

An Empirical Study on the Customer Satisfaction of Taiitang's Chinese Numerology Consulting Service and Products

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Abstract—Taiitang (太以堂 in Chinese) I Ching and geomancy research and consulting center at the middle of Taiwan provides Chinese numerology and astrology consulting service and products such as “lucky seal (開運印鑑 in Chinese).” Along with the consulting service, lucky seal is recommended after a special personal blessing process for a good fortune in the future, which is believed to have magical power and will affect the owner's luck. Therefore, different requirements need to design and purchase different seals to add new power for the customer. In order to continuously improve the service and make the alternative consulting education sustainable, an empirical study was conducted to examine the customer satisfaction and future purchase intention in the center. A questionnaire was designed to include items about consulting quality, product value, personnel service, service environment, overall performance and purchase intention. The Likert five-point scale was used. A sample of 231 participants responded to the survey. The results showed that the highest satisfaction of customers were with the convincing consulting (mean=4.481) and numerologists or astrologists' professional knowledge (mean=4.369), whereas the lowest was their dress (3.562). Overall performance highly contributed to purchase intention with correlation coefficients between 0.81 and 0.86.

Keywords—numerology; astrology; satisfaction; seal; fortune

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The History of Taiitang

Taiitang, a Chinese Numerology and Astrology Consulting Center, whose main business is the Chinese Seal Stamp for good fortune, was established in 1989. To keep up with the times, after some improvement and innovation, the center set up an institute of Five Elements to promote four pillars eight

characters technique [1]. By offering professional courses that teach the theory of four pillars eight characters technique and help students understand themselves, Taiitang is trying its best to be recognized as professional.

By combining the Chinese theory of seal and stamp with the numerology and the astrology, one of the major products, lucky seal, in Taiitang is designed for good fortune, which should be done at a specific time on a particular date following the person's nature. After a special personal blessing process, the personal lucky seal is believed to have magical power, which can inspire one's potential, turn one's weaknesses into strengths, and activate one's personal spiritual power and good fortune. Therefore, everyone can transcend their poor fate or destiny and follow what they decide to do and to fulfill their personal values.

B. Status of Taiitang

A professional customer service process, starting from entering the physical centers or visiting the online service system, has been introduced since 2017, in the hope of providing better overall service quality and smoothing the process of any interaction service contacts. All the offerings are customized which make customers feel that they are special. The employees are trained to be able to distinguish customers in terms of their characteristics, personalities, and various needs to support solid consulting services and interaction between the consulting masters and customers. This is expected to improve the center's management system and business by increasing customers' satisfaction and their repurchase intention.

Taiitang now has two consulting centers in Taichung and Changhua. It has five departments, including Sales Department, Geomancy Department, Information Department, Teaching Department, and Distribution Department. It has approximately 60,000 customers in total, of which 6,000 are active members. Among the active members, approximately 600 are premium members, who have taken the four pillars eight characters course, and 30 have become professional teachers.

Taiitang is an accredited member of the International Professional License Accreditation Council from 2020. This accreditation allows Taiitang to provide personnel service training assessments and confer a professional certificate for those who pass numerology and astrology expertise tests for developing advanced professional growth. In order to continuously improve the service and make the alternative consulting education sustainable, the major purpose of this empirical study was conducted to examine the perceived customer satisfaction and future purchase intention of the premium members in Taiitang. The study will get feedback from customers for improving service quality and after-sales service, so as to increase reputation among consumers' satisfaction and to operate sustainably.

C. Products and Services

The major product is the seal stamp for good fortune, which is recommended and made after a special personal blessing process and believed to have magical power and will affect the owner's luck. Different requirements need to design and purchase different seals to add new power for the customer. In Taiwan, the seal stamp has the same function as an individual's signature for legal documents, and can be associated with the owner's fortune if the stamp can fit its owner's eight characters of birthday data in the making process and usage. The seal stamp for good fortune is not a one-time consumer product. As long as customers need new change in destiny, the practitioners will make new ones according to new orders.

Services include four pillars eight characters courses, numerology and astrology consulting, geomancy, baby and company naming consulting, and giving auspicious dates for moving into a new house etc. The framework of Taiitang's service blueprint process includes front desk services, physical and online consulting by the practitioners, tangible exhibition, customer buying journey, back-office system for data analysis and accounting management, make-to-order process, product research and development, purchasing and inventory control, standardized after-sales service, regular track of consumer behavior and the data maintenance and updates. Fig. 1 shows the blueprint of service in Taiitang, the Chinese Numerology and Astrology Consulting Center (Fig. 1).

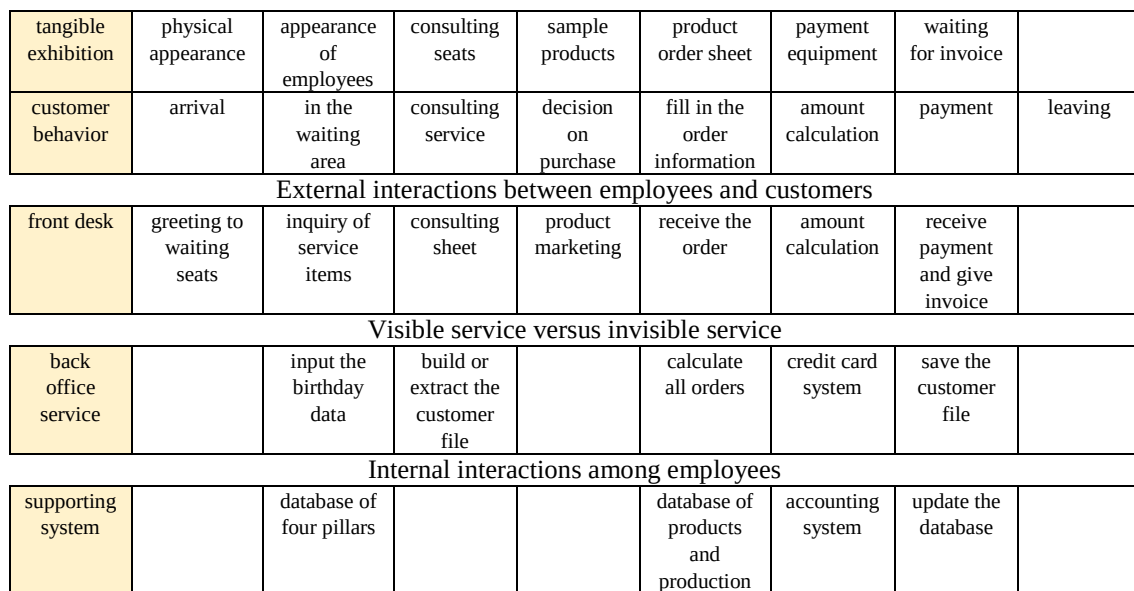


Fig. 1 The Blueprint of Service in a Chinese Numerology and Astrology Consulting Center [1].

II. RESEARCH METHODS

A. Participants and Data Collection

Taiitang has approximately 6,000 active members. Among the active members, about 600 are premium members, who are the population of this study. The questionnaire was distributed to investigate customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. All premium 600 members were invited by the Line

to click on the link of the questionnaire. A sample of 231 participants responded to the survey. The response rate was 38.5%.

B. Measurement

A questionnaire was designed to include items about satisfaction with consulting quality, product value, personnel service, service environment, overall performance and repurchase intention as well as loyalty. The Likert five-point

scale was used: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sample consists of 150 females (64.9%). Most participants were between 31 and 59 years old (76.2%). 60.2% were married and 59.3% has a college degree. 26.0% worked in services sector while 39% worked in the manufacturing, industry or commerce sectors. 74.4% had monthly income between 1,000 and 2,000 US dollars.

The results showed that the highest satisfaction of customers were with the convincing consulting (mean=4.481) and numerologists or astrologists' professional knowledge (mean=4.369), whereas the lowest was their dress (3.562) (TABLE 1). In average, respondents had loyalty with Taitang and agreed to repurchase intention in both products and services (TABLE 2). Overall performance highly contributed to loyalty and repurchase intention with correlation coefficients between 0.81 and 0.86.

TABLE 1 Satisfaction

Satisfaction	Items	Means
Consulting	Convincing	4.481
	Curiosity	4.352
	Professional knowledge	4.369
Product	Price	3.776
	Quality	3.944
	Helpful	4.043
Personnel	Service process	3.927
	Dress	3.562
Environment	Atmosphere	3.957
	Modern style	3.940
Overall	Reliable	4.206
	After-sales service	4.155
	Confidence	4.185

TABLE 2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention and Loyalty	Items	Means
Loyalty	Priority	4.094
	Recommendation	3.979
	Waiting	3.876
Purchase intention	Repurchase intention in products	4.108
	Repurchase intention in services	4.283

In conclusion, the study shows that Taitang provides satisfied products and services, and maintains members' loyalty and repurchase intention. Particularly, the consulting services are professional and convincing. Interestingly, customers might expect to see more professional dress in personnel. Further, there is a caveat for not overestimating the satisfaction level due to only 38.5% response rate. It is possible that in Chinese culture, only those who tend to be positive are more likely to respond a survey than those who are not so positive. In the future study, more unbiased sampling method is required.

REFERENCES

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