

Research on the Relationships among Macau Gambling Tourists' Novelty, Hedonics, Perceived Value and Revisit Willingness

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the relationships among Macau gambling tourists' novelty, hedonics, perceived value and revisit willingness. It will present the scales of novelty, hedonics, perceived value and revisit willingness, based on the existing relevant literature. In this paper the author utilizes SPSS 20.0 to analyze the collected data and verifies the proposed hypotheses. The expected conclusions are as follows: on the one hand, Macau gambling tourists' novelty positively and significantly affects their hedonics and perceived value; on the other hand, Macau gambling tourists' hedonics positively and significantly affects their perceived value, and Macau gambling tourists' perceived value also positively and significantly affects their revisit willingness.

Keywords: Gambling tourists; Novelty; Hedonics; Perceived value; Revisit willingness

Introduction

Macau's gaming industry has witnessed rampant growth since it opened the door to foreign casino operators in 2002. According to the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (GICB) [1] of the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR), Macau generated US\$7.08 billion gambling revenue in 2006, replacing the Las Vegas Strip as the number one gambling destination in the world.

With the gaming revenue of Macau declining and the number of inbound tourists falling sharply, Macau's gaming industry greatly weakened, which seriously affected the development of the tourism industry and the overall economy. Then a natural problem arises, how to attract gambling tourists to Macau and enhance their revisit willingness? This paper aims to explore Macau gambling tourists' novelty, hedonics, and perceived value and revisit willingness, as well as the relationships among them.

The outline of the paper is as follows, after an overall introduction in Section 1, an in-depth literature review is carried out in Section 2. Both of academic literatures and market information are being analyzed for providing further insight for the topic of the research. Section 3 will fully cover the methodology of the research designed to gather useful information from target respondents. In Section 4, the data collect are being analyzed and represented in the form of tables. Finally, all of the conclusions of previous chapters are included in Section 5; limitation of the study and suggestions for local authorities and further research are also included.

Literature Review

Gambling, gambler and gambling tourists

In general terms, gambling refers to the staking of something of value on the outcome of an event governed by an inevitable element of chance for a reward with monetary value. During gambling, money is typically staked and won or lost either directly through cash transactions, or indirectly via chips, tokens or credits which have monetary value [1].

As is known to us, gambling is related to tourism and gaming industry plays an important role in gaming and tourism industry in some regions of the world, such as Macau, Monte Carlo, etc. With

tourism becoming an indispensable part of our lives more and more people in modern societies travel away from their homes occasionally, temporarily becoming tourists of some sort. Among them, some persons participate in gambling activities, which are called gambling tourists. An interesting question then arises: what is relationship between gambler and tourist?

In general, we know that gambler means person who gambles. Some gamblers may be local residents, while others must be tourists, here we regard tourists as persons who have traveled temporally away from their home regions and are seeking pleasurable experiences of some kind from recreational and/or creative pursuits in spare time, as indicated in Leiper [2].

Novelty

Novelty is often defined as the degree of contrast between present perception and past experience, making it the opposite of familiarity [3]. From one perspective of the definition, it is possible to understand that tourists want to experience something novel through their travel. One frequent explanation is an individual's desire for novelty, arousal, or stimulation. People may travel because they want to experience something new and different. The search for novelty is often seen as an innate quality in travelers [4,5]. Indeed, travelers seeking a high degree of novelty rarely return to previously visited destinations, whereas those seeking a high degree of familiarity (or a low degree of novelty) tend to return to the same places often. Hence, novelty seeking is expected to have a diminishing effect on tourist revisit intention. Lee and Crompton [5] showed that the novelty construct comprises the following four dimensions: thrill, change from routine, surprise, and boredom-alleviation.

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Hedonics

Hedonics is one of the dimensions used by Zuckerman [6] to measure sensation-seeking, while Carbone and Haeckel [7] noted that in the process of consumption behavior, customers generally prefer to have a hedonistic feeling from the service experience. Leisure services are said to be consumed primarily for hedonic purposes, such as fun, satisfaction, and enjoyment [8]. Investigation of the hedonics and utilitarian components of attitude has been suggested in such diverse disciplines as sociology, psychology, and economics. This multidisciplinary recognition of the hedonics and utilitarian elements of consumption mirrors parallel theoretical development in marketing, mainly from a series of articles by Hirschman and Holbrook [9] as well as Holbrook and Hirschman [8].

Generally, tourism consumption is widely discussed with hedonic experiences which refers to the positive emotional experiences, intrinsic pleasure and enjoyment, as well as the feelings of happiness. Therefore, the understanding of hedonic experience is important and essential for the tourist experience [10].

Perceived value

Perceived value has been conceptualized as what consumers get for what they give, or "the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given" [11]. Brand, Cronin and Routledge [12] researched it and verified that perceived value are strongly influenced by the quality of the service.

Revisiting behavioral intention

Once a destination is visited, tourists have first-hand experiences which they can use in making decisions by comparisons with other personal experiences, with information sought from either media or friends. As Whiting [13] noted, comparison among more than one organization or destination may enable generalization of the findings. As a result of the inseparable nature of production and consumption of tourism products, tourists need to visit a destination to utilize their holiday experiences. The experience arises through tourists' enjoyment or contacts with such attributes as the natural environment, weather, local people, facilities and activities provided, and so on. This may also help tourists make comparisons with similar attributes of alternative destinations. Recently, Lam, Chan, Fong and Lo [14] explored how dimensions of servicescape influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the casino environment. They further proposed that gaming customer satisfaction would affect their desire to stay and intention to revisit.

Methodology

Theoretical background and hypotheses

For years, many authors have focused on revisiting behavioral intention, since it is an important predictor of future travel behavior [15,16]. Some of the authors thought that service quality and satisfaction as well as the destination image positively affect revisiting behavioral intention [17-19]. Gartner [20] asserted that when tourists perceive that the destination can provide them with the image of a motivational experience, such as knowledge and adventure, they would feel a sense of novelty and pleasure and then choose to visit the destination. Zuckerman [6] also noted that if tourists can obtain the benefits that they desire from a destination, they would rate it as a novel and hedonic location. Hightower et al. [21] pointed out that affective factors, such as hedonics and novelty, are integral conceptualizations of perceived value. Many other studies have shown that longing for more

novel experiences generates more pleasure and perceived value [22,23]. In addition to the effect on pre-purchase choice, perceived value also affects tourists' willingness to recommend a vacation as well as their intention to revisit [24,25].

Based on the literature above, we proposed four hypotheses as follows:

H1: The more the novelty that Macau's gambling tourists perceive, the higher the level of hedonics is for them.

H2: The more the novelty Macau's gambling tourists perceive, the more positive the perceived value is for them.

H3: The higher the level of hedonics that Macau's gambling tourists have, the more positive the perceived value is for them.

H4: The higher the level of perceived value that Macau's gambling tourists have, the more positive the revisiting behavioral intention is for them.

Sampling

In consideration of the representativeness of the sample, we chose the two styles of casinos to distribute the questionnaires in Macau. Gamblers from five casinos, including Hotel Lisboa, New Century Greek Mythology, Golden Dragon, Sands Macau, and Wynn Macau, were targeted. Hotel Lisboa, New Century Greek Mythology, and Golden Dragon are classified as locally owned casinos with an Eastern-style, and are operated by the SJM Holding Group, while Sands Macau and Wynn Macau are foreign-owned casinos with a Western-style, and are operated by Venetian Macau and Wynn Resorts Macau, respectively.

Prior to the formal survey, a pre-test was done during April this year and an item analysis was used to test the items. The formal questionnaires were handed out during May this year in Macau. At each survey venue, survey assistants started the survey from 10 am-12 am, and 3 pm-5 pm on every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during May 2016.

The survey teams were dispatched to the five casinos to collect data from gamblers through questionnaires. They approached the visitors of these five resorts on convenience sampling at the interior (dining areas) and exterior (open-air plaza or square) districts of the resorts. Our target respondents were the Chinese tourists from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Survey assistants approached those Chinese tourists who were walking around either indoor or outdoor areas of the casino. We collected data by means of person-administered face-to-face interview. The questionnaires were available in both Chinese and English. Each respondent was presented with a gift as an incentive to participate. A total of 450 gamblers were intercepted, and 395 participated in and completed the survey, which corresponds to an 87.78% response rate. The main reason for the 55 unusable responses from the 450 respondents is that they could not completely answer the questionnaires.

Method of data analysis

The collected data were statistically analyzed and the proposed model was examined using SPSS 20.0 for Windows to test both the theoretical relationships in the model and the overall model fit with regard to the survey data. There are totally four analyses used. The first one is to make description which provides an overview of the profile of the respondents; the second one is to analyze the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients which are used to find out whether the data collected are

reliable and can be used for further analysis; the third one is to use the factor analysis to test the validity of the scale; the last one is to verify all the hypotheses proposed to determine the direction and significance of relationships.

Survey instrument

The questionnaire consists of 51 items; every item is matched with a question needing answering by the respondents. There are also questions for gathering personal data. Since the main official languages in Macau are English and Traditional Chinese, the questionnaire is available in both English and Traditional Chinese. A pilot test of this research should be held prior to the formal survey. The instrument is being refined based on the results.

The initial questionnaire consisted of six sections as described below.

The first measures the necessity for the participants to go on answering the questionnaire. This assures that each respondent who takes the whole process of filling in questionnaire must be a gambling tourist in Macau.

The second contains four observed variables: Thrill, Change from Routine, Surprise and Boredom Alleviation, which are used to describe the first potential variable "Novelty". Every observed variable is matched with 3 scale items so this section contains 12 scale items. These scale items are used to measure Macau gaming tourists' novelty, which are adopted primarily from the literature [5] and are assessed by a seven-point Likert scale (7=totally agree, 6=strongly agree, 5=quite agree, 4=neutral, 3=quite disagree, 2=strongly disagree, 1=totally disagree).

The third contains three observed variables: Mood to Relax, Cheerful Travel Experience and Impressive Travel Experience, which are used to describe the second potential variable "Hedonics". Every observed variable is matched with 3 scale items so this section contains 9 scale items. These 9 scale items are used to measure Macau gaming tourists' hedonics, which are adopted primarily from the literature Hirschman & Holbrook [8] and are assessed by a seven-point Likert scale as just mentioned.

The fourth contains three observed variables: Social Value, Functional Value and Emotional Value, which are used to describe the third potential variable "Perceived Value". Every observed variable is matched with 3 scale items so this section contains 9 scale items. These 9 scale items are used to measure Macau gaming tourists' perceived value, which are adopted primarily from the literature Sheth, etc. [26] and are assessed by a seven-point Likert scale as before.

The fifth contains three observed variables: Exploring Intention, Recommendation Intention and Revisit Intention, which are used to describe the last potential variable "Revisit Willingness". Every observed variable is matched with 3 scale items so this section contains 9 scale items. These 9 scale items are used to measure Macau gaming tourists' hedonics, which are adopted primarily from the literature Sirakaya, Petrick and Choi [27], Bigne et al. [28], Tian-Cole, Crompton, and Willson [29]. And they are assessed by a seven-point Likert scale as before.

The final measures socio-demographic information, which includes questions on gender, age, educational background, occupation, income, length of stay, travel purpose, place of residence and travel companion, etc.

Data Analysis and Findings

With regard to the respondents, the proportion of men is slightly larger than that of women. However, there is no significant difference between them. The proportion of men and women is 56.89% and 43.11%, respectively.

Reliability test for initial scale

The reliability analysis of the initial questionnaire is as shown in Table 1, from which we see alpha values of Novelty, Hedonics, Perceived Value and Revisit Willingness are 0.902, 0.905, 0.905 and 0.917 respectively, ranging from 0.90 to 0.92, which exceed the minimum required level of 0.60 [30]. Besides, all the Corrected item-total correlations are greater than 0.45.

Based on the facts about the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scale and the overall correlation coefficients of the items we may conclude that the items of the survey questionnaire for the study on Macau tourists' novelty, hedonics, perceived value and revisit willingness has a good reliability. So, all the items are reliable and should be reserved.

Validity test and factor analysis

In this study, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin-measure-of-sampling-adequacy) measure and the Bartlett spherical test are carried out for the scale of Revisit Willingness. The KMO values of scale is 0.952, Bartlett's test of sphericity as chi square value is 6791.703, and the significance is 0.000. The KMO value is used to study the partial correlation between variables, which is used to compare the extent of simple correlation and partial correlation between variables [31]. Only through the KMO test of the scale can factor analysis be carried out for the scale. Qiu [32] gave the acceptance level of the KMO value (Table 2).

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to establish scales of novelty, hedonics, perceived value, and revisit willingness. The principal axis factor method was used to extract the underlying factors amongst 39 attributes and the dimension are explained by the method of orthogonal rotation. Five dimensions with eigenvalues greater than one would be extracted, accounting for 63.126% of the cumulative variance in the scale which shows that five dimensions can explain 72.13% of total items of the scale.

Table 1 shows the results of the five factor load. The factor load reflects the influence of the potential variables on the measurement variables. According to the standard, the scale items with the factor loadings lower than 0.45 are not general, not accounting for 20% of the variance of measurement variables. So the items with the factor loadings lower than 0.45 would be deleted from the scale.

As is shown in Table 1, the items No.4 and No.5, namely, "Playing games different from usual" and "Playing games in different casinos" with factor loading lower than 0.45, should be deleted. Meanwhile, the fifth component dimension with which only one item (i.e., the No. 6) is matched, should be deleted. After deleting these three items, the exploratory factor analysis were carried out once again (Table 1).

Table 2 shows that after the scale was corrected as above, the KMO value became 0.950, which is commonly considered to be excellent. Meanwhile, the positioning test of sphericity became 6272.682, while the significance is 0.000, which indicated that the corrected scale is very suitable for factor analysis.

After rotating the items of the corrected scale again, we obtained the new total variance explained and found four dimensions with

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
1 Engaging in thrilling activities	0.692				
2 Experiencing frightening activities	0.721				
3 Engaging in daring activities	0.654				
4 Playing games different from usual	0.211	0.066	0.341	0.382	0.306
5 Playing games in different casinos	0.283	0.192	0.251	0.159	0.236
6 Playing games with new friends					0.576
7 Getting rid of boredom	0.546				
8 Avoiding getting into a rut	0.812				
9 Playing new games in the casinos	0.458				
10 Experiencing something unexpected	0.540				
11 Playing games in different casinos	0.540				
12 Playing games with like-minded friends	0.561				
13 Gaming makes me forgetting boring		0.530	0.452		
14 Being excited when playing games		0.625			
15 Playing games in order to relax		0.564			
16 Enjoyable trip to Macau		0.628			
17 Gaming in Macau was truly enjoyable		0.673			
18 Acting on the "spur-of-the-moment" when playing game in Macau		0.626			
19 Feeling time passing quickly when playing games in Macau		0.464			
20 The whole trip to Macau was with no problems		0.591			
21 The whole trip to Macau was unforgettable		0.549			
22 Having many topics to talk to others after traveling to Macau to participate in gaming activities			0.477		
23 Being much confident to travel to Macau to participate in gaming activities			0.534		
24 Feeling out of the ordinary when traveling to Macau to participate in gaming activities			0.486		
25 The whole trip makes me exciting			0.584		
26 Playing games in Macau to broaden one's mind and horizons			0.669		
27 Playing games in Macau to enjoy different culture			0.567		
28 Improving ability to play gaming greatly after traveling to Macau			0.496		
29 Playing gaming can improve one's ability to communicate with others			0.501		
30 Benefit greatly from the money, time and energy that one has spent in the game in Macao			0.606		
31 Being willing to play games in Macau's casinos once again in the future				0.679	
32 Being willing to give priority to choose Macau's casinos				0.691	
33 Being willing to play games in Macau's casinos when facing unexpected difficulties				0.550	
34 Recommend one's friends and families to Macau's casinos to play games				0.661	
35 Recommend him or her to do so in Macau when someone takes the initiative to ask me to play gaming				0.624	
36 Being willing to warmly share the experience one enjoyed in Macau's casino gaming with the friends around				0.667	
37 Participating in different types of gaming activities in the casinos				0.549	
38 Only on the condition that I have played each again can I consider the issue of revisit				0.724	
39 Innovating gaming events making me revisit Macau to play gaming				0.551	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

*Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Table 1: Rotated Component Matrix^a for the Initial Scale.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.950
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6272.682
	df	630
	Sig.	0.000

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test.

eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, accounting for 61.999% of the cumulative variance in the scale. That is to say, four dimensions accounted for over 60% of the cumulative variance in the scale which shows that the corrected scale owns higher validity.

Correlation analysis

We made Pearson correlation coefficient analysis of novelty and hedonics, of hedonics and perceived value, and of perceived value and revisit willingness, and performed bilateral test. The overall correlation

coefficient of novelty and hedonics is 0.791, and the significance is 0.000, which shows that there is highly significant positive correlation between the two variables. Similarly, the overall correlation coefficients of novelty and perceived value, of hedonics and perceived value, and of perceived value and revisit willingness are 0.812, 0.865 and 0.851 respectively.

Variance analysis

Variance analysis is usually used to study the influence of independent categorical variables on the numerical variable [31-33]. In this study, we used a one-way ANOVA analysis to investigate whether the revisit willingness of Macau gaming tourists of different types (gender, age, education background, occupation, monthly income, and tourism mode) have significant difference or not.

Our results are as follows. From Table 3 we see that there is only one variable "Gender" with p value greater than 0.05, which shows that this variable has no significant difference with respect to revisit willingness, while the other seven variables, namely, Age, Education background, Occupation, Monthly income, and Tourism mode, Tourism purpose, all have significant difference, since each Sig. is 0.000, 0.006 or 0.015, smaller than 0.05.

Independent variable	Dependent variable		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Gender	Revisit willingness	Between	1.279	1	1.279	1.315	0.252
		Within	382.281	393	0.973		
		Total	383.560	394			
Age	Revisit willingness	Between	25.286	3	8.429	9.199	0.000
		Within	358.274	391	0.916		
		Total	383.560	394			
Occupation	Revisit willingness	Between	33.244	9	3.694	4.059	0.000
		Within	350.317	385	0.910		
		Total	383.560	394			
Educational background	Revisit willingness	Between	13.875	4	3.469	3.659	0.006
		Within	369.685	390	0.948		
		Total	383.560	394			
Monthly income	Revisit willingness	Between	10.120	3	3.373	3.532	0.015
		Within	373.44	391	0.955		
		Total	383.560	394			
Companions	Revisit willingness	Between	15.605	5	3.121	3.300	0.006
		Within	367.955	389	0.945		
		Total	383.560	394			
Travel purpose	Revisit willingness	Between	44.927	7	6.418	7.335	0.000
		Within	338.633	387	0.880		
		Total	383.560	394			
Place of residence	Revisit willingness	Between	22.685	3	7.562	8.192	0.000
		Within	360.875	391	0.923		
		Total	383.560	394			

Table 3: Single variance analysis for revisit willingness.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	t	F	R square
Novelty → Hedonics	0.730		21.002***	441.070***	0.660
	0.841	0.813			
Novelty → Perceived value	0.553		6.0453***	407.578***	0.783
	0.318	0.321			
Hedonics → Perceived value	0.577	0.604	11.355***		
Perceived value → Revisit willingness	0.504		24.370***	593.900***	0.723
	0.891	0.851			

*p<0.5, **p<0.1, ***p<0.01.

Table 4: The Results of the Hypotheses.

Regression analysis

In order to verify the hypotheses regarding of this research, we used regression analysis, and the results can be seen in the following table. As is shown in Table 4, the results of hypotheses test is as follows. Firstly, novelty significantly positively affects hedonics, since the F value is 441.070 (p=0.000), and standardized coefficient is 0.813, which is near to one. Second, novelty positively but not significantly affects perceived value, since the F value is 407.0578 (p=0.000), and standardized coefficient is 0.321, which is not near to 1, but greater than 0. Thirdly, hedonics significantly positively affects perceived value, since the F value is 407.0578 (p=0.000) and standardized coefficient is 0.8604, which is also near to 1. Lastly, perceived value significantly positively affects revisit willingness, since the F value is 593.900 (p=0.000) and standardized coefficient is 0.851, which is so near to 1 too (Table 4).

Conclusions

Conclusions of the previous sections and suggestions for local authorities

The data analysis and research findings show that novelty significantly and positively affects hedonics and positively but not significantly affects perceived value; and perceived value significantly

and positively affects revisiting behavioral intention. Thus all the hypotheses (namely, H1, H2, H3 and H4, see Section 3 for details) proposed are valid.

This study suggests that novelty is the antecedent of hedonics and that hedonics positively and directly affects perceived value; this finding inconsistent with past literature. Hightower et al. [21] asserted that hedonics and novelty are important antecedents of perceived value. In the future, Macau's gambling and tourism communities and administrators can adopt more initiatives to raise gambling tourists' pleasurable experiences, such as connecting sports games or cultural shows with gambling to stimulate feelings of novelty and surprise with regard to gambling and using a great diversity of recreational activities to promote gambling tourists' hedonic feelings so as to enhance their perception of the value of their stay in Macau.

The influence of perceived value on revisit willingness is the strongest. The empirical findings of this study show that both novelty and hedonics are the keys to evoking perceived value, and the influence coefficient of hedonics is larger than that of novelty. Thus, in developing gambling and tourism industry in Macau, the gambling and tourism communities and administrators in Macau may promote gambling and tourism resources and local customs as well as new and interesting gaming activities to enhance the appeal and novelty of the casinos and gaming. By adopting these strategies, it impossible to trigger an experience that is different from tourists' everyday lives and that contains the key element of surprise. Moreover, gambling tourists' sense of hedonic travel can also be enhanced in this way.

The empirical findings of this study also show that the perceived value of gambling tourists with regard to gambling and tourism has a positive and direct influence on their revisiting behavioral intention. This paper thus suggests that Macau's gambling and tourism communities and administrators treat perceived value as an effective promotional tool. For example, they could emphasize the affective value of gambling and tourism, such as pleasure and hedonics, as well as the overall quality. By doing so, they could shape a pleasurable and high-quality gambling experience for gambling tourists in Macau and use this as a marketing tool to encourage these tourists to revisit or increase the intention of recommendation, so that they can encourage their friends and relatives to travel to Macau for gambling.

Limitations and suggestions for further study

Although this study adopted random systematic sampling, the respondents were mostly younger people (55.56% were aged 21–30), and this is perhaps because the survey was administered during a relatively short period in summer. Due to this, the results of this research should be generalized with caution, and it is suggested that future studies lengthen the sampling time (e.g. conduct a survey for each of the four seasons) in order to obtain respondents from different age groups and to test the framework proposed in this study more thoroughly.

In addition, the collected data were statistically analyzed and the hypotheses were verified by virtue of factor analysis, variance analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis by SPSS 20.0. It is thus suggested that future studies adopt another effective analysis such as SEM analysis (SEM means Structural Equation Model, noting that we may use AMOS 22.0 for Windows for the SEM analysis) to study revisiting behavior intention of gambling tourists and present more accurate causal relationships between the influential factors.

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