# A Model About Visitor Perception of Leisure Farm in Shanghai: A Grounded Theory Study

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**ABSRTACT**

This study focuses on the upgrading of urban leisure farm in Shanghai, China. Using grounded theory, the researchers carried out open coding and selective coding of original material by network comments, travel notes and interviewed, and the coding results are tested by theoretical saturation. Therefore, based on the interaction between visitors and leisure farm, 103 original concepts and 22 sub-categories are abstracted and classified to form 3 main categories and 7 secondary categories, construct the visitor experience model of leisure farm, and explore the factors that affect the satisfaction of leisure farm visitors. The countermeasures for the upgrading of urban leisure farm are put forward.

*Keywords: leisure farm, grounded theory, tourist perception*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, with the rapid development of urbanization and industrialization, urban residents are suffering from more and more serious industrial diseases, urban diseases, social diseases of multiple problems. This has triggered a huge demand for leisure and health care for city dwellers who have fled the city for the countryside. And the growth of car ownership, the constant upgrading of transportation have created better and better conditions for residents to easily commute with urban and rural areas. In recent years, the strategy of rural revitalization has undoubtedly become the booster of leisure agriculture and rural tourism in China.

Tourist perception is a psychological process through which visitors perceive the information on tourist objects and tourist environment. Tourist perception not only influences the evaluation of consumption, but also influences the future tourism decision-making. Previous studies have reported that the perception and satisfaction from visitors directly affects the loyalty to the destination. Customer loyalty is the key to the success of leisure agricultural enterprises. In order to improve the management of leisure agriculture enterprises, paying attention to the customer perception, this paper studies the factors that affect the customer satisfaction from leisure farm in Shanghai, and constructs the customer experience perception model of leisure form, it provides the important theory basis for management upgrading of urban leisure farm.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist perception, involving tourism, psychology, sociology, culture, geography and other fields, is an important issue of tourism research. The research contents of tourist perception mostly center on tourism destination image perception, tourist perceived value, tourist service quality perception, crisis perception, security perception and price perception，etc. The research of tourism destination image perception mainly focuses on the research of perception influencing factors, perception subject (tourist), perception object (tourist destination) and perception action. Most of the research will discuss the application of tourism perception of marketing management in conclusion, mainly centers on the marketing strategy, planning and development of tourist sites [1-2].

The research of tourist perceived value and the exploration of dimension of tourist perceived value is the focus in academic circles. At present, multi-dimension measurement researches and the application of tourist perceived value of marketing draw the attention of scholars [1] [3].

In terms of research methods, quantitative research is the main method. To date, researchers mainly use scales, models, structural equations and multivariate statistics to quantitative analysis tourist destinations, but qualitative analysis methods are still relatively few. The literature analysis, grounded theory and text analysis method is commonly used as qualitative methods [4-7].

## 3. RESEARCH PROCESS

### 3.1 data collection and research methodology

In this study, the qualitative research method of grounded theory was used. The grounded theory is considered particularly suitable for the study of micro-level, action-oriented social interaction process [8]. So it is

suitable and feasible for the study of the micro-environment of leisure farm in Shanghai.

Considering the extensive use of online media in tourism research [9], there were two kinds of research materials, one was from the network, and the other was obtained through the interview. This paper collects and analyzes the data onto the perspective of visitors, and uses qualitative research methods to study the visitor's perception of urban leisure farms. The two kinds of materials were collected and analyzed independently to make the research results complement and support each other. In order to ensure the authenticity and validity of the online text, the author comprehensively measured the authority on the websites, the number of users, the number of visits, and so on, select 2018-2019 published in the Dianping, Meituan, Ctrip，three famous websites, of which the majority of visitors comments. The selection of effective comments requires: (1) Comments numbers of leisure farms must more than 200 in Shanghai; (2) Every comment must more than 200 words. Thus, 216 valid tourist comments were selected from 14 leisure farms in Shanghai. Every travel note required more than 300 words, and five were selected. Comments and travel notes totals more than 47,000 words.

In order to verify the conclusion, a semi-structured interview was used to the contrast after the conclusion of the study. The subjects were selected from visitors who had been to the leisure farm in Shanghai area, and 15 respondents were interviewed. For research convenience, all interviews were conducted on through Wechat from October to December 2019, with each person interviewing for 10 to 20 minutes. A total of 0.7 million words were collected and sorted out.

This research strictly followed the research method of grounded theory, independently analyzed the web text and interview text collected in two stages, extracted the concept and category according to the original data, carried on the open coding and the axial coding respectively (see tab.1) until theoretical saturation. This paper tried to find out the perception dimension of visitors on leisure farm in Shanghai by analyzing and mining the original materials.

### 3.2 Data analysis

#### 3.2.1 Open coding

To facilitate coding, the original material from different sources had been uniformly numbered, with the first comments from Dianping and Meituan being D1 and M1 respectively, and the first travel note being N1, the first interview text was numbered I1. Open coding is the process of

**Tab.1** The result examples of open coding and axial coding

| Original statement | Conceptualization | Categorization | Main Categorization |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Picking | Agricultural theme elements | Product |
| | Fishing | | |
| *To pick oranges, said small soft delicious, no patience, pick a basket of them.(D48)* | Farming experience | Other agricultural elements | |
| *Fishing is too happy, harvest a lot. (D89)* | Animal | | |
| *Feed small animals, grind the flour. (D5)* | Attitude of guide | Service and management | |
| *Here are small animals, fish pond. (D76)* | Attitude of Staff | | |
| *The tour guide is very patient, waited overtime .(D17)* | | | |
| *Animal management aunt shouted so loudly.(M6)* | Service efficiency | | |
| *Never need to wait in line. (D24)* | Farm management | Shopping | |
| *But the park signs are a little less.( M35)* | Landmarks | | |
| *I bought Chongqing cake .(D29)* | Agricultural products | | |
| *The trunk is full of self-pick fruit, vegetables. (D46)* | | Recreation and sports | |
| *The children made small orange lights (D39)* | handcraft | | |
| *We can play football, basketball in the farm. (D52)* | sports facilities | | |
| *The staff do an interactive game with family .(M14)* | | | |
| *There are rocking chairs outside.(D65)* | parent-child play | | |
| *Plenty of parking .(D35)* | | | |
| *The toilet is not very sanitary.(M45)* | facilities | Environment and atmosphere | |
| *the restaurant is right through the door, lunch was served here, it was delicious.(D112 )* | parking lot | | |
| | toilet | | |
| *I took pictures along the way, was full of surprises, and enjoyed it. (D54)* | restaurant | | |
| | | Take pictures | |
| *The dad made a video of the kid playing, as his growing record. (D145)* | photo | | |
| | | Take videos | Visualization |
| *It took two hours by car to get to the farm. (M64)* | video | | |
| *It was too remote to find.(M78)* | | Distance | |
| *it was a long and congested drive, three hours. (D145)* | self-drive time | | |
| | | Location Experience along the way | Accessibility |
| | remote | | |
| | traffic jam | | |

Slowly conceptualizing and categorization by analyzing data content paragraph by paragraph, line by line, and sentence by sentence. The analysis process must follow the research method of grounded theory, without personal thoughts

[10].Through the analysis and abstraction altogether generalized out 103 original concepts and 22 categories.

### 3.2.2 Selective coding

Selective coding is based on the theoretical construction work after the two stages of open coding and axis coding, which takes the main category as the core and constructs a brand-new theoretical framework, explains the connections, effects, and causality between categories. The purpose of this study is to find out the factors that affect the satisfaction from visitors by understanding the perception of visitors to leisure

farm. The purpose of this study is to find out the factors that affect the satisfaction from visitors by understanding the perception of visitors on leisure farms. Keeping the theoretical sensitivity, selective coding is carried out according to the theoretical development of the defined and emerging core variables [11].
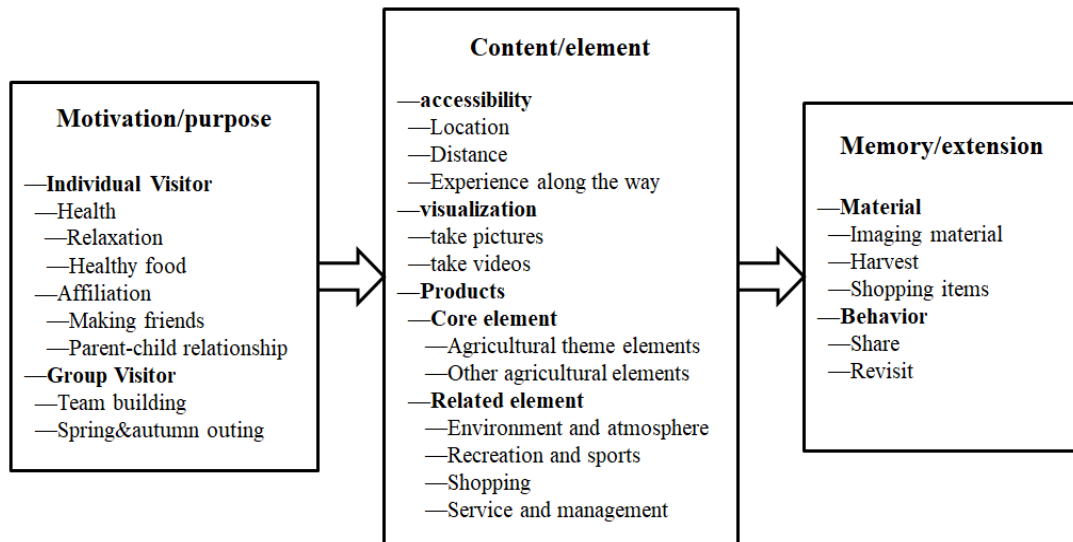


**Fig.1** Experience Perception Model of Leisure Farm

### 3.2.3 Axis coding

The purpose of principal axis coding is to find the relations of the categories obtained by open coding, to find the subcategories associated with them around a certain principal axis, and to continuously fill in the subcategories, which saturates the main category. In the process of analysis, we should not be limited to the concepts and categories obtained from open coding. We should keep sensitive to the concepts through constant comparison, restore the concepts to the original materials, and re-examine the real ideas of the reviewers and interviewees, and with a clue story, and then form a clear theoretical framework [10].The concrete analysis method is as follows, has already induced 22 subcategories according to the logic classification, has formed 3 main categories and 7 second level categories.

### 3.3 Model constructing

Based on the interaction between visitors and leisure farm visitors, both online and interview original materials of leisure farm visitors, visitors will talk about why they visit leisure farm. Different purposes, different concerns. Therefore, from the perspective of visitors, this study explores three questions of visitors to the leisure farm:(1)Why go to the farm;(2)What to pay attention to;(3) What will do after leaving the farm. The researchers built a theoretical model by taking the above questions as clues. The three main categories in the model（see fig.1）are: motivation/purpose, content/element, and memory/extension; the seven two-dimensional categories are: individual visitors, group visitors; accessibility, visualization, product; material and behavior. The model describes the parts as followed:(1) The different motivations and purposes of the local visitors;(2) On-site experience from the road accessibility experience, the photo and video experience to the product experience;(3) The tangible objects can leave memories to the visitors and trigger extension behavior including sharing, revisit.

Motive, purpose. There are two types of farm visitors, individual and group. There are two purposes of individual visitors: health motivation and affiliation motivation. Healthy motivation includes relaxation and healthy eating. Affiliation motivation includes making friends and parent-child relationship. Group visitors mainly include two categories: one is companies, organizations, to develop team building activities, one is spring and autumn outing for K12 (Short for kindergarten through twelfth grade).

Content，element. It means the experience on site. From the road accessibility experience, farm photography, the visual experience of Photography and Leisure farm products

experience. Among them, the core elements of products include agricultural theme elements and other agricultural elements, and the related elements of products include environmental atmosphere elements, service management elements, recreation and sport elements and shopping experience elements.

The analysis revealed high-frequency words of visitors' reviews vary according to farm characteristics. Qianxiaoju farm is a creative farm featuring an orange theme，so the highest frequency word is orange. Wushe farm regards a four-season fruit and vegetable picking as its theme, the highest frequency word is fruit and vegetable. So this type of conceptualization is unified as agriculture theme elements. The text appears more are picking strawberries, digging sweet potato, harvesting rice, feeding small animals, farm tools display，and so on. This category of concepts is classified as other agriculture element. These two categories together constitute the core of the product elements of leisure farms.

There are other three categories related to leisure agricultural products. Concepts such as air quality, site size, weather, toilets, sanitation, layout, facilities, parking, restaurants, design, furniture, doors are categorized as environment and atmosphere element. Service and management elements include tour guide's attitude, staff's attitude, ticket office, food and beverage service, park traffic, signage, efficiency, queuing and so on. Entertainment and sports elements include leaf painting, handmade, caterpillars and other manual activities; parent-child games, playing basketball and other sports; swings, playing chess and other recreational activities.

Memory, extension. After the trip, there are a lot of material can bring back travel memories, extends the experience of a farm trip, including photos and videos taken at leisure farm, agricultural experiences, "harvest" of recreational activities, souvenirs, agricultural products, landmark commodities etc. With the advent of the sharing economy, some visitors are willing to share their travel experiences on internet platforms and mobile apps, posting on Wechat. At the same time, some visitors exchange and share the travel experience in the daily chat with friends and relatives. Whether online or offline, visitors will have positive and negative comments about farm trip. Those who are satisfied with the experience will choose to travel again.

## 3.4 The test of theoretical saturation

The process of the research based on the grounded theory need the interaction between the theories and the original material, until the theoretical saturation. When the researchers finished coding the top 195 comments and top 5 travel diaries, there was no new concepts have emerged from left 196-216 comments. When the researchers finished coding the top 10 interview materials, there was no new concepts have emerged in the next five interviews. The coding results show that there is no new concept in the process of data analysis, and no new category is found in the main category, which indicates that the model has reached saturation in theory; the elements of tourist perception have been fully exploited.

## 4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### 4.1 Conclusion

This study followed the grounded theory approach, which was based on the coding, conceptualization and categorization of original materials from network data and interview data. Based on the three core questions of interaction between leisure farm and visitor: "Why-What-How", this paper extracted the perception model about visitors to urban leisure farm. This study analyzed the motivation, on-the-spot perception and extended experience of visitors. The network data and the interview data were analyzed independently, and the saturation degree of the theory was tested, and the results confirmed each other. The conclusion will provide the important reference function for the leisure farm management.

### 4.2 Suggestion

Visitor satisfaction is influenced by a number of factors at leisure farm. Based on this perception model, leisure farm owners should self-diagnose and seek controllable factors to improve visitor satisfaction, analyze the needs of visitors from different motivations and meet them. According to this model, new leisure farm can position, design product and refine management.

Firstly, among the factors of customer's on-the-spot experience, the owners of leisure farm pay more attention to the core product than the related factors of the product. At the same time, the managers should pay attention to the farm online map guidance to facilitate the rapid arrival of visitors. Secondly, they should pay attention to the tourist photo and video experience. More and more visitors are used to taking pictures and recording in the course of their journey. Some people simply take photos as a way to relax, "*after a full meal, go to the riverside for a walk and take photos*". Some visitors have their own hobbies, taking photos of scenery or taking a selfie. In response to this demand of visitors, leisure farm owners should take the initiative to design and provide the "best photo point" to guide visitors to leave the most beautiful memories. On one hand, the love of sharing visitors often like to carry pictures for dissemination, on the other hand, beautiful pictures are in favor of promoting the word of mouth. Thirdly, the owners should concern the functionality of the extended experience of the physical product and the importance of shopping. They are an important source of profit for farm. Due to visitors, they not only can buy for themselves to extend the travel experience, but also can present as gifts for their friends to play the role of word-of-mouth. Lastly, the owners should focus on comments online. A favourable comment can help to spread

word of mouth. The negative comments contribute to improve the management. Assign a person to handle customer online reviews and enhance the timeliness and efficiency of online interactions with visitors. If it is indeed the problem of leisure farms, the managers should try to correct and improve the unreasonable management while dealing with the visitors' dissatisfaction.

## 5. LIMITATION

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method, which is subjective to some extent. The researcher's knowledge reserve may appear in the process of data coding and analyzing. At the same time, the data sources of this study are mainly web-based text and semi-structured interviews, supplemented by leisure farm development, data collection integrity is not enough. The universality and validity of the results of this paper still need to be verified in the following research. In the future, we can test the reliability and validity of fallow farm visitor perception model by quantitative method. In addition, on the basis of this research, we further refine each indicator, construct the evaluation of visitor satisfaction about leisure farm, and explore how to design the core experience product of leisure farm in depth.

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