Study on the Factors that Influence the Management Strategiesof Leisure Farms

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study was to explore the factors that influence the management strategiesof leisure farms through research methodology such as a literature review, in-depth interviews, and surveys. An exploration of the literature was first used to determine the basic elements of management strategies that can impact leisure farms, after which relevant industry academics, specialists, and business owners were referenced in the design of a survey. This study utilized SPSS for data analysis using the path analysis model of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to validate the structure of the study. The data analysis results revealed the following main findings: 1. Factors such as experience and marketing have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farms. 2. Factors such as locations and facilities have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farms. 3. Factors such as core resources have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farms. The results of this study can serve as a basis of reference for operators of leisure farms, while the evaluation structure established in this study can serve as a basis of reference for subsequent studies.*
KEYWORDS: *leisure farm, core resources, structural equation modeling*

I.   INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the increase in national income and changes in consumption structures have caused a population shift towards urban areas, reducing the opportunities of many people to come into contact with nature. As industries become even more specialized, life has become monotonous, while improvements to roads and transportation to farms and the improved operation of agricultural industries, along with the government's efforts to promote the leisure and travel industries, have led to the thriving of leisure farms in Taiwan. However, the rapid development of leisure farm tourism has led to many farms that lack unique features even as they are faced with massive competitive pressure. Recently, the government's advocacy of "boutique agriculture" and implementation of weekend vacations has led to a rise in public leisure and travel, while economic and other changes have gradually shifted Taiwan's agricultural industries to focus on food safety, rural development, and habitat conservation, leading to diverse "leisure farms" that constitute a new type of industry (Wang and Wang, 2014:4(3)). If leisure farm tourism is to be managed sustainably, owners must understand the resource characteristics of their farms and provide diverse leisure experiences to satisfy different preferences. Therefore, achieving a better understandingof whether farms are providing satisfactory leisure services that can increase tourist retention and attract repeat customers has become a key factor in managing the survival and development of leisure farms (Ho, Tsai,andWu, 2010:55). Dining services are a key service provided to customers atleisure farms, and the quality and content of food will impact consumer impressions towards a given farm (Hsiao, Fu, andHsiao, 2010:55).

Broadly speaking, leisure agriculture provides diverse functions such as leisure, educational, social, economic, eco-friendly, and medical functions. In general, leisure farms provide diverse leisureactivities and resources such as fruit picking, dining, accommodations, farming scenery, and agricultural education and experiences, among others; some farms also integrate unique local scenes, customs, and natural habitats (Chu and Tsai, 2016: 2(1)). Frater (1983) believed that leisure farm tourism is a tourism model that revolves around productive farm villages and that these types of tourism corporations are beneficial for agricultural activities. As the government has fully implemented weekend holidays, nearby regions and fixed leisure models such as leisure farm tourism have become a key leisure choice for the general public. Leisure farm tourism differs from general tourism in that leisure farm tourism requires the utilization of specific rural lifestyles, customs, and traditions for development.In terms of management, special attention is given to guide services, farm management, custom and cultural activities, and specific experiences, such that within the general system of tourism and travel, leisure farm tourism presents specific features and styles. Leisure farm tourism is a service industry that combines agricultural products, farm management activities, cultural resources, and natural

resources; leisure farm tourism relies on effective marketing activities to achieve success and farming is the most appropriate industry for providing leisure farm tourismexperiences (Tuan, 2004:2). Leisure farm tourism combines production, life, and habitat with the goal of utilizing multiple functions to plan and manage farm resources (Chen, 2003).

In the past, leisure farm tourism owners managed with the primary aim of increasing financial performance in the short-term.The sustainable management of corporations, however, requires other key management strategies, though it is worth asking how these key management strategies differ.Answering this questionwas one of the motives for conducting this study. In summary, the study had 3 key purposes:
1.   To explore the impact of different experiences and marketing on leisure farm tourism management strategies.
2.   To explore the impact of different locations and facilities on leisure farm tourism management strategies.
3.   To explore the impact of different core resources on leisure farm tourism management strategies.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS
1.   Experience and marketing factors

In the future, the operation strategies of leisure farm tourismoperations must improve in management quality and quantity by developing unique experience activities, increasing labor efforts to provide better quality services, and, from time to time, developing new dishes using produce from their fields to increase restaurant revenues (Lin, 2015). In the era of experience economics, consumers are willing to spend higher amounts for interactive experiences or to purchase unforgettable and valuable experiences. Corporations can expend effort on designing "experiences" to increase the specific value of products and services and shift themselves towards an "experience industry" more competitive within markets (Pine, Pine, and Gilmore, 1999). Domestic leisure farm tourism operations mainly provide experiences in educational environments that allow citizens to experience different lifestyles; the categories (sorted from biggest to smallest by their share of the market) is agricultural gardens for citizens, farm village wineries, fishery experiences, husbandry experiences, forestry experiences, folk craft experiences, agricultural tours, vegetable harvesting experiences, farm house hostels, agricultural experiences, fruit picking, habitat experiences, rural village tours, themed restaurants, educational experiences, and educational guide services (Liao, 2011). Schmitt (1999) first proposed the concept and complete structure of "Experiential Marketing"; he believed that strategic experience modules and mediums working together to provide links senses, emotions, thoughts, and actions can give consumers a unique and unforgettable experience. Improvements to marketing strategies in commercial districts include regional marketing (media and online marketing), price strategies (daily low priced items, psychological pricing), brand strategies (atmosphere marketing, acknowledgment cards, scene sculpting), product exposure strategies (flyers, advertisements on buses), event marketing strategies (celebrity concerts and signing events, fun competitions, nostalgia tours), and integrated marketing strategies (Yeh, 2004:7). Through an exploration of the literature discussed above, this study categorized activities into the 6 observed variables of family experiences, agricultural forestry fishing and husbandry experiences, educational experiences, dining experiences, online marketing, and event marketing. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis.
Hypothesis 1: Factors such as experiences and marketing have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farm tourism.

2.   Location and facility factors

Carrier and Schriver (1968) discussed supplier factors of location selection and separated them into 6 major categories: personal factors, procurement-cost factors, processing-cost factors, distribution-cost factors, location-demand factors, and certainty factors. Chang and Lin (2007) listed the primary factors of potential tourism location planning as public facilities, transportation, and nearby facilities. Given that time is often the most limited resource of consumers, the locations of companies and transportation factors often impact consumer emotions and subsequently impact their willingness to consume (Yu and Chien, 2017). Yeh (2014) believes that the optimal location for a companydepends on geographical, transportation, advertising, and operation environments. When thinking of general foreign and Chinese tourists, chain hotels often choose locations by giving primary consideration to convenient transportation and nearby tourist attractions, etc. (Kao, 2013). Organic product retailers should consider convenient transportation, parking, or delivery services (Chen, 2013). If different leisure farm tourism areas are equally attractive, the convenience of transportation becomes the critical factor that impacts tourist volumes (Chiang, 2012). The development of leisure tourism industries should give more consideration to indicators such as geographical and environmental conditions, transportation convenience, and social economic backgrounds (Zhou, 2014). The4 major evaluation factors that impact expansion location selection are, in order, business benefits, site factors, status of the competition, and transportation factors (Hsu, 2011). When addressing the impact of opening agricultural industries, the shift of agricultural businesses toward leisure farm tourism is another path for the industry; evaluation standards consist

of primary facets such as "resource advantages", "transportation accessibility", "organization and labor utilization", "market development", and "external economics" (Chang, 2010). Liao (2010) believes that the categories of facilities in leisure farm tourism are "operation facilities", "leisure facilities", and "service facilities". Throughan exploration of the literature, this study categorized location and facility factors into the 6 observed variables of comprehensive public facilities, leisure facilities, service facilities, nearby tourism attractions, convenient transportation, and convenient parking. Therefore, this study proposes the following research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Factors such as location and transportation have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farm tourism.

3. Core resource factors

Itami and Roehl (1987) categorized resources into 4 major categories including physical assets, financial assets, tangible assets, and intangible assets. Liu (2002) categorized core resources into tangible assets, intangible assets, individual expertise, and organizational expertise. Grant (1991) believed that resources constitute an input during the production process and categorized resources into financial resources, physical resources, labor resources, technical resources, business reputation, and organizational resources, for a total of 6 types. Lai's (2005) study of core resources and visitor satisfaction in leisure farm tourism defined the core resources of leisure farm tourism as tangible assets, intangible assets, individual expertise, and organizational expertise.Tangible assets were further defined as land, geographical location, buildings, facilities and equipment, natural resources, and agricultural industry, whileintangible assets were defined as brand and image, marketing channels, customer base, and intellectual property. Individual expertise was defined as operation strategy and ambition, staff execution capabilities and professional skills, and service quality, while organizational expertise was defined as socioeconomic networks, innovation and communication in organizational culture, full use of labor resources, and organizational learning. Hsieh and Lin (2005) listed the assessment indicators of leisure farm tourism as tangible assets (physical assets, financial assets, natural resources), intangible assets (corporate image, cultural resources, service quality and efficiency, marketing channels, operation licenses, brand reputation, economic network, uniqueness of menu), individual expertise (guide ability, professional skills, activity planning and design, operational management, financial ability), and organizational expertise (operational style and characteristics, internal organizational culture, strategic alliances). The appropriate use of core resources and combining agricultural lifestyles, production, and features of the habitat to set market goals, lock down specific consumer groups, improve farm village environments, and activate rural assets can establish an emerging market for leisure farm tourism by integrating various resources and using diverse marketing concepts as the operating strategy forleisure farm tourismoperations (Yang, 2012). Through an exploration of the literature, this study categorized core resources into the 4 observation variables of operation facilities and equipment, service quality, guided tours, and operational management. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Core resources have a positive impact on the management strategies of leisure farm tourism.

4. Operation management strategy

Operational and management strategies consist of the planned actions of organizations for the purpose of achieving long-term goals (Herrmann, 2005:7(2)). Wu (2000) listed the operation category, the creation and accumulation of core resources, and the building and strengthening of business networks as the strategic dimensions that affect strategy. Yang (2012) believes that agriculture forms the core of leisure farm tourism operation strategy, along with establishing differentiating features, modern management strategies, the pursuit of innovative marketing strategies, and cooperative development strategies. Chang(2009) believed that the 9 critical factors of leisure farm tourism operation and management are marketing and promotion, geographical location, reputation and brand, service quality, labor resources, building exteriors and hardware facilities, financial management, scenery and atmosphere, and experience activity planning. Tuan (2008) listed the 6 aspects of leisure farm tourism operational strategies as follows: strategy based on agriculture, establishing features, experience and participation, improving service quality, innovation, and rational operating strategies. Yeh and Lu (2015) believe that the operating strategies of leisure farm tourism must comply with local conditions such as environmental, economic, and social factors in the planning of effective operating strategies. Through an exploration of the literature, this study categorized operating strategies into the 5 observation variables of innovative strategies, service quality strategies, experience and participation strategies, brand reputation, and modern management strategies.

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Research structure

Based on the hypotheses, this study explored the relationships between experience and marketing factors (family experiences, agriculture forestry fishing and husbandry experiences, educational experiences, dining experiences, online marketing, event marketing), location and facility factors (comprehensive public facilities, leisure facilities, service facilities, nearby tourist attractions, convenient transportation, convenient parking), core resource factors (operation facilities and equipment, service quality, guided tours, operational management), and operational management strategies (innovative strategies, service quality strategies, experience and participation strategies, brand reputation, modern management strategies) by developing the following research model shown asFigure 1.
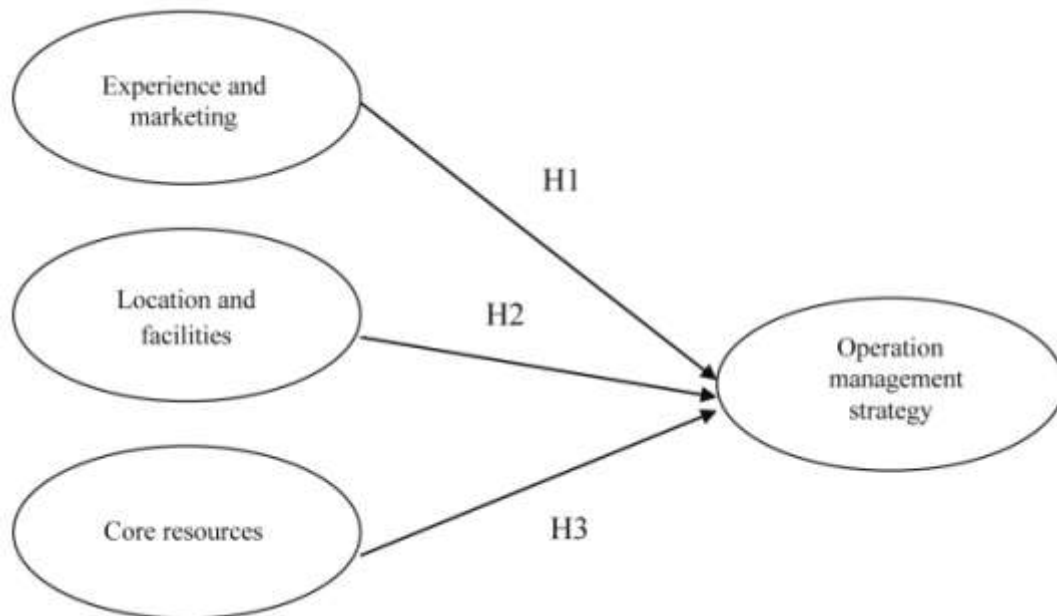

Figure 1. Concept Structure of this Study

2. Sample selection and data collection

The scope of this study was the southern region of Taiwan due to its rich agricultural resources and the government's implementation of 2-day weekends; therefore, this study selected southern Taiwan as the region in which to conduct a survey ofleisure farm tourism visitors. The surveys were issued from July 1, 2018, to September 30, 2018. A total of 500 surveys were issued; 329 were returned, with 30 of those being invalid. There were thus 299 valid surveys returned, for an overall valid return rate of 66%.This study utilized SPSS 18.0 and LISREL 8.7 to analyze and validate the various hypothesesof the study.

3. Definition and measurement of operability
a. Experience and marketing

The definition of operability of experience events in this study referenced the perspectives of scholars such as Schmitt (1999), Pine and Gilmore (1999), Yeh (2004), Liao (2011), and Lin (2015) to define experience and marketing as factors that impact the agricultural forestry fishing and husbandry experiences and marketing strategies of leisure farm tourism management strategies. This study referenced the literature above to develop an experience and sales scale with a total of 12 questions.

b. Location and facilities

The definition of operability for the locations and facilities in this study referenced the perspectives of scholars such as Carrier and Schriver (1968), Chang and Lin (2007), Liao (2010), Chang (2010), Chiang (2012), Kao (2013), Chen (2013), Zhou (2014), Yeh (2014), and Yu and Chien (2017) to define the impact of locations and facilities on leisure farm tourism management strategies in terms of the factors of comprehensive public facilities, leisure facilities, service facilities, nearby tourist attractions, convenient transportation, and convenient parking. The study referenced the literature above in the development of a location and facilities scale with a total of 12 questions.

c. Core resources

The definition of operability for core resources in this study referenced the perspectives of scholars such as Itami and Roehl (1987), Grant (1991), Liu (2002), Hsieh (2006), Lai (2005), Hsieh and Lin (2005), Hsu (2011), and Yang (2012) to define the core resources that impact leisure farm tourism management strategies as operating facilities and equipment, service quality, guided tours, and operations management. The study referenced the literature above in the development of a core resources scale with a total of 8 questions.

d. Operation management strategy

The definition of for core resource operability in this study referenced the perspectives of scholars such as Herrmann (2005), Wu (2000), Yang (2012), Chang (2009), Tuan (2008), Yeh and Lu (2015) to define the action plans undertaken by leisure farm tourism management strategies in order to achieve long-term goals. This study referencedthe literature above in the development of an operation management strategy scale with a total of 10 questions.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

1. Basic data analysis

The subjects who completed the study survey consisted of slightly more males than females at 53% (155 subjects), and most of subjects were between the ages of 18 and 45 years at 56% (167 subjects). The education levels of the subjects were vocational highschool (incl.) or below for 27% (81 subjects) and junior college or above for 73% (218 subjects). In terms of occupation, 61% of the subjects worked in military, government, or education positions or were students (182 subjects).

2. Selection of estimation methods

If the skewness of variable distribution contains an absolute value greater than 3, it is determined to be extremely skewed, while kurtosis with an absolute value greater than 10 is determined to be problematic; a problematic distribution will affect the ML (maximum likelihood) and GLS (general least square) estimation methods (Kline, 1998). In Table 1, it can be seen that the skewness values of this study were between -0.823 and 0.263, with the absolute values all lower than 3, while the kurtosis values were between -1.406 and 0.555, with the absolute values all lower than 10. This means that the observed variables in this study did not show high skewness or kurtosis; therefore, it is highly likely that the model of this study can be estimated.

Table 1. Reliability and validity of variables

Facet	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Experiences and marketing (ζ_1)				
Educational experiences (X_1)	5.6515	.51334	-.612	.555
Agriculture forestry fishing and husbandry experiences (X_2)	5.7824	.95737	-.500	-.128
Online marketing (X_3)	5.7225	.88723	-.823	-.313
Family experiences (X_4)	5.5251	.78335	-.342	-.606
Event marketing (X_5)	5.5685	.83726	-.619	-.340
Dining experiences (X_6)	5.4196	.69031	-.533	-.377
Location and facilities (ζ_2)				
Convenient parking (X_7)	5.8624	.86991	-.128	-1.092
Leisure facilities (X_8)	5.1976	.97235	.010	-1.406
Public facilities (X_9)	5.5820	.53588	.045	-.784
Service facilities (X_{10})	5.2008	.57471	-.199	-.395
Convenient transportation (X_{11})	4.8581	.78327	.263	-1.247
Nearby tourist attractions (X_{12})	5.1691	.72671	.071	-.797
Core resources (ζ_3)				
Service quality (X_{13})	5.7752	.81865	-.737	-.513
Organizational expertise (X_{14})	5.8511	.75147	-.484	-.034
Guided tours (X_{15})	5.9736	.61362	-.704	-.386
Operation equipment (X_{16})	5.6671	.71335	-.378	-.902
Operation management strategy (η_1)				
Modern management (Y_1)	5.3950	.66907	-.429	-.663
Brand reputation (Y_2)	5.4962	.60923	-.714	-.322
Experience and participation strategy (Y_3)	5.5876	.66570	-.586	-.259
Innovative strategy (Y_4)	5.6357	.75080	-.799	-.100
Partnership development strategy (Y_5)	5.4198	.68779	-.291	-.715

3. Inspection of violation estimates

Violation estimates refer to how estimated parameters cannot contain: (1) Negative error variance with all error variance achieving a significant level; (2) standard deviation that is too excessive; (3) a standardized coefficient ≥ 0.95 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988:16). As shown in Table 2, the standard deviations of all the parameters(λ) were positive and significant (all absolute values in the t value of the significance test were greater than 1.96), the standardized parameters were between 0.64 and 0.94, the error variance was a positive value and achieved a significant level, and the standard deviations were between 0.04 and 0.20, meaning there was no violation.

Table 2. Model parameter estimates

Parameter	Non-standardized parameter	Std. Deviation	t value	Standardized parameters
λ_1	1.00	----------	----------	0.66
λ_2	2.64	0.20	12.94	0.94
λ_3	2.42	0.19	12.81	0.93
λ_4	1.67	0.16	10.43	0.72
λ_5	2.17	0.18	1.31	0.88
λ_6	1.64	0.14	11.43	0.81
λ_7	1.00	----------	----------	0.70
λ_8	1.43	0.11	13.11	0.89
λ_9	0.75	0.06	12.60	0.85
λ_{10}	0.71	0.06	11.13	0.75
λ_{11}	1.12	0.09	12.83	0.87
λ_{12}	0.77	0.08	9.63	0.64
λ_{13}	1.00	----------	----------	0.85
λ_{14}	0.93	0.05	17.47	0.87
λ_{15}	0.66	0.05	13.94	0.75
λ_{16}	0.92	0.05	18.48	0.90
λ_{17}	1.00	----------	----------	0.93
λ_{18}	0.87	0.04	23.98	0.89
λ_{19}	0.99	0.04	26.66	0.92
λ_{20}	1.13	0.04	27.83	0.93
λ_{21}	0.93	0.05	20.67	0.85
γ_{11}	0.57	0.12	4.71	0.31
γ_{12}	0.15	0.06	2.32	0.15
γ_{13}	0.19	0.06	3.25	0.21
δ_1	0.15	0.01	10.74	0.56
δ_2	0.11	0.02	6.93	0.12
δ_3	0.11	0.01	7.67	0.14
δ_4	0.29	0.03	10.57	0.47
δ_5	0.16	0.02	9.25	0.22
δ_6	0.17	0.02	10.16	0.35
δ_7	0.39	0.04	10.31	0.51
δ_8	0.19	0.03	7.60	0.20
δ_9	0.08	0.01	8.72	0.27
δ_{10}	0.15	0.01	10.03	0.44
δ_{11}	0.15	0.02	8.31	0.24
δ_{12}	0.31	0.03	10.53	0.59
δ_{13}	0.18	0.02	8.37	0.27
δ_{14}	0.14	0.02	8.00	0.25
δ_{15}	0.16	0.02	9.86	0.43
δ_{16}	0.10	0.01	6.68	0.19
ε_1	0.06	0.01	8.21	0.13
ε_2	0.08	0.01	9.43	0.20
ε_3	0.07	0.01	8.60	0.15
ε_4	0.07	0.01	8.08	0.13
ε_5	0.14	0.01	10.06	0.29

4. Verification of Reliability

Bentler and Wu (1993) suggested that the reliability R2 of independently observed variables must be greater than 0.20; the 21 observed variables of R2 in this study were between 0.41 and 0.88 (Table 3). All the factor loads (λ) of the potential variables in the observed variables in this study had statistical significance, with constructed reliability indicator values of 0.94, 0.91, 0.91, and 0.96. Each was greater than 0.50, meaning that the observed variables were sufficient in reflecting the constructed potential variable (Hair et al., 1998). Tests for differential validity can be measured by the average variation of each variable and the square of the correlation coefficient of the 2 factors; the average variation of each variable and the square of the correlation coefficient of the 2 factors for even numbers in this study showed that there was differential validity (Fomell and Larcker, 1981:18(1)).

Table 3. R^2 and constructed reliability

Facet	R^2	Constructed reliability	Average variance extraction
Experiences and marketing (ζ_1)		0.94	0.70
Educational experiences (X_1)	0.44		
Agriculture forestry fishing and husbandry experiences (X_2)	0.88		
Online marketing (X_3)	0.86		
Family experiences (X_4)	0.53		
Event marketing (X_5)	0.78		
Dining experiences (X_6)	0.65		
Location and facilities (ζ_2)		0.91	0.63
Convenient parking (X_7)	0.49		
Leisure facilities (X_8)	0.80		
Public facilities (X_9)	0.73		
Service facilities (X_{10})	0.56		
Convenient transportation (X_{11})	0.76		
Nearby tourist attractions (X_{12})	0.41		
Core resources (ζ_3)		0.91	0.72
Service quality (X_{13})	0.73		
Organizational expertise (X_{14})	0.75		
Guided tours (X_{15})	0.57		
Operation equipment (X_{16})	0.81		
Operation management strategy (η_1)		0.96	0.82
Modern management (Y_1)	0.87		
Brand reputation (Y_2)	0.80		
Experience and participation strategy (Y_3)	0.85		
Innovative strategy (Y_4)	0.87		
Partnership development strategy (Y_5)	0.71		

4. Fit test of overall model

According to the suggestions of Hair et al. (1998), Huang (2006), and others, the indicators of an overall model must at least utilize the three following types of indexes to assess adaptation,namely the Absolute Fit Measures Index, Relative Fit Measures Index, and Parsimonious Fit Measures Index. From the overall model fit in this study, the assessment index showed that the GFI (goodness of fit index) in the Absolute Fit Measures Index was 0.89, approaching the accepted value of 0.90 and showing that this assumption model is acceptable. The Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.042, lower than the accepted value of 0.05, meaning that this model is acceptable. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.08, and as Byrne (1998) pointed out, an RMSEA lower than 0.08 is deemed acceptable. From the perspective of relative fit measures index, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) both had values of 0.96 while the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value being 0.98, with all three values being greater than the accepted value of 0.90, meaning that this model was acceptable. The Parsimony Normed Fit index (PNFI) was 0.56 while the Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) was 0.52, with both values greater than the accepted value of 0.52, meaning that this model was acceptable. The Normed chi-square degree of freedom ratio was 2.58, lower than the accepted value of 3; the analysis in Table 4 shows that the overall model was acceptable.

Table 4. Tests for overall model fit.

Indexes		Fit Standard	Result
Absolute fit indexes			
	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	>0.9	0.89
	Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	<0.08	0.042
	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<0.08	0.080
Relative fit indexes			
	Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	>0.9	0.96
	Normed Fit Index (NFI)	>0.9	0.96
	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	>0.9	0.98
Parsimonious fit indexes			
	Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	>0.5	0.56
	Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)	>0.5	0.52
	Normed Chi-Square	1<NC<3	2.58

5. Verification of path relationship

In the LISREL structure formula, the cause and effect relationships between potential variables must be explained by estimated γ and β values. Figure 2 shows the hypothesis of this study and that the $\gamma 11$ value

(regression coefficient) was 0.31 (t value 4.75), meaning that experience and marketing elements have a positive correlation to leisure farm tourism management strategies; therefore, hypothesis H1 is accepted. The γ12 value (regression coefficient) was 0.15 (t value 2.32), meaning that location and facilities factors have a positive correlation to leisure farm tourism management strategies; therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted. The γ13 value (regression coefficient) was 0.21 (t value 3.25), meaning that core resources have a positive correlation to leisure farm tourism management strategies; therefore, hypothesis H3 is accepted.
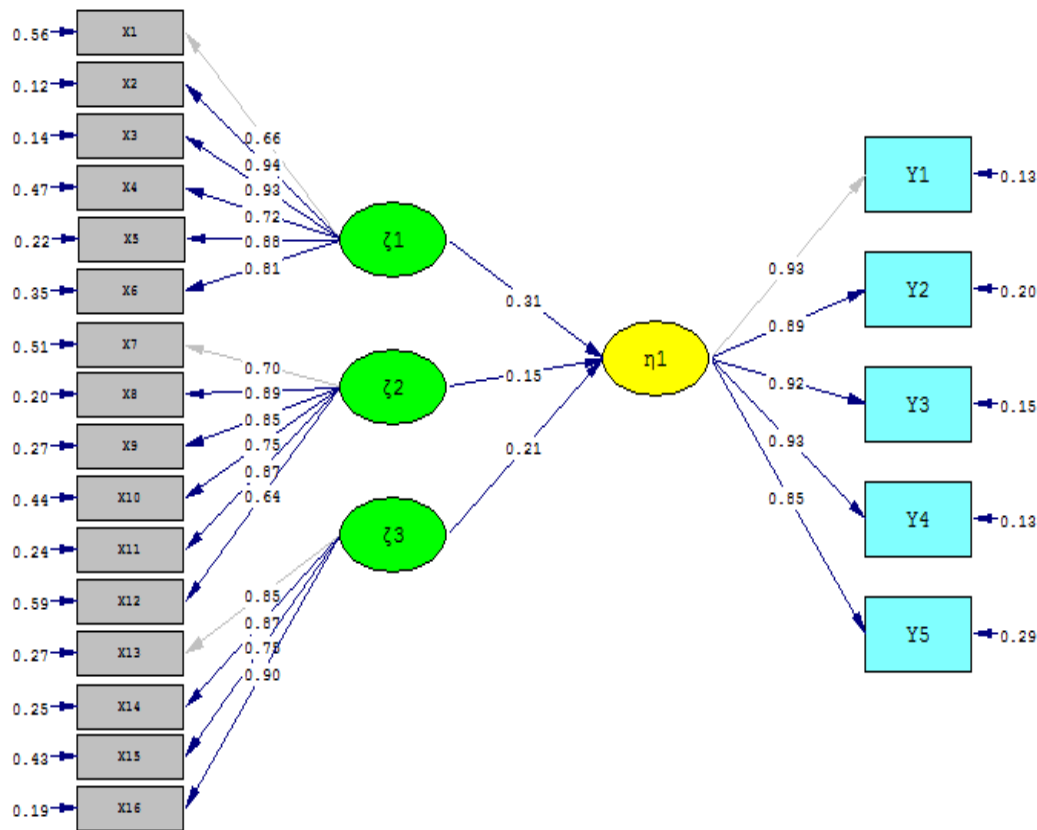
Figure 2. Standardized path diagram of this study

V.   CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors that affect leisure farm tourism management strategies and establish causal models; after utilizing structural equation modeling (SEM) in this empirical study, the following conclusions were reached:

1.   Experience and marketing have a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management strategies

The results of this empirical study found that visitors at leisure farm tourism facilities felt that experiences and marketing had a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management strategies. This validates the results of Yehet al. (2017), who stated that leisure farm tourism should use traditional marketing methods to establish sensory marketing by expressing different imaginations and creativity to increase the management performance of leisure farm tourism. The experience and marketing facets in this study were categorized into 6 observed variables such as educational experiences, agricultural forestry fishing and husbandry experiences, online marketing, family experiences, event marketing, and dining experiences. The respective factor loads were 0.66, 0.94, 0.93, 0.72, 0.88, and 0.81; therefore, visitors at leisure farm tourismsites felt that agricultural forestry fishing and husbandry experiences and online marketing were more influential towards leisure farm tourism management strategies.

2.   Location and facilities have a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management strategies

The results of this empirical study found that visitors at leisure farm tourism facilities felt that location and facilities had a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management. This conclusion corresponds to the study of Hsu and Hsueh (2010) which pointed out that public facilities and services along with location conditions will impact travel location operations and management. The 6 observed factors that constituted the location and facilities factors in this study were convenient parking, leisure facilities, public facilities, service facilities, convenient transportation, and nearby tourist attractions. The respective factor loads

were 0.70, 0.89, 0.85, 0.75, 0.87, and 0.64; these study results showed that leisure facilities and convenient transportation were the key factors that impact leisure farm tourism management strategies in the facet of location and facilities.

3. Core resources have a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management strategies

The results of this empirical study discovered that visitors at leisure farm tourism facilities believe core resources have a significant positive impact on leisure farm tourism management strategies. This conclusion corresponds to the studies of Hsieh and Lin (2005) and others who pointed out that core resource has a positive impact on cooperative/competitive relationships and strategies in leisure farm tourism. The 4 observed factors that formed the core resources in this study were service quality, organizational expertise, guided tours, and operation facilities. The respective factor loads were 0.85, 0.87, 0.75, and 0.90, and these results showed that visitors who took the survey believed that in terms of core resources, operation facilities and organizational expertise were most critical forleisure farm tourism management strategies.

VI.   LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1. This study discovered that most visitors believed that the primary factors which impacted leisure farm tourism management in Taiwan were related to agricultural forestry fishing and husbandry experiences, online marketing, event marketing, dining experiences, leisure facilities, convenient transportation, public facilities, operation facilities, and organizational expertise; hopefully this will be beneficial for business owners in the leisure farm tourism or other related industries.

2. This study focused on leisure farm tourism visitors in the southern region in its survey and did not study other domestic regions. It is suggested that in the future, scholars can consider expanding their investigations to leisure farm tourism facilities across the nation to construct a more comprehensive causal model.

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