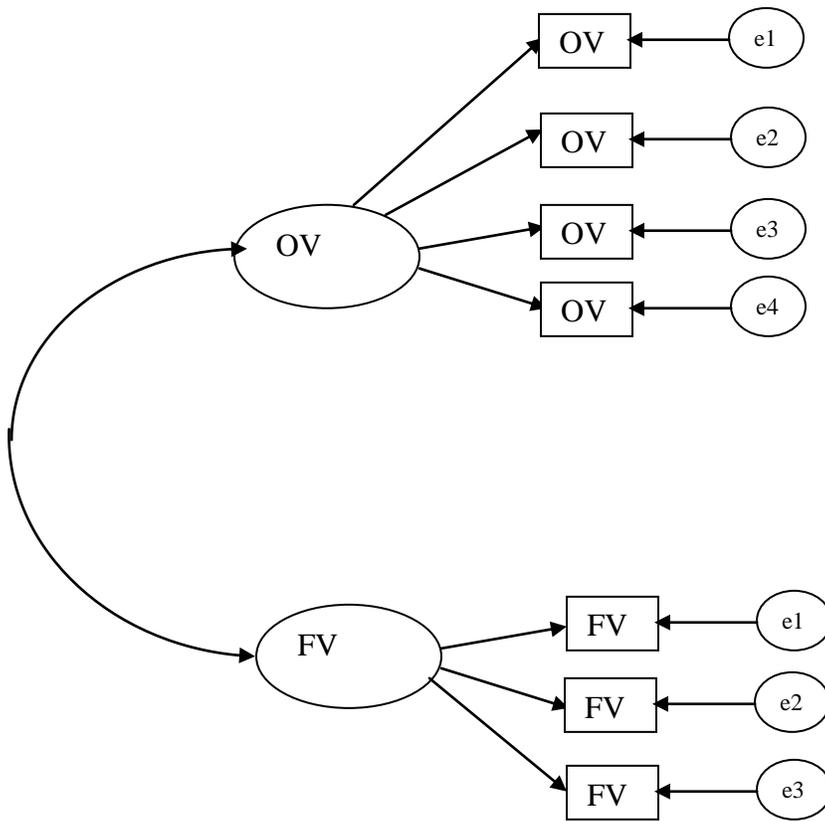


Figure 4-3. First-order confirmatory factor analysis for Perceived Values

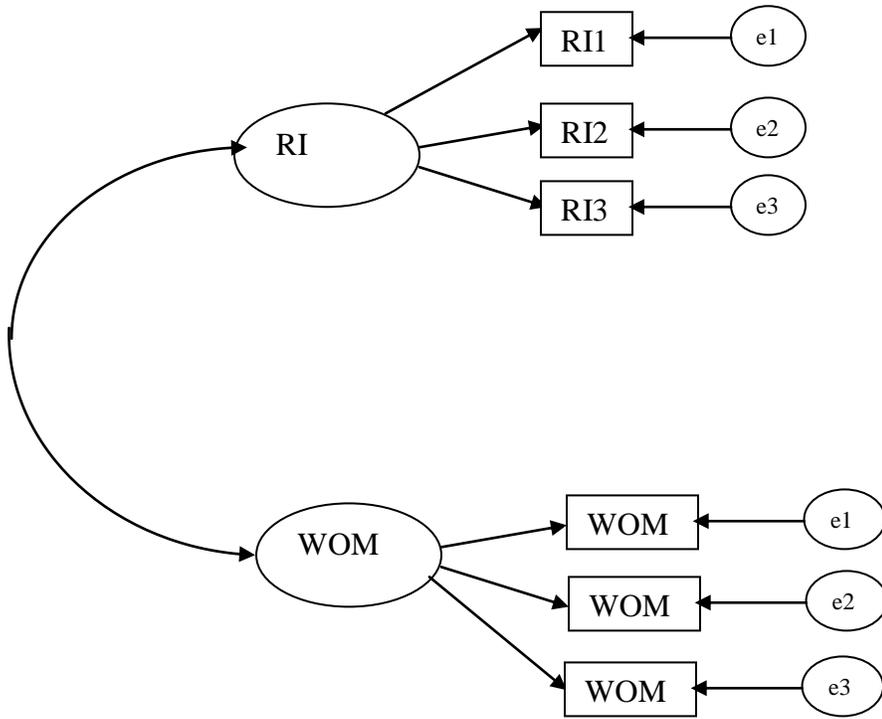


Figure 4-4. First-order confirmatory factor analysis for Loyalty



Figure 4-5. Tested Structured Model

Table 4-1. Frequency distributions for the sociodemographic variables ( $N = 581$ )

Variables	Category	Frequency (%) ( $N = 581$ )	Cumulative %
Gender	Male	241 (41.5)	41.5
	Female	340 (58.5)	100.0
Ethnicity	Caucasian	546 (94.0)	94.0
	African- American	9 (1.5)	95.5
	Hispanic/Latin America	15 (2.6)	98.1
	Asian American/Pacific Islander	1 (0.2)	98.3
	Native American	8 (1.4)	99.7
	Other		100.0
Age	18-25	160 (27.6)	27.6
	26-32	57 (9.8)	37.4
	33-40	88 (15.1)	52.5
	41-50	149 (25.8)	78.3
	51-65	119 (20.5)	98.8
	66 or above	7 (1.2)	100.0
Marital Status	Single	181 (31.2)	31.2
	Married	356 (61.3)	92.4
	Divorced	27 (4.6)	97.1
	Widowed	6 (1.0)	98.1
	Other	11 (1.9)	100.0
Income	Below \$20,000	47 (8.1)	8.1
	\$20,000 – 39,999	65 (11.2)	19.3
	\$40,000 – 59,999	98 (16.9)	36.1
	\$60,000 – 79,999	80 (13.8)	49.9
	\$80,000 – 99,999	102 (17.6)	67.5
	Above \$100,000	189 (32.6)	100.0
Education	Some high School	17 (2.9)	2.9
	High School Graduate	112 (19.3)	22.2
	Some College	188 (32.4)	54.6
	College Graduate	188 (32.4)	86.9
	Graduate degree	72 (12.4)	99.3
	Other	4 (0.7)	100.0

Table 4-1 Continued

Variables	Category	Frequency (%) (N = 581)	Cumulative %
Groups	Family with no children	125 (21.5)	21.5
	Family with children	307 (52.8)	74.4
	Tour group	3 (.5)	74.9
	Friends	110 (18.9)	93.8
	Others	36 (6.2)	100.0
Primary Purpose	Vacation/pleasure	465 (80.0)	80.2
	Business/professional	17 (2.9)	83.1
	Visit friends/relatives	54 (9.3)	92.4
	Convention/exhibition	12 (2.1)	94.5
	En route to somewhere else	5 (.9)	95.3
	Leisure	5 (.9)	96.2
	Others	22 (3.8)	100.0
Duration	1-2	60 (10.4)	10.4
	3-4	179 (30.8)	41.2
	5-6	186 (32.1)	73.3
	7-9	124 (21.3)	94.6
	Over 10	32 (5.5)	100.0

Table 4-2. Descriptive statistics for the Destination Image Variables ( $N = 581$ )

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
1.Orlando was a good place to shop	5.642	1.19304	-0.651	-0.136
2.Local people were helpful	5.3046	1.33202	-0.795	0.553
3.Orlando offered wide variety of shops	5.9071	1.13029	-1.017	0.541
4.Orlando was a restful place	5.0637	1.56615	-0.584	-0.443
5.Orlando had many traffic jams	4.7332	1.71084	-0.337	-0.813
6.Orlando was an enjoyable traffic destination	6.1601	0.95241	-0.149	2.904
7.Orlando offered convenience of local transportation	5.3121	1.31585	-0.690	0.109
8.Orlando offered good nightlife and entertainment	5.8176	1.11159	-1.003	1.064
9.Orlando was a safe place to visit	5.5611	1.15302	-0.874	0.985
10.Orlando had pleasant weather	6.3787	0.8893	-1.822	3.895
11.Orlando was a pleasing travel destination	6.2582	0.89565	-1.730	4.752
12.Orlando was crowded	5.6386	1.27583	-0.919	0.611
13.Orlando was family-oriented destination	6.2203	0.89423	-1.303	2.221
14.Orlando offered various events information	5.7745	1.0966	-0.804	0.406
15.Orlando had high standards for sanitation and cleanliness	5.4286	1.11748	-0.605	0.32
16.Orlando was advanced and developed city	5.7108	0.95721	-0.554	0.09
17.Orlando had suitable accommodations	6.0637	0.89697	-0.960	0.945
18.Orlando offered appealing local food	5.8657	1.05498	-0.888	0.543
19.Orlando was a good atmosphere to visit	6.1067	0.89383	-1.039	1.268
20.Orlando had high standards of living	5.5439	1.0087	-0.459	-0.04
21.Orlando offered good tourism information	6.0293	0.95457	-0.894	0.918
22.Orlando offered easily accessible tourism information	6.0516	0.93813	-0.857	0.467
23.Orlando had wide variety of products	5.8795	1.00135	-0.760	0.524
24.Everything was fascinating	5.3477	1.21327	-0.499	-0.147
25.Orlando offered convenient shopping	5.8055	1.04965	-0.691	0.187
26.Orlando had many interesting places	6.0809	0.90896	-0.921	0.735
27.Orlando offered easy access to the area where I want to visit	5.8675	1.14981	-1.125	1.115
28.Orlando was an exciting travel destination	6.0275	1.00306	-1.156	1.809
29.Orlando was a relaxing place	5.3597	1.41288	-0.912	0.454
30.A holiday in Orlando is a real adventure	5.6282	1.22734	-1.053	1.293
31.Local people were friendly	5.4768	1.1926	-0.722	0.446
32.Orlando was a good place to travel	6.0776	0.98302	-1.327	2.525
33.Orlando had limited parking area	5.3652	1.1524	-0.895	0.721

Table 4-3. Descriptive statistics for the Service Quality Variables ( $N = 581$ )

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
1. Generally, the employees provided service reliably and consistently	5.5164	1.02477	-0.777	1.008
2. Generally, the employees provided services in a timely manner	5.4974	1.06775	-0.906	1.198
3. Generally, the employees were competent (knowledgeable and skillful)	5.5250	1.08667	-0.841	1.100
4. Generally, the physical facilities were clean	5.5783	1.07934	-0.769	0.847
5. Generally, the employees were courteous, polite and respectful	5.6403	1.05194	-0.748	0.571
6. Generally, the employees listened to me and we understood each other	5.4303	1.13747	-0.786	0.760
7. Generally, the employees were trustworthy, believable and honest	5.5697	1.05080	-0.699	0.450
8. Generally, the employees made the effort to understand my needs	5.6179	1.04813	-0.927	1.436
9. Generally, the employees were neat and clean	5.7091	1.02203	-0.833	0.908
10. Generally, the employees were approachable and easy to contact	5.7057	1.06728	-0.989	1.513
11. Compared to other destinations, I got high quality from visiting Orlando	5.7040	0.93687	-0.616	0.596
12. Orlando offered good quality tourism product	5.9346	0.92617	-0.784	0.585
13. Orlando offered good quality of merchandise	5.7745	0.97155	-0.668	0.303
14. Orlando offered good quality of lodging facilities	6.0413	0.87190	-0.879	1.182
15. Orlando offered good quality of food	5.9208	0.97057	-1.033	1.854

Table 4-4. Descriptive statistics for the Perceived Value Variables ( $N = 581$ )

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
1. Visiting Orlando made me feel better	5.7969	1.01373	-0.950	1.370
2.Orlando was a destination that I enjoyed	6.0792	0.91006	-1.231	2.439
3.Compared to other tourism destinations I have visited,	5.2582	1.26305	-0.815	0.770
4.Orlando was a good value for the money	5.5095	1.04979	-0.765	0.660
5.The level of service I experienced was a good value	5.7625	0.96062	-0.763	0.763
6.I obtained good results while visiting Orlando	4.8107	1.40269	-0.506	-0.055
7.The quality per dollar spent while visiting Orlando was more than what I expected	5.2375	1.36913	-0.750	0.284
8.Orlando was a place where I wanted to travel	5.4200	1.12306	-0.580	0.229
9.Overall, my Orlando experience were better than I expected	5.8141	1.10946	-0.943	0.705
10.The choice to visit Orlando was the right decision	5.8795	1.05337	-1.037	1.187
11.Visiting Orlando gave me pleasure	4.7367	1.38259	-0.525	0.112
12.Orlando was reasonably priced	5.2943	1.24060	-0.594	0.214
13.After visiting Orlando, my image of Orlando has improved	5.3115	1.44831	-0.667	0.273
14.Orlando was expensive	4.7367	1.38259	-0.525	0.112

Table 4-5. Descriptive statistics for the Satisfaction Variables ( $N = 581$ )

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
1. Overall I'm satisfied with Orlando	5.8793	0.99355	-0.975	1.604
2. I'm satisfied with Orlando compared to my expectations before traveling	5.6523	1.02197	-0.635	0.522
3. I'm satisfied with Orlando considering the time and effort I invested	5.7573	1.01096	-0.826	0.962

Table 4-6. Descriptive statistics for the Loyalty Variables ( $N = 581$ )

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>
1. I will revisit Orlando within three years for a vacation(s)	5.4441	1.63340	-1.034	0.381
2.I will recommend visiting Orlando to others (family or friends)	5.8382	1.22671	-1.269	1.808
3.I will refer Orlando to other people who want advice on travel destination	5.7741	1.23661	-1.181	1.538
4.I have a high likelihood of revisiting Orlando within three years of vacation	5.5043	1.63435	-1.092	0.452
5.I will say positive things about visiting Orlando to other people	5.9053	1.12633	-1.295	2.267
6.I have plans to revisit Orlando in the near future	5.2582	1.85383	-0.888	-0.284

Table 4-7. EFA for Destination Image variables: varimax rotation using first half data ( $n = 290$ )

Original subscale item name	Factor loading	Communality	Cronbach's $\alpha$
<b><i>Destination Atmosphere (8 items)</i></b>			.91
Orlando was an exciting travel destination	.76	.75	
Orlando was a good place to travel	.75	.75	
Orlando was a pleasing travel destination	.72	.68	
Orlando was an enjoyable travel destination	.7	.65	
A holiday in Orlando was a real adventure	.67	.58	
Orlando was a good atmosphere to visit	.62	.66	
Orlando had a pleasant weather	.6	.55	
Everything was fascinating	.55	.65	
<b><i>Travel Information (3 items)</i></b>			.84
Orlando offered easily accessible tourism information	.83	.80	
Orlando offered good tourism information	.77	.72	
Orlando offered various events information	.63	.66	
<b><i>Travel Environment (4 items)</i></b>			.82
Orlando was advanced and developed city	.80	.72	
Orlando had high standards for sanitation & cleanliness	.71	.66	
Orlando had suitable accommodations	.66	.61	
Orlando had high standard of living	.47	.57	
<b><i>Shopping (3 items)</i></b>			.90
Orlando was a good place to shop	.76	.68	
Orlando offered wide variety of shops	.75	.68	
Orlando offered convenient shopping	.71	.54	
<b><i>Community Attitude (3 items)</i></b>			.85
Local people were helpful	.66	.74	
Orlando was family-oriented destination	.59	.64	
Local people were friendly	.54	.64	
<b><i>Accessibility (3 items)</i></b>			.81
Orlando had many traffic jams	.82	.71	
Orlando was crowded	.76	.64	
Orlando had limited parking area	.59	.59	

Table 4-8. EFA for Service Quality variables: varimax rotation using first half data ( $n = 290$ )

Original subscale item name	Factor loading	Communality	Cronbach' $\alpha$
<b><i>Performance-based quality (10 items)</i></b>			.95
Employees were competent	.86	.71	
Employees listened to me and we understand each other	.84	.64	
Employees provided service reliably & consistently	.83	.72	
Employees provided services in a timely manner	.80	.67	
Employees were trustworthy, believable and honest	.80	.67	
Employees made the effort to understand my needs	.79	.72	
Employees were courteous, polite and respectful	.78	.72	
Employees were approachable and easy to contact	.78	.71	
Employees were neat and clean	.70	.63	
Physical facilities were clean	.60	.57	
<b><i>Product-based quality (5 items)</i></b>			.89
Orlando offered good quality of merchandise	.81	.70	
Orlando offered a good quality of tourism product	.80	.76	
Orlando offered good quality of food	.75	.66	
Orlando offered good quality of lodging facilities	.72	.68	
Compared to other travel destination, I got high quality from visiting Orlando	.54	.68	

Table 4-9. EFA for Perceived Value variables: varimax rotation using first half data ( $n = 290$ )

Original subscale item name	Factor loading	Communality	Cronbach's $\alpha$
<b><i>Overall Value (8 items)</i></b>			<b>.92</b>
Visiting Orlando gave me pleasure	.82	.68	
The choice to visit Orlando was the right decision	.81	.68	
Orlando was a destination that I enjoyed	.80	.65	
Visiting Orlando made me feel better	.79	.65	
I obtained good results while visiting Orlando	.70	.60	
Orlando is a place where I always wanted to travel	.68	.49	
Orlando experiences were better than I expected	.67	.59	
After visiting Orlando, my image of Orlando has improved	.60	.46	
<b><i>Financial Value (3 items)</i></b>			<b>.79</b>
Orlando was reasonably priced	.76	.72	
Orlando was expensive	.75	.66	
The quality per dollar spent while visiting Orlando was more than what I expected	.61	.51	

Table 4-10. EFA for Loyalty variables: varimax rotation using first half data ( $n = 290$ )

Original subscale item name	Factor loading	Communality	Cronbach'α
<b><i>Revisit intentions (3 items)</i></b>			.94
I have a high likelihood of revisiting Orlando within 3 years for vacation	.91	.92	
I will revisit Orlando within 3 years for a vacation	.91	.91	
I have plans to revisit Orlando in the near future	.86	.92	
<b><i>WOM (3 items)</i></b>			.92
I will say positive things about visiting Orlando to other people	.89	.85	
I will recommend visiting Orlando to others (family or friends)	.88	.90	
I will refer Orlando to other people who want advice on travel destinations	.87	.89	

Table 4-11. Model Fit comparison between the six-factor model and five-factor model of destination image using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	TLI
Six-Factor Model (24 items)	718.447	237	3.03	.089	.087	.79	.880
Five-Factor Model (19 items)	414.089	142	2.91	.069	.065	.931	.923

Table 4-12. Model Fit of service quality using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CFI	NFI
Two-Factor Model (15 items)	215.979	89	2.43	.073	.050	.934	.931	.922

Table 4-13. Model Fit comparison between the eleven item model and seven item model of perceived value using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	GFI
Two-Factor Model (11 items)	145.620	43	3.386	.098	.097	.902	.899
Two-Factor Model (7 items)	35.75	13	2.75	.078	.087	.926	.922

Table 4-14. Model Fit of loyalty using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CFI	NFI
Two-Factor Model (6 items)	15.235	8	1.904	.056	.047	.953	.971	.965

Table 4-15. Overall model fit of hypothesized structural model using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Model	$\chi^2$	$df$	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	SRMR	GFI	CFI	NFI
Structural Model	1729.128	617	2.802	.058	.047	.931	.943	.930

Table 4-16. Indicator loadings, critical ratios, cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, average variance extracted for the destination image (n = 291)

Variables	Indicator Loadings	Critical Ratios	Cronbach' Alpha	Construct Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
<b><i>Destination Atmosphere (6 items)</i></b>			.87	.84	.62
Orlando was an exciting travel destination	.88				
Orlando was a pleasing travel destination	.75	14.15			
Orlando was an enjoyable travel destination	.77	15.54			
A holiday in Orlando was a real adventure	.85	12.78			
Orlando was a good atmosphere to visit	.86	13.84			
Orlando had a pleasant weather	.91	14.52			
<b><i>Travel Information (3 items)</i></b>			.85	.83	.60
Orlando offered easily accessible tourism information	.92				
Orlando offered good tourism information	.88	11.23			
Orlando offered various events information	.89	10.79			
<b><i>Travel Environment (4 items)</i></b>			.80	.80	.59
Orlando was advanced and developed city	.89				
Orlando had high standards for sanitation & cleanliness	.78	13.52			
Orlando had suitable accommodations	.85	12.44			
Orlando had high standard of living	.75	13.62			
<b><i>Shopping (3 items)</i></b>			.89	.87	.57
Orlando was a good place to shop	.90				
Orlando offered wide variety of shops	.88	9.54			
Orlando offered convenient shopping	.87	10.11			
<b><i>Community Attitude (3 items)</i></b>			.81	.80	.58
Local people were helpful	.78				
Orlando was family-oriented destination	.83	14.85			
Local people were friendly	.88	15.13			

Table 4-17. Correlations among destination image constructs ( $n = 291$ )

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Destination Atmosphere	1.00				
2. Travel Information	.61	1.00			
3. Travel Environment	.75	.71	1.00		
4. Shopping	.59	.78	.68	1.00	
5. Community Attitude	.69	.58	.73	.65	1.00

Table 4-18. Indicator loadings, critical ratios, Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, average variance extracted for the service quality ( $n = 291$ )

Variables	Indicator Loadings	Critical Ratios	Cronbach's Alpha	Construct Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
<b><i>Performance-based quality (10 items)</i></b>			.96	.94	.63
Employees were competent	.89	16.60			
Employees listened to me and we understand each other	.95	17.83			
Employees provided service reliably & consistently	.88	18.04			
Employees provided services in a timely manner	.90	17.81			
Employees were trustworthy, believable and honest	.92	18.10			
Employees made the effort to understand my needs	.93	18.32			
Employees were courteous, polite and respectful	.94	18.76			
Employees were approachable and easy to contact	.92	18.84			
Employees were neat and clean	.86	18.63			
Physical facilities were clean	.79	14.91			
<b><i>Product-based quality (5 items)</i></b>			.90	.91	.57
Orlando offered good quality of merchandise	.81	17.08			
Orlando offered a good quality of tourism product	.76	17.42			
Orlando offered good quality of food	.69	13.20			
Orlando offered good quality of lodging facilities	.77	15.73			
Compared to other travel destination, I got high quality form visiting Orlando	.78	16.82			

Table 4-19. Correlations between service quality constructs ( $n = 291$ )

	1	2
1. Performance-based quality	1.00	
2. Product-based quality	.59	1.00

Table 4-20. Indicator loadings, critical ratios, Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, average variance extracted for the perceived value ( $n = 291$ )

Variables	Indicator Loadings	Critical Ratios	Cronbach's Alpha	Construct Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
<b><i>Overall Value (4 items)</i></b>			.88	.90	.58
The choice to visit Orlando was the right decision	.76	19.644			
I obtained good results while visiting Orlando	.83	16.88			
Orlando is a place where I always wanted to travel	.71	13.24			
Orlando experiences were better than I expected	.69	16.42			
<b><i>Financial Value (3 items)</i></b>			.76	.77	.52
Orlando was reasonably priced	.77	16.09			
Orlando was expensive	.80	15.88			
The quality per dollar spent while visiting Orlando was more than what I expected	.69	18.84			

Table 4-21. Correlations between perceived value constructs ( $n = 291$ )

	1	2
1. Overall Value	1.00	
2. Financial Value	.69	1.00

Table 4-22. Indicator loadings, critical ratios, Cronbach's alpha, construct reliability, average variance extracted for the loyalty ( $n = 291$ )

Variables	Indicator Loadings	Critical Ratios	Cronbach's Alpha	Construct Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
<b><i>Revisit intentions (3 items)</i></b>			.93	.91	.52
I have a high likelihood of revisiting Orlando within 3 years for vacation	.93	14.26			
I will revisit Orlando within 3 years for a vacation	.91	13.84			
I have plans to revisit Orlando in the near future	.86	11.83			
<b><i>WOM (3 items)</i></b>			.95	.93	.57
I will say positive things about visiting Orlando to other people	.86	15.90			
I will recommend visiting Orlando to others (family and friends)	.90	16.78			
I will refer Orlando to other people who want advice on travel destinations	.87	16.01			

Table 4-23. Correlations between destination loyalty constructs ( $n = 291$ )

	1	2
1. Revisit Intentions	1.00	
2. Word-of-Mouth	.72	1.00

Table 4-24. Maximum likelihood standardized loadings ( $\beta$ ), critical ratios (CR), standard errors (SE), and t-values for the hypothesized structural model using second half data ( $n = 291$ )

Path Coefficients between Factors	$\beta$	CR	SE	$t$
<b>Direct Effect</b>				
Service Quality ← Destination Image (S)	.567	13.094	.046	6.47**
Perceived Value ← Destination Image (S)	.725	15.829	.044	12.29**
Satisfaction ← Destination Image (NS)	.097	1.561	.069	3.29
Destination Loyalty ← Destination Image (S)	.476	8.324	.033	6.72.**
Perceived Value ← Service Quality (S)	.271	4.732.	.053	3.23**
Satisfaction ← Service Quality (S)	.171	3.678.	.040	2.29*
Destination Loyalty ← Service Quality (S)	-.155	-3.459	.077	-2.14**
Satisfaction ← Perceived Value (S)	.735	10.879	.078	11.789**
Destination Loyalty ← Perceived Value (S)	.445	4.720	.151	5.89**
Destination Loyalty ← Satisfaction (S)	.344	3.612	.112	6.359**
Path Coefficients between Factors	$\beta$			$p$
<b>Indirect Effect</b>				
Destination Loyalty← Satisfaction ← Destination Image (S)	.034			.028
Destination Loyalty← Satisfaction ← Service Quality(S)	.011			.033
Destination Loyalty← Satisfaction ← Perceive Value (S)	.098			.001

Note. S = significant; NS = not significant

\*\*Correlation significant at .01 level

\*Correlation significant at .05 level

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The primary objectives of this study were to investigate and develop a theoretical relationship among destination image, service quality, and perceived value, and to empirically test the constructs that are likely to affect tourist satisfaction, which in turn influence revisit intentions and Word-of-Mouth (WOM). To achieve these purposes, measurement scales for destination image, service quality, perceived value, loyalty were developed relying on previous studies across various contexts. Then, the measurement scales were tested and validated through multiple CFAs. Next, the structural nature of the relationship of destination loyalty, service quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and destination loyalty constructs were explored. This discussion chapter is organized into the following sections: (a) hypotheses testing, (b) conceptual/theoretical implications, (c) managerial implications, (d) delimitations, (e) limitations and recommendations for the future studies.

### **Hypotheses Testing**

As destination competition is becoming more intense, the process of selecting a destination is also more complex, so it is crucial for both practitioners and researchers to identify those variables that directly and indirectly influence destination loyalty. An in-depth understanding of what factors influence tourists to decide to return to a destination, and how they refer a destination to others, is of paramount importance for destination marketers to better understand tourist behaviors.

The SEM analysis supported the existence of statistically significant relationships between destination image and perceived value (H2), destination image and service quality (H3), destination image and destination loyalty (H4), service quality and perceived value (H5), service quality and satisfaction (H6), service quality and destination loyalty (H7), perceived value and

satisfaction (H8), perceived value and destination loyalty (H9), and satisfaction and destination loyalty (H10). The SEM analysis also confirmed the mediation role that satisfaction played between destination image and destination loyalty (H11), service quality and destination loyalty (H12), and perceived value and destination loyalty (H13). The only hypothesis (H1) that was not supported pointed to no significant relationship between perceived destination image and overall satisfaction.

Through these results, it is believed that the destination loyalty model outlined in the conceptual framework was corroborated. Therefore, it can be said that tourists' overall satisfaction was affected by perceptions of service quality, and perceived value, which were also directly influenced by perceived destination image, and destination loyalty was in turn influenced by overall satisfaction. In addition, the newly proposed direct path from service quality to destination loyalty and perceived value to destination loyalty were shown to be significant; thus, service quality and perceived value were also direct antecedents of destination loyalty. The findings confirmed that tourists' destination loyalty was enhanced by positive perceived destination image, high perceived service quality, perceived value, and overall satisfaction.

First, this study does not support a conclusion that destination image directly influences satisfaction, however, destination image has both direct and indirect relationships with destination loyalty through satisfaction as a moderating variable. The total effect of destination image on destination loyalty, (i.e., sum of direct and indirect effect through satisfaction, and satisfaction on destination loyalty) was found to be 0.51, and 0.34. This indicates that destination image and satisfaction are important variables influencing destination loyalty. This finding

confirms the conclusions of previous studies (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Lee et al., 2005).

Although different studies have verified that destination image leads to overall satisfaction, Chen and Tsai (2007) point out that perceptions of positive destination image does not always imply satisfaction. The literature has shown that a generally positive relationship between destination image and satisfaction, but some authors suggested that destination image may not be enough to explain satisfaction (Bigne et al., 2001, Chen & Tsai, 2007). In general, the explanation may be related to the type of travelers. The type of companions most often reported were family with children (53%) for the purpose of vacation and pleasure in the current study. Parents may be dissatisfied with overall experiences at Orlando, but their priority was to choose a vacation destination for the children. In addition, satisfied children were not part of the survey respondents. When the researcher interviewed some respondents (i.e., parents taking care of children), they were often close to exhaustion with their Orlando stay, but the children were still excited and seemed to be happy, expecting to visit again.

Destination image is defined as an individual's mental representation of knowledge, feelings and overall perceptions of a particular destination (Crompton, 1979; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Destination image plays two important roles in behaviors: (1) to influence the destination choice decision-making process and (2) to condition post-decision-making behaviors including participation (on-site experience), evaluation (satisfaction) and future behavioral intentions (intention to revisit and willingness to recommend) (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Lee et al., 2005).

The results of the current study are consistent with past studies; in particular, destination image not only influences the decision-making process but also conditions post-decision-making

behaviors of tourists. In other words, the influence of destination image is not limited to the destination selection stage, but also affects the onsite behaviors of tourists in general (Bigne et al., 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Hence, endeavors to build or improve a destination's image facilitate loyal visitors revisiting or recommending behaviors, thus being critical to the success of destination tourism development.

Second, perceived service quality is an immediate antecedent of satisfaction, and affects destination loyalty both directly and indirectly through satisfaction as a moderating variable. In addition, perceived service quality was positively influenced by destination image. This finding of the current study is consistent with past studies (Castro, Armario, & Ruiz, 2007; Baker & Crompton, 2000; McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Hutchinson, Lai, & Wang, 2009; Murra & Howat, 2002; Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). Therefore, service quality measurement and improvement are essential aspects for those wishing to enhance destination loyalty. It should be noted that the current study measures perceived service quality, referring to employee performance-based quality and product-based quality experiences.

Service quality is a widely studied, and debated, construct (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). However, for the purpose of explaining variance in dependent constructs, the weight of the evidence in the extant literature supports the use of performance-based service quality (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000). As a result, two multiple factors (employee performance-based service quality and product-based quality) were included in the current study. Because of the comprehensive nature of the study, the number of items used to measure each variable became a major concern. Thus, the first employee performance-based service quality measure consisted of 10 questions derived from Cronin, Brandy, and Hult' (2000), which created the basis to conclude that perceived service

quality is an immediate antecedent of satisfaction, and affects destination loyalty both directly and indirectly through satisfaction as a moderating variable.

Third, the results are consistent with those of prior studies (Cronin et al., 2000; Eggert & Ulaga, 2002; Lee et al., 2007; Woodruff, 1997) in that, perceived value has an effect on customer satisfaction, which in turn influences destination loyalty. These findings indicate that the respondent tourists considered visiting Orlando to be a valuable and correct decision, which likely affected their level of travel satisfaction expressed for Orlando. As for travel expenses, most respondents indicated satisfaction with prices being reasonable during their Orlando visit. Most also characterized Orlando as a pleasurable and enjoyable tourism destination, adding to their satisfaction levels. In a similar vein, results provide acceptable evidence that measures of customers' perceived overall value and financial value can be expanded to include tourists' perceived value in visiting a family oriented destination.

## **Implications**

### **Theoretical/Conceptual Implications**

There are a number of theoretical implications of the findings. First, a newly developed comprehensive model was tested to simultaneously analyze the relationship between destination image, service quality, perceived value, and satisfaction and to concurrently explore these four constructs in the prediction of intention to revisit and share positive word-of-mouth impressions with others. Although destination image, service quality, value, and satisfaction studies have dominated, in a variety of fields; in the tourism and hospitality literature, these constructs have usually been studied fragmentarily.

Second, considerable research has focused on the nature of service quality, and there is general acceptance that service quality is composed of a number of underlying dimensions. However, there is a lack of agreement on the exact nature of these dimensions. Thus, previous

research consistently tailored service quality dimensions based on the context being examined (Murray & Howat, 2002). In the same token, service quality studies in tourism and recreation stressed products/programs and/or destinations (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Getty & Thompson, 1994; Howat, Murray, & Crilley, 1999). However, the current study developed two different factors with eighteen items to capture the complexity of perceptions.

Third, although marketing literature has suggested that perceived value is the leading predictor of customer loyalty and repurchase intentions (Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Woodruff, 1997), this construct has usually been operationalized with “value for money” in the hospitality and marketing literature. As shown in table 4-22, the current study operationalized perceived value with two factors (overall perceived value and financial value) and seven variables which attempted to better measure the complexities of perceived value. In addition, table 4-25 explained that the total effect of perceived value on destination loyalty (i.e., sum of direct and indirect effect through satisfaction) was found to be .543. This finding suggests that perceived value has a significant influence on destination loyalty, as has been also reported by past researches (Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2007).

### **Managerial Implications**

The major findings of this study have significant managerial implications for Orlando tourism management and travel destination marketers, as well as for other destinations. First, the exploratory factor analyses showed that tourists pursue six different destination images (destination atmosphere, travel information available, travel environment, shopping, community attitude, and accessibility), two different service qualities (employee performance-based quality and product-based quality) and perceived values (overall value and financial value). Thus, it is suggested that destination marketers consider the practical implications of these variables,

because they can be elementary factors in increasing tourists' overall satisfaction with various products as well as enhancing destination loyalty.

Second, the implications for tourism and hospitality managers in any destination are that it is of paramount importance to meet travelers' expectations for service quality. Employee performance-based and product-based quality must be delivered appropriately to the customers, as these are significant drivers of customer satisfaction, which is directly related to their intentions to revisit and express positive word-of-mouth comments to others. In particular, hospitality managers need to understand what their basic promise is to the customer and how deliver on that promise. This promise generates the basic expectations that customers have with respect to desired levels of service quality. As an example, at a restaurant, customers expect the provider to perform the activities involved in taking food orders, delivering the food and any other promises the provider has implied in their advertizing or based on their advertized quality rankings. These promises could include high employee performance-based service quality and/or high food quality. The promises could also include timely service. Customers will evaluate service quality based on the promises made, which may include core aspects of service. Thus, hospitality managers need to train their employees to deliver on all the promises made to meet customer expectations. Further, hospitality organizations should provide excellent guest services, which may be represented by the friendliness, courtesy, willingness to help, professionalism, and knowledge levels of front-line personnel.

Finally, this study supports the idea that the general theory of consumer loyalty can apply to tourists' loyalty at a tourism destination. Thus, destination managers can estimate tourists' post purchase-behaviors and consider this information in their decision-making.

## **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

Even though the current research findings are based on good indicators of the antecedents of destination loyalty, the understanding of tourists' revisit intentions and their behavior remains limited. Particularly, previous research has rarely explored temporal issues related to destination loyalty (Jang & Feng, 2007; Oppermann, 2000). Oppermann (1999, p. 58) suggested that time is significant in tourist intentions and loyalties because "time firstly plays a role in identifying appropriate time intervals during which a purchase may or may not take place". In addition, Jang and Feng (2007, p. 587) also noted "it is necessary to understand how the revisit intention changes over time and identify appropriate time intervals". Therefore, in order to better understand temporal destination revisit intentions, future research should include the temporal perspective of destination loyalty, which would be measured utilizing short-term, mid-term, and long-term intentions.

Second, the design of this study (post-visit assessment of image) made it impossible to measure the pre-visit image of the destination, which would have made it feasible to measure the extent to which secondary information sources influence the formation of the pre-visit image and the way in which primary information sources could alter this image. Also, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) revealed that the image held of destinations by nonvisitors differed from that of visitors. Empirical studies have found that people change their image about a destination after they visit. In addition, the number of visits or the extent of previous experience at a specific destination seems to have a positive influence on the image of that destination. Therefore, it would seem desirable to carry out longitudinal studies that deal with the specific destination image, measured before and after visiting a destination.

Third, most early research work focused on overall satisfaction with the on-site tourism experience (Anderson et al., 1994; Babin et al., 2005; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bigen, 2001;

Chen & Tsai, 2007; Chon, 1989; Cronin et al., 2000; Gallarza & Saura, 2006; Getty & Thompson, 1994; Gotlieb et al., 1994; Howat, 1999; Kozak & Remington, 2000; Lee et al., 2004, 2007; Oliver, 1980). Researchers only recently directed attention to attribute-level conceptualizations of the antecedents of overall satisfaction (Chi & Qu, 2008; Oliver, 1993). According to Oliver (1993), overall satisfaction and attribute satisfaction are distinct but related constructs. Chi and Qu (2008) also noted that “attribute satisfaction has significant, positive, and direct effects on overall satisfaction; and it captures a significant amount of variation in overall satisfaction” (p. 626).

Satisfaction research in tourism and recreation has indicated that tourists’ satisfaction with individual components of destinations leads to their satisfaction with the overall destination (Danaher & Arweiler, 1996; Hsu, 2003; Mayer, Johnson, Hu, & Chen, 1998; Chen & Tsai, 2008). It is time for researchers in tourism and hospitality to distinguish overall satisfaction from satisfaction with individual attributes since the particular characteristics within tourism and hospitality service have a prominent effect on tourists’ overall satisfaction (Chen & Tsai, 2008). Chen and Tsai (2008) also noted that services should be distinguished from products, because they have generic characteristics such as intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1985).

Further, tourism and hospitality products are considered to be interdependent between sub sectors. Tourist’s experiences at destinations encompass satisfaction at hotels, restaurants, shops, attractions, etc.; they may evaluate each service element separately. These individual components of satisfaction with a destination lead to overall satisfaction. From this perspective, Chen and Tsai (2008) further contended that overall satisfaction with a hospitality experience is a function of satisfaction with the individual attributes of all the services and products that make

up the experience, such as accommodation, weather, natural environments, social environments, etc. Therefore, future studies should explore satisfaction with various components of the destination in order to give in-depth managerial implications to destination marketers or managers.

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