

Paisri, Wanwisa; Ruanguttamanun, Chutima; Sujchaphong, Narissara

Article

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*Corresponding author: Wanwisa Paisri, Mahasarakham Business School, Mahasarakham University
Email: wanwisa.paisri@gmail.com

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MARKETING | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Customer experience and commitment on eWOM and revisit intention: A case of Talad Tongchom Thailand

Wanwisa Paisri^{1*}, Chutima Ruanguttamanun² and Narissara Sujchaphong²

Abstract: This study examines the effects of customer experience on electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention and investigates whether commitment mediates the relationship between customer experience, eWOM, and revisit intention in the tourism context. A survey method by using a self-administered questionnaire with a quantitative approach was conducted. Quota sampling was adopted, the data were collected in 12 markets, for a total of 52 questionnaires per market. The total sample sizes are 624 tourists. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is used for data analysis. The results indicate that customer experience has a significant and positive relationship with affective and continuance commitment. Affective commitment mediates the relationship between entertainment and escapist experience and eWOM and revisit intention. The study's findings the extended role of customer experience and the types of commitment provide meaningful theoretical implications. Hence, managers should focus on customer experience to generate customers' commitment, positive eWOM, and revisit intention.

Subjects: Tourism Marketing; Marketing Research; Relationship Marketing

Keywords: tourism; customer experience; affective commitment; continuance commitment; revisit intention; electronic word of mouth (eWOM); Thailand

1. Introduction

Customer experience is the modern marketing strategy of the 21st century. This is one of the key characteristics of experiential marketing, particularly experiential marketing focuses on customer experiences (Schmitt, 1999; Khan et al., 2020). Companies should recognize the importance of customer experience as a strategic tool to guarantee their long-term success (Shaw & Ivens, 2005). Customer experience can generate satisfaction, attracting loyal customers through positive word of mouth (WOM), stimulating repurchase intention, retaining existing customers, and decreasing complaints (Kim et al., 2011). In term of customer experience study, many scholars still to call for research that advances in understanding of customer experience in an era of increasingly complex customer behaviors (Roy et al., 2022). Especially, Hermes and Riedl (2021) stated that both affective and cognitive customer experience have been studied intensively. While affective customer experience has mostly been measured using the PAD (pleasure, arousal, dominance) scale, cognitive customer experience has largely been studied based on the prior concept. On the contrary, a few researchers have studied customer experience holistically, or as a social and sensorial phenomenon.

Customer experience also helps improve customer relationships with a brand and increase brand loyalty. It is a key factor for customer relationship management (Murthi, 2005). Previous studies show that customer relationship is often mediated. Many studies focus on the relationship between customer experience and satisfaction or trust (Bustamante & Rubio, 2017; Chen & Lin, 2015; Rose et al., 2012). In addition, Konstantopoulou et al. (2019) and Schouten et al. (2020) revealed that positive experiences with the social media influencers lead to a stronger trust, and it seems to be an important predictor of eWOM and consumers' purchase intention. According to Pop et al. (2022) stated that in case of tourists have a good experience, they will create trust and buying intention leading to post-purchase process focuses on satisfaction and travelers' experience sharing. However, the role of commitment has not yet been studied, so it is not obvious which one is dominant in literally customer experience. Furthermore, Keiningham et al. (2017) call for further research on the relationship between customer experience and customer commitment for assessing the potential effect of different commitment dimensions on customer loyalty, positive WOM, and other desirable outcomes. According to Roy et al. (2022) pointed the significance of customer experience, if customer experience positively affects customer commitment, it indicates the customer engagement behaviors. Thus, it is important to address this gap in research by investigating the relationship between customer experience and commitment. It also tests the mediating role of commitment, as customer relationships may influence customer loyalty through WOM and revisit intention (Brown et al., 2005; Fullerton, 2005; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Palmatier et al., 2006).

The existing gap has supported the research question are 1) How does dimension of customer experience influence type of commitment, electronic word of mouth and revisit intention? 2) How does type of commitment influence electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention? 3) How does type of commitment which mediator the influences of the relationship between customer experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention? This study sought to shed light on these questions, we conducted an empirical study in a Thailand tourist context. We have chosen a Thailand tourist destination to test mainly our framework particularly in this context, studies have identified customer commitment, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention as critical point in creating superior customer experience. To test our model, we conducted a survey by using a self-administered questionnaire distributed among Thai tourists who visited Taladtongchom

Taladtongchom, in Thailand (which means "a must-visit market"), is a governmental project to promote the linkage between local markets and economic activities in tourist destinations. Thai local communities reflect their unique cultures and provide new tourist experiences by combining cultural learning and entertainment. Tourists can indulge in the beautiful surroundings and experience a different way of living. According to hospitality and tourism research, creating a positive customer experience is crucial due to the experiential nature of the hospitality and tourism industry (Hwang & Seo, 2016). Customer experience plays an essential role in tourism (Oh et al., 2007). Hence, we aim to assess customer experience in Taladtongchom to expand the customer experience concept.

This study examines the relationships among customer experience, commitment, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and revisit intention. It investigates whether the type of commitment mediates the relationship between the customer experience's dimension, eWOM, and revisit intention in Taladtongchom. In doing so, this study contributes to academic research by expanding the concepts of customer experience and commitment. The study's results provide new insights that managers can apply to differentiate from competitors and create competitive advantages by exploiting their unique identity. The results also indicate that providing a unique customer experience may increase customer commitment, positive eWOM, and revisit intention. Moreover, the government can use the study's results to guide policymaking for supporting Thailand's tourism industry.

The data used in this study were collected before the COVID-19 pandemic, which may affect the implications of the proposed customer experience model. However, the principles and guidelines

for applying the proposed model can still be used for encouraging revisit intention after the pandemics, as the Thai government has committed to restoring a resilient tourism economy post-COVID-19. The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The next section deals with a review of literature on customer experience electronic, commitment, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and revisit intention. The subsequent section covers the research model and hypotheses development. Next, the third part is the methodology, while the fourth section presents results. The last section concentrates on conclusion, discussion and implications.

2. A review of the literature

2.1. Context of Taladtongchom

Taladtongchom is characterized by a distinguished local culture and way of living, such as unique agricultural, handicraft, and community's products. This location is also a landmark for taking pictures that reflect the identity of the community and the local culture. Here, visitors can enjoy a unique Thai local experience (Department of Internal Trend, 2018). In line with community-based tourism (CBT), Taladtongchom has developed a form of tourism that maximizes local benefits and advocates capacity building for achieving community development objectives (Tolkach & King, 2015). CBT involves direct local participation (collective action) in the development, management, and benefits of tourism activities integrated into the local economy (Zielinski et al., 2020).

2.2. Customer experience

The evolution of customer experience begins with Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) defined that experience as the consumption and interaction of a person with products or services that involve the significant experience of affection and consumption as involving various playful leisure activities, sensory pleasures, esthetic enjoyment, and emotional responses. Customer experience is holistic in nature and stimulates customers' cognitive, affective, emotional, social, and physical responses (Verhoef et al., 2009). Based on a review of the literature on customer experience, this study addresses four realms of experience—the educational, entertainment, esthetic, and escapist dimensions—in line with Pine and Gilmore (1998). In this study, educational experience refers to customers' absorption of the events unfolding at a destination, to which they actively participate through the interactive engagement with locals. Entertainment experience occurs when customers passively observe activities and/or performances, such as attending a local festival at a tourist destination. Esthetic experience is when customers passively engage with and immerse in the physical environment, enjoying the environmental conditions and the aesthetic beauty of the site. Escapist experience occurs when tourists actively participate in the events and become part of the activities and occurrences in a real or virtual environment, taking a break from their daily life. As a result, numerous studies revealed emphasis on the need for in-depth study of the role of customer experience in marketing, especially in services (Edvardsson et al., 2005; Jaakkola et al., 2015). Marketing academics and practitioners believe that largely positive customer experience can create a unique, enduring advantage over time for every company. Consequently, customer experience is a dominant concept of marketing (De Keyser et al., 2015), and the theoretical knowledge developed to date provides a foundation from which to develop a more detailed understanding of the concept.

2.3. Electronic word of mouth

Studies have stated in marketing literature that word of mouth plays an important role in the process of product choice and in service provider selection (Gilly et al., 1998). Litvin et al. (2008) claimed that word of mouth (WOM) is informal contact between consumers about specific products or services, is considered one of the most important sources of information because WOM has a powerful impact on the purchase behavior of customers. With the advancement of Internet technology, increasing numbers of travelers use the internet to search for information about the tourist attraction that has caused the frequency of eWOM. WOM active on the World Wide Web, also known as eWOM or electronic word of mouth, is used extensively. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) described eWOM as any

positive or negative comment about a product or company made by consumers, sharing information with many people over the internet. Goldsmith (2006) described electronic word of mouth communication (eWOM) as internet word of mouth communication, which can be disseminated through various internet applications such as online forums, electronic board systems, blogs, review sites, and social networking sites. Consequently, eWOM's potential impact on the decision-making processes of customers can be more powerful than traditional WOM's influence. Also, the unique features of eWOM communication will leverage the power of positive eWOM to influence the decision-making processes of the customers and motivates customers to spread positive eWOM affecting increase customers' visitation (Jeong & Jang, 2011). In this study, eWOM is defined as the act of exchanging experiences from tourist attraction through internet-based technology of customer to among consumers. eWOM can be distributed through a variety of online platforms, including discussion forums, instant messaging, online communities, chat rooms, and social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Line).

2.4. Revisit intention

Revisit intention has been recognized as one of the essential factors for business survival and growth in the tourism industry. According to Gronholdt et al. (2000) and Baker and Crompton (2000a), revisit intention has been described as the willingness of tourists to revisit a destination and also think that this behavior is an expression of customer loyalty, similar to the willingness to buy a certain product again. Revisit intention as an important concept in the marketing of destinations to forecast the potential behaviors of travelers (Hu, 2003). For travel loyalty researchers, revisit intention is an important dimension in measuring behavioral loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978). Thus, this research defines that revisit intention as a stated likelihood of tourists' willingness to revisit a destination again.

2.5. Affective and continuance commitment

Moorman et al. (1992) defined commitment as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship. Commitment is a measure of a customers' relationship with a company, which usually results from customer experience (Bustamante & Rubio, 2017; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Fullerton (2005) stated that commitment is often viewed as a multidimensional construct in marketing research. The three components of commitment are: affective (attachment due to liking and identification), calculative or continuance (attachment due to switching costs based), and normative or moral commitment (attachment due to felt obligation). Previous research primarily focused on affective and continuance commitment and mostly failed to integrate normative commitment. N'Goala (2007) stated that normative commitment has received much less attention in marketing. In most service settings, consumers do not feel a moral obligation to continue the service provider relationship, especially in the tourism industry, as various alternative ways exist to reach a tourist destination. Thus, this study only focuses on affective and continuance commitment.

Affective commitment is customers' tendency to maintain a relationship with a service provider based on their emotional attachment, positive feeling, liking, and identification with the service provider (Fullerton, 2003; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). While, Continuance commitment is the extent to which customers perceive the need to maintain a relationship due to the anticipated switching costs or lack of alternatives once customers' costs, alternatives, and benefits are considered (Fullerton, 2003; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). In this research, affective commitment refer to the tendency of customer to maintain a relationship with a service provider on the basis of their emotional attachment, positive feeling and identification with the service provider and continuance commitment refer to the tendency of customer to maintain a relationship with a service provider due to the significant anticipated switching costs, lack of alternatives or benefit that they receives.

3. Research Model and Hypothesis development

3.1. Customer experience and electronic word of mouth

Previous studies examined positive and negative WOM as satisfaction/dissatisfaction outcomes following customer experience. When consumers experience a favorable service, they show

a strong desire to share positive information about their experiences (Mangold et al., 1999; Swanson & Kelley, 2001). Reichheld and Sasser (1990) stated that customers that receive excellent service and are exposed to a memorable experience form a favorable behavioral intention, such as recommending to others and spreading positive WOM. Hosany and Witham (2010) examined the four dimensions of consumer experience proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998), who studied the relationship between customer experience and intention to recommend. Their results show that all four dimensions of customer experience are crucial and positively linked to the intention to recommend a tourist destination. Hence, they recommended managers to create pleasant and memorable experiences, which can generate strong customer behavioral intentions. Similarly, Radder and Han (2015) proposed that the four dimensions of customer experience affect behavioral intentions, such as WOM.

In terms of interpersonal influence, WOM and eWOM have substantial conceptual similarities (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The idea that WOM may be generated from customer experience is also relevant when investigating eWOM communication. EWOM and online reviews/recommendations are increasingly being used in the field of tourism services. Semrad and Rivera (2018) showed that tourists exposed to a memorable experience involving the four dimensions of customer experience in a festival and /or a tourist destination will likely recommend the destination to others through social media. When tourists are faced with new learning experiences, immersed in attractive environments, or enjoy local performances and activities, they experience a different way of living. As a result, they are likely to spread positive WOM by posting or sharing content through online media. Based on the literature mentioned above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a. Educational experience is positively related to eWOM.

H1b. Entertainment experience is positively related to eWOM.

H1c. Esthetic experience is positively related to eWOM.

H1d. Escapist experience is positively related to eWOM.

3.2. Customer experience and revisit intention

Revisit intention originates from tourists' cognition of their travel experience (Guest, 1995) and intentions to return to the experienced tourist attraction (Baker & Crompton, 2000a). Chang et al. (2014) reported that the quality of the tourism experience is the most crucial antecedent of revisit intention. Besides, customers exposed to an excellent and memorable experience show a favorable behavioral intention and become loyal customers, ultimately leading to revisit intention (Boulding et al., 1993; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Qu (2017) found a positive and significant relationship between education, entertainment, esthetic, and escapism experience and revisit intention. Radder and Han (2015) revealed that edutainment (the experience between education and entertainment) is the most crucial experience dimension in determining tourists' revisit intention. Quadri (2012) showed that esthetic and escapism experiences are essential for building revisit intention in a wine trail setting. In addition, Baker (2016) found that the crucial customer experience elements for increasing return intention are esthetic and education experience. When tourists learn, experience a beautiful atmosphere, and participate in interesting shows and activities, their return intention increases. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2a. Educational experience is positively related to revisit intention.

H2b. Entertainment experience is positively related to revisit intention.

H2c. Esthetic experience is positively related to revisit intention.

H2d. Escapist experience is positively related to revisit intention.

3.3. Electronic word of mouth and revisit intention

WOM provides crucial information to consumers about a product or service and often helps them decide whether to purchase a product/service or patronize a firm. The empirical evidence in the hotel and travel industry suggests that eWOM can substantially influence tourists' travel and/or revisit intention (Filieri & McLeay, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011). Damayanti et al. (2017) studied the effects of eWOM on tourists' interest in visiting a tourist destination. The study indicates eWOM as a source of essential information for travel planning. In particular, eWOM has a positive influence on future behavioral intentions such as revisit intention. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. eWOM is positively related to revisit intention.

3.4. Customer experience and affective commitment

Customer experience affects customer's attachment toward a brand/firm (Ismail, 2011). In the tourism sector, customer experience may positively impact their emotions (Rose et al., 2011; Slåtten et al., 2011). Ali et al. (2016) noted that education, entertainment, esthetic, and escapism experience have a positive and significant influence on customer emotions, defined as affective states of subjective feelings (Jang et al., 2011; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Rose et al., 2012). Furthermore, Iglesias et al. (2011) claimed that experienced customers are likely to affect customers' affective attachment. Sharma and Rather (2015) stated that education, entertainment, esthetic, and escapism experience have a positive influence on satisfaction, leading to affective commitment, as satisfaction, an affective response or emotional dimension, is linked to affective commitment (Iglesias et al., 2011). The above relationship implies that the four dimensions of customer experience are likely related to affective commitment, which may be called emotional commitment. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a. Educational experience is positively related to affective commitment.

H4b. Entertainment experience is positively related to affective commitment.

H4c. Esthetic experience is positively related to affective commitment.

H4d. Escapist experience is positively related to affective commitment.

3.5. Customer experience and continuance commitment

Consumer experience toward a service provider has a substantial effect on procedural and relational switching costs (Burnham et al., 2003). The likelihood of a customer to switch providers decreases when their experience is positive (Klaus et al., 2013). Customer experience is influenced by exposure to stimuli over time, allowing them considering alternative perspectives (Palmer, 2008). Customer experience generates utilitarian perceptions (Jain & Bagdare, 2009; Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Depending on the context, continuance commitment can be called calculative or utilitarian commitment (Bowden, 2011). Song et al. (2015) contended that educational, entertainment, esthetic, and escapist experience are crucial predictors of functional values. By addressing Beemsterboer (2017) study in the context of Pine and Gilmore's relate to education,

entertainment, esthetic and escapism experience played an essential role in explaining functional values, helping judge the cognitive trade-off between financial or utilitarian benefits and costs. Previous research showed that the four dimensions of customer experience are associated with perceived and functional values, which can be linked to continuance commitment, once considered customers' costs and benefits. Based on this literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5a. Educational experience is positively related to continuance commitment.

H5b. Entertainment experience is positively related to continuance commitment.

H5c. Esthetic experience is positively related to continuance commitment.

H5d. Escapist experience is positively related to continuance commitment.

3.6. Affective commitment and electronic word of mouth

As suggested by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002), commitment has been demonstrated to predict WOM. It was also hypothesized to have a direct effect on positive WOM. Moreover, affective commitment has been related to the desire to continue the relationship with service providers, the willingness to invest in the relationship, and a greater propensity to engage in positive WOM recommendations (Harrison-Walker, 2001; Wetzels et al., 1998). Previous studies have examined the effect of affective commitment on consumer behavior, including WOM communications, and found a positive relationship between affective commitment and WOM (Brown et al., 2005; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Garbarino and Johnson (1999) showed that affective commitment positively influences product and service recommendations. Likewise, Tsao and Hsieh (2012) concluded that affectively committed customers refer to an organization through positive eWOM communication. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6. Affective commitment is positively related to eWOM.

3.7. Continuance commitment and electronic word of mouth

Continuance commitment can be seen as negative motivation to maintain a relationship. A person with a high continuance commitment is motivated to stay passively with an organization. Moreover, customers who experience continuance commitment are tied to the relationship partner and, due to switching costs, they find it difficult to terminate the relationship. However, customers are willing to switch between retailers providing them the best alternative at any given time (Seiders & Tigert, 1997). Therefore, customers with a high level of continuance commitment are not expected to voice positive WOM communications (Nusair et al., 2010). Continuance commitment was found to be negatively related to advocacy toward a brand and to reduce the willingness to act as a reference customer (Fullerton, 2005). Some studies reported that continuance commitment is positively related to attitudinal and behavioral loyalty (Evanschitzky et al., 2006). Continuance commitment positively influences customers' intentions to maintain a business relationship and recommend the provider's products and services (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H7: Continuance commitment is positively related to eWOM.

3.8. Affective commitment and revisit intention

Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) showed that commitment is an antecedent of repeated purchasing behavior. The emotional attachment of affective commitment strongly influences loyalty in customer patronage toward a brand or firm. Consumers continue to buy certain brands as they identify with the firm and have an affective commitment to the service provider. A positive relationship has been found between affective commitment and behavioral loyalty (Evanschitzky et al., 2006) and services purchased (Verhoef et al., 2002). Rauyruen and Miller (2007) argued that customers who are affectively committed to an organization intend to continue purchase products or services from that organization. Fullerton (2005) found that affective commitment has a direct positive relationship with behavior intentions such as repurchase intention. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H8. Affective commitment is positively related to revisit intention.

3.9. Continuance commitment and revisit intention

In a brand relationship, continuance commitment may result in continued purchasing behavior (Becker, 1960). In addition, Fullerton (2005) stated that continuance commitment is positively related to repurchase intention. It has a positive influence on the consumers' intentions to continue a business relationship and repurchase the company's products and services (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Jones et al. (2007) found that continuance commitment is positively related to repurchase intentions. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9. Continuance commitment is positively related to revisit intention.

3.10 Commitment as the mediator between Customer Experience and Electronic word of Mouth and Revisit Intention

Morgan and Hunt (1994) developed a relationship marketing model that conceptualizes commitment as the key mediating variable in the development of long-term customer relationships. A mediator is a variable that explains the relationship between an independent variable and an outcome variable. In other words, a mediator is a mechanism through which an independent variable influences an outcome variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Johnson et al. (2001) found that both affective and continuance commitment are mediators of customer loyalty. Fullerton (2005) showed that affective commitment and continuance

Figure 1. Proposed research model.

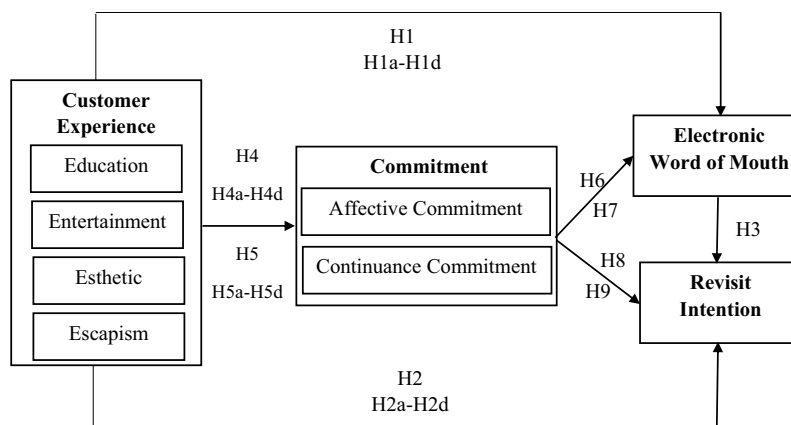


Table 1. Properties of measurement items

Construct name and items	Standardized Loading
Customer Experience (Oh et al., 2007)	
Educational experience (Mean = 3.85, S.D. = 0.721, α = 0.923, CR = 0.909, AVE = 0.716)	
1. I learnt a lot during visit Taladtongchom.	0.832
2. The experience has made me more knowledgeable.	0.867
3. It was a real learning experience.	0.871
4. It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things.	0.806
Entertainment Experience (Mean = 3.95, S.D. = 0.689, α = 0.928, CR = 0.901, AVE = 0.696)	
5. Watching market activities of others was very entertaining.	0.790
6. Activities of market were amusing to watch.	0.838
7. Activities of market were fun to watch.	0.873
8. Market entertainment was captivating.	0.837
Esthetic Experience (Mean = 4.01, S.D. = 0.650, α = 0.919, CR = 0.913, AVE = 0.636)	
9. Market environment was very attractive.	0.833
10. Market environment was pretty.	0.806
11. Market environment really showed attention to design details.	0.767
12. I felt a real sense of harmony.	0.763
13. Market environment provided pleasure to my senses.	0.818
14. Just being here was very pleasant.	0.783
Escapist Experience (Mean = 3.79, S.D. = 0.678, α = 0.908, CR = 0.906, AVE = 0.658)	
15. I felt I played a different character here.	0.759
16. I felt like I was living in a different time or place.	0.794
17. I completely escaped from reality.	0.807
18. I totally forgot about my daily routine.	0.822
19. I felt I was in a different world.	0.860
Affective Commitment (Jones et al., 2007 and Sharma et al., 2006) (Mean = 3.76, S.D. = 0.716, α = 0.928, CR = 0.894, AVE = 0.678)	
1. I visit Taladtongchom because I really like it.	0.807
2. I am a customer of this type market because I feel a strong sense of attachment.	0.786
3. I take pleasure in being a customer of Taladtongchom.	0.846
4. I feel a strong sense of identification with Taladtongchom.	0.852
Continuance Commitment (Jones et al., 2007 and Sharma et al., 2006) (Mean = 3.60, S.D. = 0.755, α = 0.797, CR = 0.838, AVE = 0.575)	
1. I feel like I visit this market because I have to.	0.784

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Construct name and items	Standardized Loading
2. Changing from this market to another would cost too much.	0.818
3. I feel like I don't have a choice as to which market I visit.	0.514
4. I remain a customer of market because it is difficult to switch to another market.	0.702
Electronic Word of mouth (Goyette et al., 2010) (Mean = 3.76, S.D. = 0.880, α = 0.904, CR = 0.912, AVE = 0.777)	
1. I say positive things online about market to other people.	0.830
2. I strongly recommend people to visit this market online.	0.898
3. I am proud to say online to others that I got a good experience from this market.	0.917
Revisit Intention (Kim and Moon, 2009) (Mean = 4.02, S.D. = 0.724, α = 0.921, CR = 0.939, AVE = 0.837)	
1. I would like to visit Taladtongchom again.	0.942
2. I have a strong intention to bring my family and friends to visit type market again.	0.927
3. Taladtongchom would be a-must-go place when I plan for another trip in the future.	0.875

commitment are partial mediators of the service quality and loyalty relationship. Richard and Zhang (2012) contended that affective commitment plays a strong mediating role in the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Kaur and Soch (2013) concluded that the relationship between trust and attitudinal loyalty is fully mediated by continuance commitment. Thus, this study assumes that commitment is likely to be the mediator between customer experience and eWOM and revisit intention. Therefore, the following hypotheses (Figure 1) are proposed:

H10. Affective commitment mediates the relationship between customer experience, eWOM, and revisit intention.

H11. Continuance commitment mediates the relationship between customer experience, eWOM, and revisit intention.

4. Methodology

4.1. Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

Population approach for this study were tourists who visited Taladtongchom. These tourist representatives were the sample. They were selected by using convenience sampling. We ensured that the tourist could communicate via Facebook, Instagram, and/or Line by asking preliminary questions about receiving information and using online media before answering the questionnaire. The data used in this study were collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed to 624 tourists who visited Taladtongchom.

In term of research site, we considered the Taladongchom as the market site surveys. The market selection criteria were as follows: 1) the market is sold as “local specialties”. 2) the market provides activities or local performances that combine learning and entertainment, including the escape from daily life. We selected 12 markets that represent the locals’ way of life according to the above criteria. Quota sampling was adopted because many Taladongchom areas are located in the Central region, which represents the local model and characteristics. The Central region is represented by 6 markets. The Northern, North-Eastern, and Southern regions are represented by 2 markets. As mentioned above, to obtain the full data distribution and generalization, the data were collected in 12 markets in Taladongchom, for a total of 52 questionnaires per market. A detailed of the respondent’s characteristics and tourism behavior is given in [Table A1 and A2](#) in Appendix A.

Customer experience was measured using a 19-item scale adapted from Oh et al. (2007), which measured customer experience using educational, entertainment, esthetics, and escapist elements. Affective and continuance commitment were assessed using a four-item scale, adapted from Jones et al. (2007) and Sharma et al. (2006). eWOM was measured using a three-item scale, adapted from Goyette et al. (2010). Revisit intention was assessed using a three-item scale from Kim and Moon (2009). Respondents were asked to rate their answers using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), except for their personal information and tourism behavior (see, [Table 1](#)).

5. Results

5.1. Reliability and construct validity testing

SPSS and AMOS 22 were used to analyze the data. [Table 2](#) reports the correlations and measurement model’s results. The results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) show that the measurement model fits the data adequately ($\chi^2 (439) = 771.928$, $p < .000$, $\chi^2/df = 1.758$, RMSEA = .035, CFI = 0.980, IFI = 0.980, NFI = .955). [Tables 1](#) show that the reliability indices range from 0.797 to 0.956 for customer experience, commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention. As a rule of thumb, the Cronbach’s alpha should be higher than 0.7 for adequate internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) suggested that all constructs should have factor loading that is great than 0.40. The composite reliability (CR) values range between 0.802 and 0.939, supporting the reliability of the multi-item scales used in this study. These values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2006). Finally, the results of the convergent validity test show that the average variance extracted (AVE) values exceed the minimum value of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The AVEs are greater than the squared correlations between any pair of constructs, confirming discriminant validity, in line with the recommendations of Fornell and Larcker (1981). Overall, the results of the measurement models strongly support reliability and construct validity (see, [Table 2](#)).

VIF of EDU = 1.949, ENT = 2.340, EST = 2.849, ESC = 1.714

Abbreviations of variable: Educational Experience (EDU), Entertainment Experience (ENT), Esthetic Experience (EST), Escapist Experience (ESC), Affective Commitment (AFF), Continuance Commitment (CON), Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), and Revisit Intention (REV)

5.2. Hypothesis testing

The results of hypothesis testing indicate that educational experience has a significant and positive relation with eWOM ($\beta = 0.136$, $P < 0.01$), revisit intention ($\beta = 0.078$, $P < 0.05$), affective commitment ($\beta = 0.172$, $P < 0.01$), continuance commitment ($\beta = 0.203$, $P < 0.01$). **Therefore, H1a, H2a, H4a, H5a are supported.** Entertainment experience has no significant relationship with eWOM ($\gamma = 0.018$, $P > 0.05$) and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.045$, $P > 0.05$). **Hence, H1b and H2b are not supported.** However, entertainment experience has a significant and positive relationship with affective commitment ($\beta = 0.079$, $P < 0.01$) and continuance commitment ($\beta = 0.078$, $P < 0.01$). **Therefore, H4b and H5b are supported.** Esthetic experience has a significant and positive relation with eWOM ($\beta = 0.153$, $P < 0.01$), revisit

Table 2. Correlation, and Discriminant validity results based on Fornell—Larcker criterion

	EDU	ENT	EST	ESC	AFF	CON	eWOM	REV
EDU	0.846							
ENT	0.609***	0.834						
EST	0.665***	0.733***	0.797					
ESC	0.523***	0.549***	0.619***	0.811				
AFF	0.569***	0.567***	0.661***	0.658***	0.823			
CON	0.486***	0.462***	0.520***	0.522***	0.654***	0.758		
eWOM	0.459***	0.425***	0.501***	0.437***	0.560***	0.438***	0.881	
REV	0.533***	0.528***	0.627***	0.510***	0.645***	0.531***	0.562***	0.915

Note: Squared root of AVE on the diagonal; Correlations below the diagonal.

***Significate level at 0.01.

Table 3. Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Path	Path Coefficient	t-Statistics	Decision
H1a	EDU → eWOM	0.136	3.661**	Accepted
H1b	ENT → eWOM	0.018	0.513	Rejected
H1c	EST → eWOM	0.153	3.876**	Accepted
H1d	ESC → eWOM	0.030	0.715	Rejected
H2a	EDU → REV	0.078	2.310*	Accepted
H2b	ENT → REV	0.045	1.420	Rejected
H2c	EST → REV	0.266	7.452**	Accepted
H2d	ESC → REV	0.004	0.108	Rejected
H3	eWOM → REV	0.229	6.400**	Accepted
H4a	EDU → AFF	0.172	5.347**	Accepted
H4b	ENT → AFF	0.079	2.436*	Accepted
H4c	EST → AFF	0.351	10.879**	Accepted
H4d	ESC → AFF	0.441	13.674**	Accepted
H5a	EDU → CON	0.203	5.606**	Accepted
H5b	ENT → CON	0.078	2.149*	Accepted
H5c	EST → CON	0.197	5.458**	Accepted
H5d	ESC → CON	0.317	8.769**	Accepted
H6	AFF → eWOM	0.297	6.717**	Accepted
H7	CON → eWOM	0.072	1.832	Rejected
H8	AFF → REV	0.230	5.624**	Accepted
H9	CON → REV	0.113	3.192**	Accepted

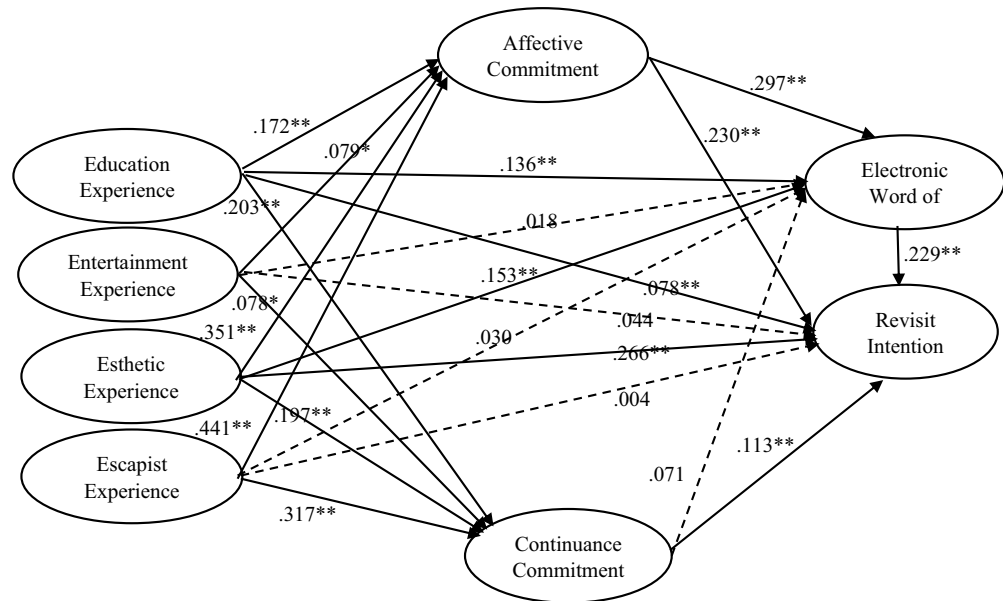
Note1. ** p < 0.05. *** p < 0.01.

Note 2. Goodness-of-fit statistics: χ^2 (482) = 1117.273, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.318, RMSEA = .046, CFI = 0.962, IFI = 0.962, NFI = .935.

Note 3. Total variance explained (R^2).

intention (β = 0.266, P < 0.01), affective commitment (β = 0.351, P < 0.01), and continuance commitment (β = 0.197, P < 0.01). **Hence, H1c, H2c, H4c, and H5c are supported.** Escapist experience has no significant relationship with eWOM (β = 0.030, P > 0.05) and revisit intention (β = 0.004, P > 0.05). **Therefore, H1d and H2d are not supported.** However, escapist experience has a significant and positive relationship with affective commitment (β = 0.441, P < 0.01) and continuance commitment (β = 0.317, P < 0.01). **Hence, H4d and H5d are supported.** In addition, affective commitment has a significant and

Figure 2. Structural model for hypotheses testing.



positive relationship with eWOM ($\beta = 0.297$, $P < 0.01$) and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.230$, $P < 0.01$). **Therefore, H6 and H8 are supported.** Continuance commitment has no significant relationship with eWOM ($\beta = 0.071$, $P > 0.05$), but it has a significant and positive relationship with revisit intention ($\beta = 0.113$, $P < 0.01$). **Hence, H7 is not supported, but H9 is supported.** Finally, eWOM has a significant and positive relationship with revisit intention ($\beta = 0.229$, $P < 0.01$). **Therefore, H3 is supported.**

Furthermore, in line with Baron and Kenny (1986), H10 and H11 test the relationship between the dimension of customer experience, the type of commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention as the mediator. The results in Table 3 reveal that affective commitment is a partial mediator between educational and esthetic experience and eWOM and revisit intention. Continuance commitment is a partial mediator between education and esthetic experience and revisit intention. The results also indicate that affective commitment fully mediate the relationship between entertainment and escapist experience and eWOM and revisit intention. Moreover, continuance commitment is a full mediator in the relationship between entertainment and escapist experience and revisit intention. **Therefore, H10 and H11 are supported** (see, Figure 2 and Table 3).

R^2 for Affective Commitment = 0.353

R^2 for Continuance Commitment = 0.186

R^2 for Electronic Word of Mouth = 0.212

R^2 for Revisit Intention = 0.373

6. Conclusion

This study attempts to fulfill the research gap with investigating the effects of customer experience on type of commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention. Previous research investigated the influence of customer experience, which affects behavioral intentions through positive emotions and memories in the tourism context. In contrast, this study proposes a new framework to explain the relationships between customer experience, commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention from the customer perspective. The study investigates the generalizability of customer experience, eWOM, and the revisit intention construct in the Thai tourism industry. Our results provide

meaningful theoretical implications into the relationship between dimension of customer experience and type of commitment. In doing so, this study contributes to academic research by expanding the concepts of customer experience and commitment. Moreover, type of commitment was found to act as a mediator in the relationship between dimension of customer experience, eWOM, and revisit intention. Finally, customer experience affects customer commitment, which in turn positively affects eWOM, and the revisit intention.

7. Discussion and implications

7.1. Theoretical implications

This results show that the dimension of customer experience generates positive eWOM and revisit intention through commitment. The study's findings regarding the role of customer experience and the types of commitment provide meaningful theoretical implications.

First, the results reveal that educational experience is positively related to eWOM, in line with previous studies showing that educational experience has the largest effect on WOM (Quadri, 2012; Radder & Han, 2015). Tourists who visit Taladtongchom learn something new about the culture and way of life of the community, such as the local traditions, dress codes, and food. Tourists exposed to these learning experiences are likely to share their experiences with the public or post reviews online or through eWOM. Besides, the results show that an esthetic experience creates positive eWOM by reflecting the attractiveness and beauty of the environment. Tourists enjoy being passively immersed in an attractive landscape or physical environments. They like taking pictures to post or share their travel experiences on social media, increasing other people's awareness. Esthetic experience appears to be a crucial attraction for tourists. A stronger esthetic dimension positively affects the intention to recommend a destination (Alegre & Cladera, 2009; Chi & Qu, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Second, the results show that esthetic and education experiences are positively related to revisit intention. These dimensions reflect the way of living of the local community, making tourists feel satisfied. Seeing and experiencing the atmosphere of Taladtongchom affects the revisit intention. Earlier research has shown that the environment positively influences patrons' behaviors, increasing the likelihood that customers return to a destination (Wright et al., 2006). Tourists participate in a learning experience in the unique culture Taladtongchom, which affects their revisit intention. Therefore, esthetic and education experiences should be designed to create memorable experiences, leading tourists to revisit the destination. Tung and Ritchie (2011) stated that tourists' memorable experiences significantly influence revisit intention.

Third, the results indicate that all dimensions of customer experience are significantly and positively related to affective and continuance commitment. Sahin et al. (2011) argued that firms' efforts toward enhancing consumer experience positively affect loyalty in direct and indirect ways (through commitment). Furthermore, the result indicates that both affective and continuance commitment have a significant impact on eWOM and revisit intention. Fullerton (2005) showed that affective commitment has a direct and positive relationship with repurchase intention and advocacy intention, while continuance commitment affects eWOM and revisit intention. Continuance commitment implies that tourists consider receivable benefits, feel that visiting Taladtongchom is worth the travel, make them desire to visit it again, and recommend friends or relatives to visit Taladtongchom. Previous studies reported that continuance commitment positively influences customers' general intentions to maintain a business relationship by recommending and repurchasing the provider's products and services (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Finally, this study provides theoretically crucial insights regarding the type of commitment as a mediator in the tourism industry. The results indicate that affective and continuance commitment are partial mediators in the relationship between educational and esthetic experiences,

eWOM, and revisit intention. However, affective and continuance commitment are full mediators in the relationship between entertainment experience and escapist experience, eWOM, and revisit intention. Entertainment and activities attract tourists, leading them feel like and worthwhile to watch the show and participate in activities in Taladtongchom. These phenomena encourage tourists to share information by eWOM and stimulate their desire to visit the area again. Lacey (2007) defined commitment as a mediator for increased purchase intention and customer share. Hence, research should focus on the role of affective and continuance commitment by creating entertainment and escapist experiences for tourists to generate eWOM and revisit intention. This study addresses this gap in research by investigating various dimensions of customer experiences with regard to commitment types, eWOM, and revisit intention in the tourism industry.

7.2. Managerial implications

This study contributes to the tourism industry by helping create customer experiences that generate commitment and stimulate eWOM and revisit intention. This study makes the following recommendations.

First, managers should focus on creating educational and esthetic experiences, which directly affect eWOM and revisit intention. They should support cultural learning by promoting the unique local culture and community identity through a learning center. Cultural information should be combined with community sightseeing tours and local guides to present local stories. These activities would support the creation of an educational experience that may affect the spread of public stories via social media. Moreover, each market should promote local cooking, dancing, and dressing styles that represent the community's culture. These aspects should be presented to tourists, creating or improving the market landscape. The unique identity and community's way of life would help tourists fully experience the local atmosphere. As a result, they would likely rely on eWOM (for instance, sharing pictures on social media such as Facebook or Instagram) and feel bound to and want to revisit the destination.

Managers should focus on education and esthetic experiences and consider the creation of entertainment and escapist experiences as well. Such experiences focus on creating customers' affective relationships with and continuance commitment to Taladtongchom. These phenomena would result in eWOM and revisit intention. Thus, managers should provide local performing arts, dancing, music, and other activities that allow tourists to participate in a different lifestyle. These unique performances and activities would help tourists to fully enjoy their experience, inducing feelings of worthwhileness. Managers should organize tourism activities in all regions of Taladtongchom to allow tourists to post pictures, and share or send messages that reflects the Thai cultural identity, beautiful landscape, and unique performances and activities. All these elements can stimulate the revisit desire by inviting friends or relatives to travel.

Second, the government should support the development of Taladtongchom by providing funds for tourist attractions, including the destination development and field trips in successful destinations for managers and local stakeholders to increase their knowledge of tourism destination management. These initiatives would create new guidelines for making Taladtongchom a sustainable cultural destination. Moreover, the government should support public relations in Taladtongchom to create awareness and stimulate desire for tourism in the area. Finally, tourist destinations in contexts similar to Taladtongchom, such as CBT, could implement the same guidelines to create a dimension of customer experience related to commitment to stimulate the tourists' eWOM and revisit intention.

8. Limitation and Future Research

First, the previous literature on customer experience and the dimension of customer experience mostly addressed western or developed countries. The study of customer experience, commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention in those countries may yield different results due to the effect of cultural factors. However, this study suffered some limitations. This research only addressed Thai

tourists. Therefore, the study's results may not represent the views of foreign tourists. Future research should compare Thai and foreign tourists to fully uncover the relationship between customer experience, commitment, eWOM, and revisit intention. In addition, future studies should address both the customer and firm perspectives to obtain comprehensive results and further contribute to customer experience management.

Second, this study only addressed the relationship between customer experience and commitment and eWOM and revisit intention. The results of the study are based on the questionnaire of tourists' opinions. Some variables, such as eWOM, can be further considered by counting the number of shares, checking-in at Taladtongchom, and reviewing Taladtongchom as a tourist; hence, customer behavior might provide substantial managerial implications.

Finally, this study was conducted in the context of Taladtongchom. Therefore, the results thereof may lack generalization and may not be generalized to other types of tourism industries. Hence, they should be considered with caution. Future research should test the proposed conceptual framework in other tourism industries or other industrial sectors related to experience creation, such as five-star hotels or homestay.

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Author details

Wanwisa Paisri¹

E-mail: wanwisa.paisri@gmail.com

Chutima Ruanguttamanun²

Narissara Sujchaphong²

¹ Maharakham Business School, Maharakham University Maha Sarakham Thailand.

² Department of Marketing, Maharakham Business School, Maharakham University.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Characteristics of respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Gender	Male	216	34.62
	Female	408	65.38
2. Age	Less than 20 years old	91	14.58
	20 - 30 years old	216	34.62
	31 - 40 years old	155	24.84
	41 - 50 years old	108	17.31
	More than 50 years old	54	8.65
3. Marital status	Single	306	49.04
	Have a Boyfriend / Girlfriend	112	17.95
	Married	206	33.01
4. Level of education	Lower than Bachelor's degree	258	41.35
	Bachelor's degree	314	50.32
	Higher than Bachelor's degree	52	8.33
5. Occupation	Student/Collegian	156	25.00
	Husband /Housewife	30	4.81
	Freelance	80	12.82
	Merchant	41	6.57
	Agriculturist	12	1.92
	Company Employees	168	26.92
	Government official/ State enterprise	137	21.96
6. Average salary per month	Less than 5,000 Baht	148	23.72
	5,000 - 10,000 Baht	86	13.78
	10,001 - 15,000 Baht	114	18.27
	15,001 - 20,000 Baht	76	12.18
	20,001 - 25,000 Baht	54	8.65
	25,001 - 30,000 Baht	38	6.09
	More than 30,000 Baht	108	17.31

Table A2. Characteristics of Tourist Behavior

Characteristics		Frequency	Percent
1. The number of times	Never come	164	26.28
	Visited once	92	14.74
	Visited twice	66	10.58
	Visited more than 3 times	302	48.40
2. Objectives of visiting	For shopping	364	24.95
	For travelling	301	20.63
	For local culture learning	212	14.53
	For relaxing	354	24.26
	For entertainment, such as to see performances	101	6.92
	For studying	42	2.88
	Just unplanning visit	85	5.83
3. Travelling	Private vehicles	550	88.14
	Public transportation	41	6.57
	Tour agency	33	5.29
4. The characteristics of traveling	Alone	28	4.49
	Two people	195	31.25
	3-5 people	264	42.31
	More than 5 people	137	21.96
5. Companion	Family	255	42.79
	Friends	184	30.87
	Colleagues	75	12.58
	Spouse	82	13.76
6. Cost of tourism	Less than or equal 1,000 Baht	497	79.65
	1,001 - 1,500 Baht	73	11.70
	1,501 - 2,000 Baht	28	4.49
	More than 2,000 Baht	26	4.17
7. Plans to stay	Have a stay	131	20.99
	No stay	493	79.01



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