

THE INVESTIGATION OF CORRECTING NEGATIVE STEREOTYPE OF MOTEL BUSINESS IN TAIWAN

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ABSTRACT

The influences from 921 Earthquake, followed by outbreak disease of SARS, and recently global financial crisis made Taiwan economy in recession stage for a long time. Therefore, tourism, airline and hotel industries were affected. The manager of hotel tried to turn the table around by bold business investment and creativity operation. Therefore, hotel business development took a big leap into motel. Based on the unique operation of motel business and the shifting trend of society, most of consumers thought motel was highly related to infidelity. Moreover, the media also supported the negative image of motel by mass broadcasting. Hence, the stereotype was constructed. This study based on an attempt to correct the negative stereotype in consumer mind. If the negative image could reverse, the motel business could expand the market and reached new consumer groups. Therefore, this study focused on following three objects:

1. *The possibility of correcting negative stereotype image of consumer to positive that never been to motel.*
2. *The possibility of correcting negative stereotype image of consumer to positive that have experienced motel.*
3. *The requirements differences of services and equipment of motel between negative stereotype image consumer and positive image consumer.*

Keywords: Motel, Stereotype, Tourism, leisure, Consumer Behavior

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Taiwan current tourism legislation "Tourism Development Ordinance", lodging industry classification provisions can be divided into tourist hotels, hotels and bed and breakfast three categories. Tourist hotel category means hotel that provided travelers accommodation and related services for profit. And, in accordance with the tourist hotel business rules, it contained international tourist hotel and general tourist hotels. Usually, hotel category presented services to customer included lodging, rest and the other by the central authority of the profit-seeking enterprise-related business. The bed and breakfast category referred to the use of free rooms occupied dwellings, combined with the local culture, natural landscape, ecology, environment, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries resources nearby the house. In addition, it was a sideline business activity in this particular household, offered accommodation and service to customer. The motel was classified to the second category of hotel (Tsang and Hsu, 2011).

Since Taiwan industrial policy changed from production to leisure and culture, the tourism

industry vigorously promoted. Based on the supports of government, the hotel's function become more diverse, and formed a necessary element of the Taiwan tourism industry. Hence, the hotel industry combined high-end equipment and luxurious decoration with cultural recreation of twenty-first century (Huang and Hsu, 2008). Therefore, hotel industry was firmly established by hotel manager business intentions and substantial publicity in the media. The average hotel and motel did not differ significantly, but in the product presentation and services offered was a great gap, but this issue is not in the scope of this study to explore.

The motel market highly developed in recent 10 years because of downward economy situation. Taiwan economy suffered series incidents, 921 earthquake, outbreak of SARS and global financial crisis. International and domestic tourists declined rapidly and hotel industry accepted enormous loss. Instead of back up from hotel industry, the managers and investors of hotel industry put restructuring efforts coupled with bold ideas that a unique mode of operation and innovative services to consumers. They reformed the motel from hotel business concept to a new operation mode (Tsang

and Hsu, 2011). The concept of motel was altered from tourism to erotic leisure activity. Due to successful publicity media manipulation, people with many stereotypes referred to erotic, taboo and did not dare to discuss in public about motel. On the other hand, it incurred the curiosity of people and made them want to experience it. Motel was no longer simply a branch of hotel industry, but with fashion, fun leisure space and entertainment. Motel business mode reversed the depression to profit; scholars began to study the motel phenomenon (Bowen and Sparks, 1998; Butler, 1980; Tsang and Hsu, 2011). This type of researchers focused mainly on competition point of view in the motel market and did not investigate development course and induction of motel negative image. Therefore, most of the people still retained erotic and infidelity negative stereotype toward motel (Thomas and Bob, 2003). In order to understand the formation of a negative public stereotypes reason, this study utilized comparison between literature review and consumer data collection and analysis to explore negative motel stereotype. Also, this study attempted to find possibility of correction and how to efficiently reverse negative to positive for motel business to expand its customer base and market territory.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Origin of Motel

In 1901, the first hotel with motel type operation opened in Arizona, Askings Cottage Camp (William and Salvatore, 1994). In 1923, California businessman Harry seen many bus and cars traveled on road for long distance trip, Harry had an idea, came to visit and asked the architect designed this first motel. In 1925, the world's oldest and real motel completed in the December 25th, and was named "Milestone Mo-Tel" (William and Salvatore, 1994).

In the United States, motel began to develop prosperous between 1950 to 1960. In this period of time, motel developed from highway roadside to suburban area, then extended to surrounding area of airports. Motel provided very limited services, and some lower class motel even did not have any service in early days. Passengers only needed to complete the registration formalities and obtain a room key for termination of transaction process, so as follow-up service. The characteristic of motel was guests must park his or her car in front of their own room, and handle their own luggage (Leposky, 1998). Moreover, customers did not need to check

out to drive away. Motel was designed and built for passenger travel by car, not only convenient but also affordable. American motel industry in early 1960 began to expand the scale of cities and stationed downtown area. In 1970, motel started to form a complete system from small and simple turned into large and refinement motel. In mid-1980, luxurious but affordable motel began to earn consumers favorite. However, motel and hotel generally distinguished by lack of an attractive hall, large conference room, and luxurious banquet in American hotel system. Thus, motel accommodation prices set at the low price range compared to the average hotel (Jackle, Sculle and Ragers, 1996). Today in the US, motel development has been towards generalization with hotel. It was also known as Motor Hotel or Grand Motel. American motel could be divided into the following four categories (Adrian, 1994). First, highway motel usually located along the road on inexpensive land and built with one or two-story wooden building. The main customer was highway car travelers. Second, suburban motel built on more expensive urban area and operated mainly for business travelers. Third, resort motel was constructed in or near resort with high level of service and convenience. The tourists were the primary targeting consumers. Forth, airport periphery motel customarily established at rim area of airport. Major patron group was foreign business travelers because of this type of motel always close to industrial or residential areas.

The development of motel in the United States has been a century, business operation mode and building appearance also changed over time, but the only constant was that each guest room has its own dedicated parking spaces (Sandoval and Strauss, 2007). Although the United States was the source of motel, but the idea gradually spread around the world. In Latin America, for example, local motel poorly equipped with low prices and became the main place for prostitution (Matthias, Josefina, Danilo, Fred and George, 2000). The motel business has been accepted by people was great relevance with passenger demand. Because of car traveler increasing and customers want to pursue fast and convenient services. The environment was peace and quiet, not disturbed by the service personnel, guests can comfortable exist in private space and no extra tip or service charged. The cost of motel compared to other types of hotel accommodation was relatively low and occupancy rate was also higher than average hotel. Therefore, the development and prosperity of the motel were inseparable from "the spacious and free parking"

and "low-rent" two factors (Walsham, 1993).

2.2 Motel History in Taiwan

According to Tsang and Hsu (2011), the main service of domestic motel was to provide the consumers a guest room with a private garage. In other words, the purpose of motel was to protect consumer privacy. Compared to other forms of hotels, motel appeared to be more susceptible to the outside world and outsider's disturbance (Jogaratnam, 2005; Walsham, 1993). Huang and Hsu (2008) indicated that motels in Taiwan usually designed to one to two-story for single-family building, the main target for the short-term use of room service was to provide customers with dedicated parking space, focus on consumer privacy. In addition, motel offered simple accommodation services for visitors, the rooms and facilities were also more furnishing and romantic, but charged higher than general hotels. The average hotel provided tenants for use of concentrated parking spaces in the same parking lot, tenants can enter their own car or valet parking through the hotel staff, but the tenant will eventually need to walk to the hotel lobby for housing formalities (Palmer, Sese and Montano, 2005). However, customers of motel went through the formalities of check in process by stay in the car and drive directly to the garage and self-control garage door. The parking space was independent and customers had right to use this parking space in that period of time. Moreover, equipment and facilities of motel were private to customers. Customer of hotel had to share equipment and facilities with other guests. Hence, the privacy of customers of motel was guaranteed (Lasswell, 1948).

The evolution of motel in Taiwan was more unique compared to hotel, and even derived new products with rare operation style. Development of motel business in Taiwan was divided into four generations (Sheldon, 1991; Michman and Mazze, 2006). The first generation was the introduction of the concept of American motel operation form. It solely focused on transportation of convenience and located on the side of highway interchange or next to the main road. In 1988, the first motel Taichung California Motel opened for business. Taichung California Motel imitated American motel characteristics, low rental costs, easier parking, convenience and privacy compared to hotels in Taiwan. Due to freshness, it became the reference of the hotel industry (Curtis, 2001). Violet Motel, Edinburgh Motel, Beverly Motel

built up in a short period of time. Motels mushroomed led to supply surpass demand (Ugur and Emin, 2005). Finally, the unsatisfactory performance of business coupled with huge raise of construction cost resulting in the first generation motel withered (Miller, 2013).

The second generation motel emphasized the localization. The features of this type of motel were privacy, cleanness and comfort. It located not only on road next to the highway and main road of suburban but also in the alleys of major cities. In 1990s, motel operation gradually began to focus on interior design and decoration, and stressed on clean and comfortable. The price also has increased gradually upward in this period of time (Bernstein, 1999; Sherman, 2007). The first floor of the main body of the building designed for parking space and second and third story for guests rooms. The decoration style was similar to Japan's love hotels and more luxury than first generation. The main function was providing the best place for dating; hence, the major consumers were usually male and female friends, husband and wife (Dittmer, 2001).

Third generation motel underlined luxury property, interior theme and privacy protection. The location of motel was more approaching people. This generation of motel spread out at business district and residential areas within the city. In order to compete on the lodging market, motel business heavily invested on interior and exterior. The quality of the motel improved facilities that comparable to five-star hotel, fine silk bed set in the bathroom, not only set up a large double Jacuzzi also fitted with an LCD TV, more than a dozen exotic themed suites and low price (Talbot, 2004). This period emphasized on "visual effects" motel, a clear theme and featured each room with American, British, South Pacific Ocean, Shanghai, Versace, Chanel and Las Vegas (Danziger, 2005).

The fourth generation motel combined hotel and motel and became a new species of motel. The main characteristic was beyond luxury for hardware devices or software services, indoor floor area from 60 square meters raised to 300 square meters, double Jacuzzi also upgraded to the pool and SPA facilities and stairs equipment promoted to a dedicated elevator (Walsham, 1993). Motel decoration advanced from fancy to taste and leisure (Becker, 2009). Motel business also launched marketing campaign to advertise motel stylish, luxurious, magnificent building facilities.

Moreover, it was a self-achievement and social status for been to motel (Fred, 2000).

3. METHDOLOGY

The literature of Taiwan motel business development process proved reasons that people formed a negative stereotype related to erotic images (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002). Although motel business managers tried to improve the situation of negative stereotype by restructuring efforts and innovative services, but the effect is limited. Therefore, the intension of reaching or creating new consumer segments for expanding the market was failed. The objective of this study was

to explore directions that could efficiently and effectively reach the goal of correcting negative stereotype in order to bring more revenue to the motel business. There were three purposes of this study.

1. The possibility of correcting negative stereotype image of consumer to positive that never been to motel.
2. The possibility of correcting negative stereotype image of consumer to positive that have experienced motel.
3. The requirements differences of services and equipment of motel between negative stereotype image consumer and positive image consumer.

Figure 1: Research Procedure

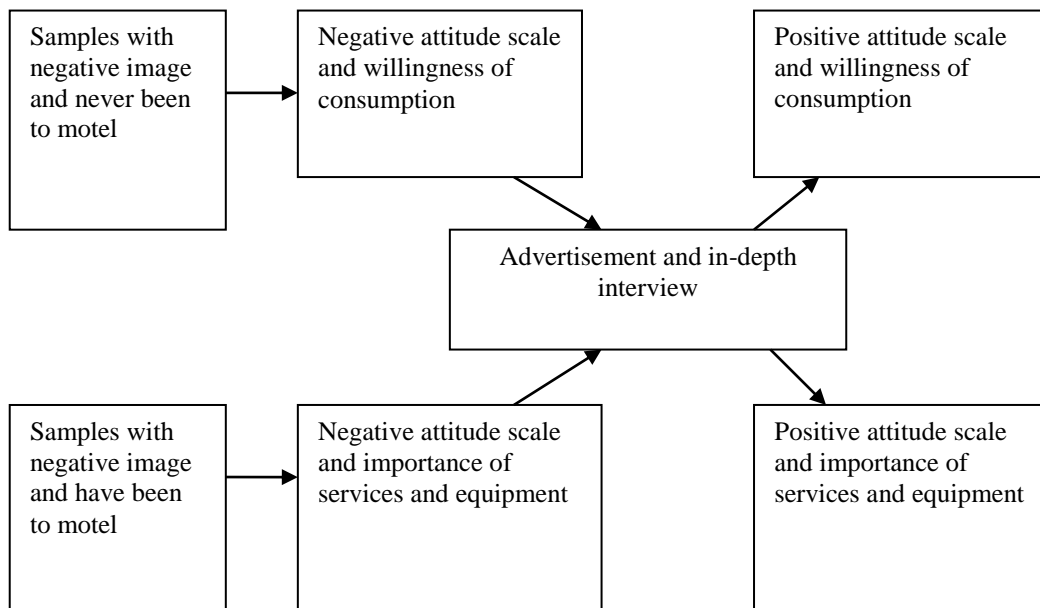


Figure 1 showed that this study utilized two different sample groups. One sample group characterized customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has never been to motel. The other sample group characterized customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has experienced motel facilities and services. Two sample groups were measured negative impression of extent of motel and tested the possibility of changing stereotype image by following procedure. The procedure contained six steps. First, both sample group exanimated by the same questionnaire to test the degree of negative attitude toward motel. If the result degree was less than preset standard, the member of this sample was discarded. This study only investigated negative stereotype subjects as targets to amend their

attitude. Second, every sample with negative stereotype gave an in-depth interview and an advertisement with positive image of the motel that focused on family quality time in motel. Third, another survey was given to detect whether negative stereotype samples altered their attitude and degree of correction. Forth, the sample group characterized customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has never been to motel only measured attitude alteration scale and willingness of going to motel. Fifth, the sample group characterized customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has experienced motel facilities and services estimated attitude alteration scale and the importance extent of facilities and services of motel. Finally, this study compared the attitude differences of both

sample groups before and after in-depth interview and motel positive image advertisement to understand the possibility of altering people stereotype.

3.1 Research Methods and Questionnaire Design

This study utilized mixing primary and secondary sources. First, in order to understand stereotype subconscious and behavioral phenomenon, this study looked over academic research materials, periodicals and magazines documents to form the basic study content (Khan, Kunz, Kleijinen, and Antes, 2003). However, the content of the research literature were scarce, especially in marketing area (Lasswell, 1948). The questionnaire was comprised by psychology and marketing studies. Second, in-depth interviews and advertisement design was most difficult part of this study. The concept and detail information that revealed in interview and advertisement were based on not only literatures but also suggestions from many motel business managers (Walker, 1999).

. This study focused on the intention that stereotype with negative image could shift to positive by marketing instruments. Moreover, due to the special nature of the objective of the study, this study had two different sample groups and there were different corresponding questionnaire to sample groups. The questionnaire of first sample group that customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has never been to motel was comprised by betrayal, erotic, affair, entertainment, family fun and leisure six factors and willingness of become consumer factor contained four price level indicators. The questionnaire for second sample group that customer that negative stereotype toward motel business and has experienced motel facilities and services was consisted of betrayal, erotic, affair, entertainment, family fun and leisure six factors and services and equipment importance scale factor contained total of twenty four indicators, twelve indicators for services and twelve indicators for equipment that motel had to provide.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study incorporated with China Airline Education and Training Center to implement research design. The population of this center was

351 individuals. They were divided into two groups. The first group contained 156 individuals that experienced motel services and equipment. The other group consisted of 198 individuals that did not have motel experience. A questionnaire that included betrayal, erotic and affair three negative factors and entertainment, family fun and recreation three positive factors was given to the first group that experienced motel services and equipment. If the negative index was greater than the positive index, this member retained in sample group, otherwise discarded. In this study, there were 122 samples with negative index greater than positive index in 156 samples that had motel experience and. Therefore, 34 samples were given up. This study presented a 3 minutes positive image advertisement of motel and followed up in-depth interview for 20 minutes to 122 samples that had negative stereotype. The content of advertisement was whole family could be together in motel. Everyone enjoyed leisure, quality time and exclusive luxury equipment. The purpose of in-depth interviews was to introduce the new concept of motel and gather more personal information. The remaining samples received second questionnaire to test whether negative stereotype were corrected and the degree of correction after interview. In this study, 76 in 122 samples altered from negative to positive. This study utilized Chi-Square Analysis to compare 76 samples index of first questionnaire that issued before advertisement and in-depth interview and index of second questionnaire that issued after advertisement and in-depth interview. The significance was $0.029 < 0.05$. There was significant difference.

Identically, second group had 198 individuals that never experienced motel services and equipment. A questionnaire that included betrayal, erotic and affair three negative factors and entertainment, family fun and recreation three positive factors was given to the second group before advertisement and in-depth interview. The result was that there were 143 samples with negative index greater than positive index in 156 samples. Therefore, 55 samples were discarded. After first questionnaire, positive image advertisement of motel and in-depth interview followed up to influence samples for second questionnaire. The 143 samples received second questionnaire to test whether negative stereotype were corrected and the degree of correction. The 143 samples only 22 changed from negative to positive. This study utilized Chi-Square Analysis to compare 22 samples index of first questionnaire

that issued before advertisement and in-depth interview and index of second questionnaire that issued after advertisement and in-depth interview. The significance was $0.669 > 0.05$. There was no significant difference.

The improvement in consumer negative stereotype toward motel business only found at group that experienced motel services and equipment. This study also investigated what services and equipment should be more advanced to make the new customers that considered the motel was the place for leisure and family quality time. Therefore, this sample group received another survey with 24 questions of. This study compared the significant difference of 24 services and equipment importance scale between 76 samples that shifted motel impression from negative to positive and 46 samples that maintained negative impression of motel with T-Test. The result of T-test revealed that variety of theme ($0.03 < 0.05$) and importance of security ($0.002 < 0.05$) in 12 questions related to service had significant differences between two sample groups. There was no significant difference showed in visibility, hidden density, privacy, special needs, public interests, corporate image, active service, the credibility and customized personal care between impression altered group and the group maintained a negative impression. On the other hand, 12 questions related to equipment of motel also tested by T-Test between two groups. The outcome demonstrated that the importance of the square feet of the floor ($0.016 < 0.05$) and erotic toys ($0.000 < 0.05$) had significant differences. However, the price charged, food and beverage offer, discounts, leisure facilities, entertainment equipment, decoration, lighting, gifts and fire equipment did not indicate significant difference.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

According to statistical analysis and hypothesis testing, advertisement and interview did not have stereotype changing effect for group that with negative image and never been to motel. Although, there were 22 samples out of 143 samples altered attitude from negative to positive index, the Chi-Square indicated no significant difference existed. Thus, it failed to suggest that using advertisement and interview to convenience consumers that never experienced motel that motel was a place for family and entertainment. Motel managers might have to find other more effective marketing method to achieve the purpose of open new market segment. However, statistical analysis

expressed that advertisement and interview did modify stereotype for group with negative image and experienced motel services and equipment. There were 76 in 122 samples reversed their opinion toward motel. In addition, it did present significant difference statistically. It implied that advertisement and interview produced effect on people that have negative image and experience of motel. The result of this study was strongly against preceding academic studies. The intensity of prejudice would be proportional correlation to frequency. It represented that the more times people go to hotel, the harder to change their impression of motel. The initial intension of this study was to find persuasive commercial to change people's negative idea related to motel and people with no motel experience was the primary subject. On the contrary, this study suggested original customers were more profitable than new customers.

The study also identified that customers with positive image was more significant concerned about variety of theme variable and importance of security variable than customers with negative image for motel services. Furthermore, erotic toys and square feet of floor variables were considered significantly different for motel equipment and facilities. This result indicated that motel managers did not need to put extra cost to modify motel services and equipment only slight adjustment was sufficient. The reasonable inference would be customers were already familiar with services and equipment that motel provided. Therefore, they know how to adjust from erotic situation to leisure. No matter in what situations, customers could effectively use the existing motel services and equipment to achieve their goals.

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