

Correlation of Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: The Heritage Tourism Site of Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, China

Zhide Luo^{1,2}, Ador G. Paulino¹

¹College of Business Administration, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines

²School of Economics and Trade Management, Yancheng Polytechnic College, Yancheng, China

Email: luozhide2008@163.com, Paulino.adorg@gmail.com

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Abstract

The study utilized the descriptive-correlational research design. It evaluated customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of various small, micro, and medium-sized businesses on Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. Customer satisfaction was established using the eight factors of the Customer Service Theory, namely: 1) speed, 2) transparency, 3) availability and accessibility, 4) friendliness, 5) simplicity, 6) empowerment, 7) accuracy, and 8) details. Customer loyalty was established using the four stages of customer loyalty, namely: 1) cognitive loyalty, 2) affective loyalty, 3) cognitive loyalty, and 4) action loyalty. Thereafter, the two variables were analyzed further to determine their association. Based on the study's findings, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were forwarded to strengthen the marketing strategies of the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises on Dongguan Street.

Keywords

Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, Heritage Tourism Site, Dongguan Street, China

1. Introduction

Cultural heritage is “the legacy of tangible objects and intangible societal characteristics passed down from earlier generations” (Wilkinson & Remy, 2017). Due to the country's long and rich history and extensive landmass, the heritage resources in China have been described as being diverse, culturally anchored,

and developed via the fusion of culture and nature (Fang, 2004; as cited by Su & Wall, 2011). Recognizing the conflict between cultural preservation and economic development, China must face this challenge leaning towards the latter, but ensuring a balance with the former (Song, Cheong, Wang, & Li, 2020).

The Chinese government acknowledges that sustainable development is dependent on a balance of its impact on society (people), the environment (planet), and economic value (profit). These three dimensions are interlinked in a way that government administrations should jointly consider the public and private policies to be developed and formulated for such without compromising sustainability and prosperity (Kambewa, 2007).

At present, the study of small, micro, and medium-sized businesses customer has been highly concerned by the academic circle and the industry. However, the research on small tourism businesses customer in China has just started, especially on the basis of tourism cultural heritage.

One of the positive outcomes of heritage tourism is the influx of people, both domestic and foreign tourists, who want to visit and see the fragile and cultural resources, not only by the former, but especially by the latter, because these sites are essentially within their reach (Su & Wall, 2011). And, if we expect tourism to grow, we must completely satisfy customers (tourists) with the end goal of achieving customer (tourist) loyalty, it is a fervent desire to repeatedly purchase or use a favored good or service in the future; in this case, for the customer (tourists) to visit the heritage site again (Khan et al., 2013). Chinese Yangzhou Dongguan Street is the most representative of a history of Yangzhou City street block, and a center of small business, handicraft industry and religious and cultural, there are 72 handicraft businesses, 24 catering businesses and 136 tourism commodity operators. Therefore, the tourism heritage of Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, China is a suitable place for the customer of small tourism business to study. As a result, customer (tourist) satisfaction is viewed as one of the key factors in achieving customer loyalty, which contributes to the success of heritage sites in China such as Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, but there is less research on this.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between customer loyalty and satisfaction in relation to a heritage tourism destination on Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, China (Figure 1).

This study utilized the paradigm illustrated above. The box on the left is for the variable Customer Satisfaction, which was measured in terms of the Customer Service Theory, while the box on the right is for the variable Customer Loyalty, which was weighed in terms of the four stages of customer loyalty as espoused. For the first variable, the customer-respondents assessed their level of customer satisfaction from the various small, micro, and medium business enterprises operating in Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China, utilizing the eight factors suggested by. These were: 1) Speed, 2)

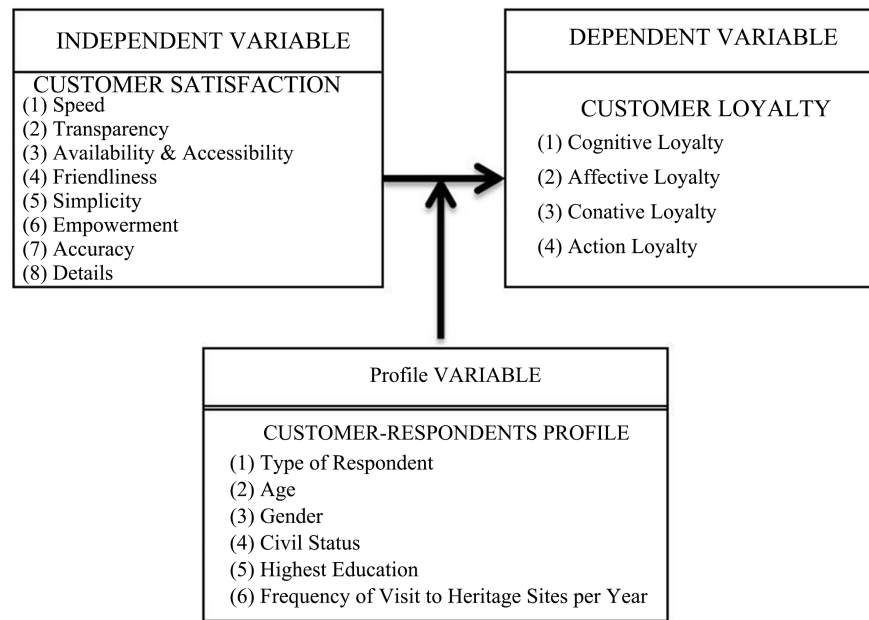


Figure 1. Research paradigm.

Transparency, 3) Availability and Accessibility, 4) Friendliness, 5) Simplicity, 6) Empowerment, 7) Accuracy, and 8) Details. The latter variable, Customer Loyalty, on the other hand, was assessed by the customer-respondents using the four stages of customer loyalty, which are: 1) Cognitive Loyalty, 2) Affective Loyalty, 3) Conative Loyalty, and 4) Action Loyalty. The third and final box at the bottom of the two boxes signifies the respondents' profile, which was created using the variables listed below: 1) Type of Respondent, 2) Age, 3) Gender, 4) Civil Status, 5) Highest Educational Attainment, 6) Frequency of Visit to the Heritage Sites (e.g., Dongguan Street). Therefore, the article is organized as follows: based on the study's findings, conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were forwarded to strengthen the marketing strategies of the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises on Dongguan Street.

This study is deemed significant to the following: to store and shop owners and/or entrepreneurs as the results may provide them guidelines to better deliver customer service that leads to customer satisfaction; to customers, given the improvement in the delivery of customer service, both local and foreign visitors may be enticed to return; to the government and local chief executives—findings of the study may assist them in updating marketing plans for the heritages sites in their respective jurisdiction; and to the academe and research community as this study adds to the knowledge already in existence about client loyalty and satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

All commercial endeavors focused on meeting consumer requirements and desires through the exchange process, and these are included in marketing. The “right” principle is used by marketing managers to bring the right products or

services to the right customers at the right time, place, and price while utilizing the appropriate promotional strategies. Today, a lot of organizations fervently follow this marketing principle. Marketing as a process would entail determining the wants and desires of consumers before providing goods, services, or both that satisfy those demands while turning a profit. Long-term client ties are developed through relationship marketing, which can lead to recurring business, lower expenses, and more solid relationships.

Marketers use the “right” principle to encourage these exchanges. For instance, a potential client will not pay money for a new lipstick from Avon if a local Avon representative is unable to locate the ideal lipstick for the consumer at the ideal price and when the customer wants it. Think about your most recent transaction (purchase): What if the cost had been 30% higher? What if getting to the store or other source was more challenging? Would you have made a purchase? According to the “right” concept, marketers have a lot of influence over the variables that affect the success of their campaigns.

The majority of top firms have embraced the marketing approach, which is founded on the “right” notion. In order to design marketing strategies that not only meet the needs of the customers but also help the organization reach its objectives, it uses marketing data to focus more attention on the needs and wishes of the customers. When a business employs marketing, it determines the needs of the customer before producing the goods, services, or both to satisfy those demands (using the “right” principle). The marketing strategy is geared around winning over customers with the fundamental tenet of offering value.

In order for the business to set its product(s) apart from those of competitors, the marketing idea specifically calls for: 1) focusing on the wants and wishes of customers. Merchandise can be commodities, services, or ideas; 2) integrating all of the organization’s activities, including as production and promotion, to meet these wants and needs; and 3) accomplishing long-term organizational goals by ethically and legally meeting the needs and wants of the consumer.

Today, marketing is a concept used by businesses of all sizes and in all sectors. For instance, Enterprise Rent-A-Car found that its clients preferred not to drive to the company’s locations. As a result, Enterprise began sending cars to customers’ homes or places of business. It was observed by Disney that some of its visitors detested standing in line. In response, Disney started charging more for “Fast-Pass”, which allows visitors to skip waiting in line for attractions.

Understanding that applying the marketing concept entails developing a product after performing market research to determine the needs and preferences of the target market is essential to understanding it. Production departments don’t merely create products for the sake of producing them; the marketing department is also expected to figure out how to promote them. When developing the best product, service, or both, and other marketing techniques to support it, a firm that properly grasps the marketing concept leverages data on potential customers from the product’s inception.

The ratio of benefits received by the customer (or organization) to the expense

incurred in achieving those benefits is known as customer value. The value of the advantages and the costs can only be determined by the consumer. However, other factors such as product reviews, recommendations from family and immediate relatives, and the perspectives of colleagues and friends who purchased the same product, among others, can sometimes influence the customer. Many successful businesses base their core business strategy on creating customer value.

The idea that pricing isn't always the most crucial aspect is the foundation of customer value. A company that prioritizes cost of production and price to the client is treated as a commodity with only price distinction. Some companies think that giving customers value is crucial and that many customers will pay more for excellent customer service or settle for less offerings for a lower price. In the Philippines, a classic example of this is the application and processing for a passport. Applicants are willing to pay a premium in order to receive their passports sooner than the standard processing time.

Because clients who just value money will purchase from a rival as soon as they can provide a cheaper price, it is crucial not to establish value on price (rather than on service or quality). Relationship- and service-based marketing tactics are much more successful and challenging for rivals to imitate. A seat assignment service, meals, or in-flight entertainment are not offered by Southwest Airlines. Instead, the low-cost carrier delivers on its promise of timely departures. In "service value" surveys, Southwest routinely outperforms full-service airlines like American Airlines, which offer luxuries like movies and food on selected long-haul flights.

Experiential marketing, as defined by Wood (2009) and Gilmore and Pine (2002), is a communication tool that allows a consumer to have a personal, emotional, one-of-a-kind, and noteworthy experience with a brand by immersing the consumer in an environment (physical or virtual) created by brand marketers.

Schmitt (1999) defined experiential marketing from the customers' perspective as "customers developing acknowledgement and purchasing goods and/or services from a business or a brand after they get experiences from having attended activities and perceiving stimulations." Creating an emotional perception within the consumer self is measured using five main indicators: sense, feel, think, act, and relate, according to Schmitt (1999).

Customer Satisfaction may be viewed from the perspective of the Customer Service Theory. There are eight factors the customer needs to assess to establish their level of satisfaction. These factors include the following: 1) Speed, 2) Transparency, 3) Availability and Accessibility, 4) Friendliness, 5) Simplicity, 6) Empowerment, 7) Accuracy, and 8) Details.

When these factors are combined, they aimed achieving good customer service resulting to customer satisfaction. The meaning of each factor are as follows:

Speed. Because customers want everything fast, this principle refers to the response time from employees (in the stores, restaurants, hotels, and other establishments in the Dongguan Street) or the time it takes to serve and/or resolve a

customer issue.

Transparency. This principle refers to the clear explanations given to customers, especially when something goes wrong, considering that customers want to be kept always informed.

Availability and accessibility. This principle refers to the store ensuring that customers can readily communicate with the store and its employees, in either one or a combination of the several contact channels such as phone, email, web chat and social media.

Friendliness. This principle is one of the vital parts of good customer service, i.e., always being polite, fair, and nice to customers, but quite challenging in terms of inculcating in the employee's mindset; thus, training employees is a must.

Simplicity. This principle refers to the ability of the store to making things simple for the customers through having simple processes and clearly communicating for customers to properly understand.

Empowerment. This principle refers to the customers of having that feeling of being able to have a say in the service and/or giving them self-service options and the ability to provide feedback.

Accuracy. This principle refers to ensuring employees of the store are doing things right for the customers, i.e., providing accurate service to customers. This in a way would require providing training, tools, and processes needed to deliver correct service.

Details. This principle refers to paying attention to the small stuff that customers are regularly observing and expecting from store employees, i.e., being careful and detail oriented.

Loyalty is a phenomenon that has piqued the attention of marketers (Ramana Reddy, Reddy, & Abdul Azeem, 2011); Although there has been an increase in interest in customer loyalty recently (Kuusik, 2007), most marketers were thinking about it in the 1980s, and a few businesses invested a lot of money on customer relationship management initiatives with the goal of encouraging patron loyalty (Pitta, Franzak, & Fowler, 2006).

During the last two decades, the importance of loyalty and customer loyalty increased because of the increasing competition. Companies have concluded that "loyalty" has a similar meaning in both cases. Because of this, companies created smart marketing and advertising campaigns aimed at forging bonds with their clients (Liang, 2008). The inclination to repurchase goods and services indicates customer loyalty, which is the objective of any firm (Pi & Huang, 2011).

In a corporate setting, a client's loyalty to a particular company affects how long they continue to use the products and services provided by that company, which leads to client referrals to friends and colleagues (Bose & Rao, 2011). In a similar vein, Musriha (2012) defines client loyalty as a client's readiness to repurchase or continue using a good or service. Additionally, it is believed that one of the most critical elements in determining a company's success is its ability to retain customers, and retaining customers requires that customers feel that the

organization provides excellent customer service (Krumay & Brandtweiner, 2010).

A borderless economy has been made possible by information technology breakthroughs, market saturation, and globalized competition. This has raised consumer knowledge and produced a situation in which long-term success is no longer dependent on product price and quality. Long-term client relationships are the foundation of successful businesses (Kuusik, 2007).

The importance of a customer's loyalty to a business is usually overlooked by consumers (Pitta et al., 2006). Customer or brand loyalty, however, is crucial for the majority of organizations; in terms of behavior, it simply refers to having customers who keep buying from you. Actually, many corporate initiatives are purely aimed at boosting the proportion of repeat business from current clients. Predictive models created by marketing strategists show the huge effects on profitability of increasing the likelihood that existing consumers would make additional purchases.

Loyalty, in the opinion of Li and Green (2011) and Chen and Ching (2007), is a long-term commitment to repurchase or re-patronize a chosen good or service in the future, despite external influences and marketing initiatives that can prompt switching behavior. Loyalty is more strongly influenced by a customer's preferences and level of devotion toward a product (brand) or service. To that aim, loyalty is defined by quality, which is a crucial factor.

Service quality, perceived value, and customer pleasure are frequently linked to loyalty. Thus, according to Li and Green (2011), loyalty strategies are developed by utilizing the ideal marketing mix, product, price, place, promotions, and outstanding deal proposition in order to support the target customer groups and to have the proper positioning in their minds relative to rivals.

Due to the popularity of customer loyalty among firms, it has been extensively studied in the field of marketing (Leong, Michael, Bakar, Ibrahim, Veerappan, & Rajamanickam, 2012). In recent years, there has been an increase in interest in the topic (Kuusik, 2007). Bose & Rao (2011) A favorable claim about a company's worth is loyalty, which over time leads to increased purchases. "A favorable perception that has grown over time in the significance that a business and its products or services give, leading to continuous interactions and purchases," says the definition of loyalty (Feuerstein & Pribyl, 2005). However, there are divergent viewpoints in business regarding the specific elements of loyalty (Thompson, 2007).

Uncles, Dowling, and Hammond (2003) claim that consumers can be loyal to businesses, products, services, retailers, and activities (e.g., shopping). Customer loyalty, as opposed to brand loyalty, highlights the fact that loyalty is a quality shared by people as opposed to a property of brands. Unfortunately, there isn't a definition that is acknowledged by everyone. Three widely accepted conceptualizations have been put forth in order to achieve this goal: 1) loyalty is primarily an attitude that sporadically results in a relationship with the brand; 2) loyalty is primarily expressed through the use of disclosed behavior (i.e., the pattern of

past purchases); and 3) it is buying that is moderated by the individual's traits, circumstances, and purchase situation.

The development of client loyalty has thus become a primary focus of marketing strategies since Bagdonien and Jaktait's explanation of the importance and value of customer loyalty in 2007. Researchers have proven the benefits of customer loyalty to a provider, including reduced price sensitivity, cheaper costs for acquiring new customers, and greater organization profitability. They have also found that loyal customers are more likely to recommend a business or product to others. Making repeated purchases is simply one aspect of loyalty. Someone who keeps making purchases could not be driven by loyalty but rather by inertia, indifference, or impediments to departure. Customers' attitudes and behaviors can both demonstrate their loyalty. The latter aids in determining attachment to products, services, or organizations since a specific thought and feeling triggers a particular reaction to things, people, and events.

Since it has been shown to be associated with future usage, better word-of-mouth referrals, and, ultimately, customer profitability, a greater knowledge of the attitudinal component of loyalty is essential. In addition to changing over time, loyalty based on attitude is less consistent than loyalty based on conduct. Both an emotional and a rational base underpins customer loyalty. While rational loyalty is determined by reasoning, accessibility and understanding, and cognition of organization activity processes, emotional loyalty is determined by feelings, expectations, and relationships with organization employees.

Some researchers claim that there are six different types of loyalty, including: 1) monopoly loyalty, 2) inertia loyalty, 3) convenience loyalty, 4) price loyalty, 5) incentivized loyalty, and 6) emotional loyalty. These four types of loyalty are based on behavior and attitude, and they are: true loyalty, spurious loyalty, latent loyalty, and no loyalty. Customers can be made to be loyal when they have no other choice (prisoners), they can be faithful under different circumstances (separated loyalists), they can be devotedly loyal (bought loyalists), they can be loyal out of satisfaction (satisfied loyalists), and they can be implicitly loyal (apostles).

Customer loyalty is the willingness of a customer to make repeat purchases and sign up for the service provider's membership program. According to [Cheng, Chiu, Hu, and Chang \(2011\)](#), the four stages of customer loyalty are perceived loyalty, emotional loyalty, intentional loyalty, and action loyalty. Customer loyalty is defined as a consumer's choice to keep using a product or service despite comparing it to those of competitors based on the competitive product's ease of purchase.

Researchers found that rather than being a result, loyalty is a constant process of interaction between the brand and the customer. There are two types of loyalty: 1) inertia-based loyalty, in which a customer repurchases a brand because they used to do so but will change the item if the situation permits. And 2) genuine brand loyalty, when the decision to make a repeat purchase is based on a favorable experience and attitude toward the favored brand.

Researchers typically distinguish between behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty. The first is loyalty as a mindset that fosters a lasting bond with the brand through time. The latter is a prerequisite for fostering genuine brand loyalty (or a powerfully favorable attitude). Using a number of prior purchases as examples, the behavioral loyalty model is illustrated by examining consumer commitment and motivation to a certain brand. Studies show that most consumers are “poly-gamous”—loyal to a group of brand names in a particular category—and that only a small percentage of users are “monogamous”, or wholly devoted to a single brand, or “promiscuous”, or disloyal to any trademark. Behavioral loyalty is described as loyalty that develops over time as a result of repeated product purchases made after the consumer has likely found the brand’s benefits to be satisfactory and realized that all brands in the category are more or less comparable. Loyalty models based on behavior and attitudes are “highly interwoven”. The third common loyalty profile is when the acquisition is influenced by person qualities, the surroundings, and the purchasing conditions, and even a good attitude and strong brand devotion are irrelevant when faced with specific co-determined factors.

Four categories were developed by researchers to group the factors that influence loyalty: 1) environmental factors, 2) relationship factors, 3) customer factors, and 4) consumer impression of the company). Additionally, three user loyalty components that are essential for the growth of enduring consumer-brand relationships have been identified by certain academics. There are three different kinds of commitment: brand satisfaction, affective commitment, and calculative commitment.

Ivanauskiene and Auruskevicien (2009), citing some researchers, proposed categorization of customer loyalty types by subdividing loyal ones into four categories, namely: 1) Captive, 2) Convenient seeker, 3) Contented, and 4) Committed, and provided brief descriptions of typical behaviors and attitudes associated with each.

Lin and Wang (2006) state that customer loyalty is bi-dimensional, including both attitudinal commitment and behavioral repurchase intention. In previous studies, customer loyalty was characterized as the customer’s positive feeling toward a brand, resulting in repeat purchase behavior. According to Agrawal, Gaur, and Narayanan (2012), the following factors influence customer loyalty: 1) trust, 2) commitment, 3) emotions, 4) perception of corporate image, and 5) value perception.

In 2019, Chinese tourists shelled out \$254.6 bn traveling abroad, according to the data of the UN World Tourism Organization. It should be noted that 2019 is the year before the COVID-19 pandemic upended global tourism. Given this situation and the associated health and travel restrictions since then, Chinese tourism has no choice but to shift interest to local and domestic tourists.

Bai Yu, the founder of the travel company Lishi Jiangtan (Travel on History), quit the tech sector in 2015 to pursue cultural tourism, offering tailored trips to small groups of 10 to 20 people. According to Bai, China has over nine million

regular international travelers, and many of them are eagerly pursuing in-depth and themed tourism products with a price tag as alternatives.

In terms of profile, Bai's customers are over 35 years old, well-educated, and wealthy, and they travel as individuals rather than in groups. He estimates that 90% of them are women. These wealthy newcomers demand quality and spend accordingly.

Prior to the pandemic grounded international flights, there has been a surge in interest in China's cultural treasures and heritage sites since 2014, when Chinese President Xi Jinping made "confidence in our culture" a national political doctrine. In 2018, the state's tourism and cultural agencies merged and created the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

"You will miss out on a blue ocean if you are reluctant to follow [the president's] guideline, especially when state propaganda is promoting the entire industry," says Yang Jie, who founded Jinxingji (Shanxi Travels) in 2017 after a 15-year management role at McDonald's. Yang's team led cultural tours for over 5000 people in 2020. A weekend visit to Tang dynasty Buddhist temples in Shanxi's Wutai County, about 250 kilometers south-west of Beijing, is the most popular route. Unlike natural attractions, "cultural attractions must be narrated in order to be fully appreciated," according to Yang, and this is where the agencies come in.

Even as COVID-19 outbreaks and lockdowns prompted the cancellation of some field trips, agencies have remained open by charging for online courses. According to Nie Mengqiao, a partner at Yilü (Art Travels), online offerings account for half of her company's workload, which include lectures on Buddhist statues, ancient architecture, and Chinese heritage in Western Museum collections. Specialists from top universities and research institutions record the material, and some of them also lead on-site visits as lecturers. Depending on their qualifications, lecturers receive daily honoraria ranging from RMB 1000 (\$155) to even more than RMB 20,000 (\$3100), with the most well-known specialists commanding RMB 100,000 (\$15,500).

"Most of the professionals in cultural institutions graduated from acclaimed universities but work for a humble income. The honorarium that we pay them is a recognition of their academic achievements," Nie said. "And we offer more job opportunities to those who recently graduated."

Increased visitor numbers invariably raise concerns about the conservation and protection of ancient sites and the security of their artifacts. According to a 2012 national survey, mainland China has over 766,000 sites of immovable cultural relics but only about 130,000 designated custodians. Due to a lack of personnel, some sites are left unsecured, whereas others are closed to the general public. The bottom line in these situations is plainly a loss of opportunity.

While the conservation of China's heritage sites is a state responsibility, tourism agency managers concurred that they have a duty to increase social awareness, and some even make small donations to help with maintenance. Bai Yu's company works with the cultural authorities to obtain access to some closed sites

in exchange for a fee. “It’s the fairest way to obtain such a privilege,” Bai says. “The price you pay for a cultural attraction stands for the visitor’s recognition of its value.”

To sum up, there are relatively few studies on customer satisfaction and loyalty of small, micro, and medium-sized tourism customer.

Dongguan Street is a historic alley in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province. It is hidden by many buildings, but it has two grand gates that stand at opposite ends of the street. East of the Grand Canal and west of the National Road is Dongguan Street.

It is 1122 meters long and slate paved. It was once not only Yangzhou’s water and land transportation route, but also a commercial and cultural center. Dongguan Street connects with the Circle East Gate Streets. Two blocks have been merged to organize, renovate, develop, and become Yangzhou’s highlights. There are many old shops as well as many monuments and heritages. Dongguan Street is imbued with Ming and Qing Dynasty characteristics (Zhao and Li, 2016).

It was named one of the “10 Famous Historical and Cultural Streets” in 2010 by a national program that assessed streets based on their historic significance, cultural significance, preservation, economic vitality, social visibility, and protection and management.

Customer service is an essential component of any reputable or professional business. It aids customers both before and after they make a purchase. It is an important part of providing a positive customer experience. Most companies’ service today goes far beyond simply providing phone support. Social media, text messaging, the web, and email are all ways to contact customer service. You may have the finest product available on the market, but if your customer support is subpar, consumers’ perception of your brand may be less favorable than you believe. Companies that appreciate excellent customer service invest more time and money in employee training than the average company in their industry. They are also more likely to gather customer feedback early on so that any shortcomings or complaints can be addressed before they become major issues. However, there are few studies on Dongguan Street consumer service.

Many companies undervalue the cost of gaining a new client. Investing in keeping current clients rather than constantly pursuing new ones is far more cost-effective. Those who buy from you are considerably more likely to buy from you again if you concentrate on their satisfaction. From the perspective of the Heritage Tourism Sites in China, it is best to focus on local tourists and travelers as their volume is large compared to foreign visitors.

The rapid development of tourism has spawned a large number of small tourism enterprises. The large number of small tourism enterprises and their impact on local economic development has made scholars pay attention to small tourism enterprises, thus starting the research on small tourism business. But there is little research on tourism small business owners in China, especially on custom-

er satisfaction and loyalty in Dongguan Street. This, on the one hand, reflects the phenomenon that tourism industry in China does not pay enough attention to small tourism enterprises and the lack of research results; on the other hand, it also poses challenges for future generations to enrich research conclusions and broaden research horizons.

3. Materials and Methods

The study utilized the descriptive-correlational research design. The study illustrated “what is” currently happening at the time the research was conducted. Specifically, it looked at the level of customer satisfaction and loyalty in the context of the heritage tourism site in Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China. Mainly the study utilized a questionnaire as its data-gathering instrument. Items of the instrument were taken from Customer Service Theory and customer loyalty as espoused by. The level of customer satisfaction was established using the Customer Service Theory. There were eight factors the customer-respondents assessed that established the level of customer satisfaction from the various small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China. These were: 1) Speed, 2) Transparency, 3) Availability and Accessibility, 4) Friendliness, 5) Simplicity, 6) Empowerment, 7) Accuracy, and 8) Details. The study also elicited from the respondents their level of customer loyalty using the four stages of customer loyalty. The four stages of customer loyalty were: 1) Cognitive Loyalty, 2) Affective Loyalty, 3) Conative Loyalty, and 4) Action Loyalty. Thereafter, the two variables were further analyzed to establish whether there is significant association between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The survey questionnaire was pilot administered to 30 target respondents in Dongguan Street before the actual conduct of the data gathering. The completed survey questionnaires were tabulated and served as input data to the Cronbach’s Alpha Test (CAT) that established the acceptability and reliability of the research instrument. The CAT yielded a score of 0.878 finding the survey questionnaire acceptable and reliable when compared to the acceptable range score of between 0.70 and 1.00.

The researcher conveniently selected the 400 respondents in Dongguan Street tourism heritage, among them, 385 valid questionnaires, effective rate of 96%. The total number of targeted respondents was pegged at 385 using the Cochran sample size formula considering the large population (>1000) of visitors in Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China, being a heritage site. About 303 of 385 (78.7%) of the respondents were local visitors while 82 of 385 (21.3%) of the respondents were foreign visitors. This ratio of local to foreign visitors was attributable to the prevailing situation relative to COVID-19 pandemic, including health protocols and/or travel restrictions to China during the data gathering period that started from mid-October and completed in mid-December 2021.

The study elicited the opinions of both foreign and local visitors regarding their experiences as customers to the various small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in Dongguan Street. Random sampling technique was employed to tap the target respondents; hence, both foreign and local visitors were randomly chosen at the time of the data gathering between mid-October to mid-December 2021. All the 385 respondents who agreed to and willingly participated in the survey served as primary respondents of the study and answered the researcher-made questionnaire.

Descriptive Statistics

The profile of the respondent considered the type of respondent where 78.7% are local while 21.3% are foreigner. Most of the respondent age group belong to 18 to 35 years old with 48.3% followed by below 18 years old with 26.5%. Half of the respondents are male with 50.1% and 49.9% are female. Also, half of the respondents are single with 49.1% while 50.9% are married. Most of the participants' education attainment are high school level or high school graduate and college level or college graduate with 40.8% and 26.0% respectively. More than half of the respondents visited the heritage only once with 54.8%, 2 to 3 times with 24.9%, and more than 3 times with 20.3%.

Many companies undervalue the cost of attracting a new client. Investing in retaining current clients rather than constantly pursuing new ones is far more cost-effective. Those who buy from you are more likely to buy from you again if you focus on customer satisfaction. From the standpoint of China's Heritage Tourism Sites, specifically Dongguan Street, it is optimal to concentrate on local tourists and travelers because their volume is greater than that of foreign visitors and there the site's access is unregulated and very convenient.

This raises the customer's lifetime value, which implies the amount they spend with you over their entire lifetime rises accordingly. When customers return to buy from you again and again, your investment returns from their product sales cost rises. Simply put, happy customers are loyal customers, and loyal customers are more financially beneficial for the company

(<https://www.act.com/en-uk/customer-satisfaction>).

4. Results and Discussion

Using the instrument as tool in gathering the data, respondents were asked about their assessment of their customer satisfaction on the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in terms of customer satisfaction, speed, transparency, availability and accessibility, friendliness, simplicity, empowerment, accuracy, and details. Respondents were also asked to assess their customer loyalty using the four stages of customer loyalty suggested by Price such as cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty. And lastly, the study identified the marketing strategies that can help entrepreneurs of the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

4.1. Respondents' Level of Customer Satisfaction from the Small, Micro, and Medium Business Enterprises

4.1.1. Customer Satisfaction

Table 1 shows the respondents overall assessment of their CUSTOMER SATISFACTION received a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.00$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the factors included in the assessment of the CUSTOMER SATISFACTION based on the Customer Service Theory indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Factor #2, Transparency, obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.02$ while Factor #4, Friendliness, received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.98$.

Friendliness is one of the vital parts of good customer service, i.e., always being polite, fair, and nice to customers, but quite challenging in terms of inculcating in the employee's mindset; thus, training employees and its continuing conduct is a must.

Customer satisfaction is a summary of the affective response (or emotional response, like being friendly with customers), which can vary in intensity within a time-specific point of determination and have a limited lifespan when directed toward the key features of product acquisition and/or consumption (Giese & Cote, 2000). The type of emotive response and level of intensity that the client is likely to experience must be stated explicitly depending on the situation of interest. Given the likelihood that customers will carefully consider their response to the satisfaction question, time will likely be needed to obtain the true result.

4.1.2. Speed

Table 1 shows that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor—SPEED based on the Customer Service Theory obtained a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.01$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied.

Table 1. Respondents' overall assessment of customer satisfaction.

Customer Satisfaction	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
1. Speed	4.01	0.36	Very Satisfied
2. Transparency	4.02	0.35	Very Satisfied
3. Availability & Accessibility	3.99	0.38	Very Satisfied
4. Friendliness	3.98	0.38	Very Satisfied
5. Simplicity	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied
6. Empowerment	3.99	0.37	Very Satisfied
7. Accuracy	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied
8. Details	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied
Overall Customer Satisfaction	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied

Note: Tabular data based on author survey, the same below.

Table 2. Respondents' assessment of speed.

SPEED	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
The shop/store employees are fast in responding to customer needs.	3.97	0.80	Very Satisfied
When issues arise, shop/store employees resolve them with the customers immediately.	4.01	0.83	Very Satisfied
Quality is inherent in the speedy delivery of service.	4.05	0.81	Very Satisfied
Customers always feel very comfortable receiving speedy service.	4.00	0.84	Very Satisfied
Providing speedy service to customers is important to shops/stores in Dongguan Street to succeed.	4.02	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL SPEED	4.01	0.36	Very Satisfied

According to **Table 2**, all the items included in the assessment of the factor SPEED indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #3 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.05$ while Item #1 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.97$.

This factor basically refers to the time it takes to serve a customer. Such need and objective of a customer, especially in a Heritage Tourism site, is to visit as many stores as possible. Thus, customers want everything fast so they can move around to all the shops in the area. Creating an emotional perception within consumer self is measured through five main indicators, which are sense, feel, think, act, and relate, added **Schmitt (1999)**. The aspect of "relate" in this instance may be the contributing factor that led to Item #1 receiving the lowest mean rating. It can be viewed from the context of communication, especially in the case of foreign customers wherein language is a barrier.

4.1.3. Transparency

Table 3 displays that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor TRANSPARENCY based on the Customer Service Theory attained a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.02$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor TRANSPARENCY indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #4 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.11$ while Item #1 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.95$.

Given the number of visitors entering a shop/store, explaining and/or presenting all the products/items of the store to all customers is basically not feasible, especially when it involves foreign visitors. Also, in most instances, customers would like to be left alone and to be able to freely look and scrutinize the products of the store. And once they call the sales staff for assistance, it often entails asking for the price of the product.

Organizations should not assume they know what their customer wants. Rather, it is important to understand the voice of the customer through the use of

Table 3. Respondents' assessment of transparency.

TRANSPARENCY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Shop/Store employees can easily explain to customers the products/items the shop/store is selling.	3.95	0.80	Very Satisfied
The concept of "what you see is what you get", especially on prices is true for the shops/stores in Dongguan Street.	3.99	0.81	Very Satisfied
Customer inquiries are clearly responded to by shop/store employees.	4.00	0.81	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees are honest when dealing with customers.	4.11	0.79	Very Satisfied
The transparency of shop/store employees is key to building customers' trust.	4.05	0.83	Very Satisfied
OVERALL TRANSPARENCY	4.02	0.35	Very Satisfied

Organizations should not make the assumption that they know what their customers want. Rather, it is critical to understand the customer's voice through the use of tools such as customer surveys and polling, or simply by asking them, so that detailed insights into what customers want can be obtained and the store's products and/or services can be tailored to satisfy or even exceed customer expectations (<https://asq.org/quality-resources/customer-satisfaction>).

4.1.4. Availability and Accessibility

Table 4 below shows that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor AVAILABILITY and ACCESSIBILITY based on the Customer Service Theory received a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.99$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor AVAILABILITY and ACCESSIBILITY indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #5 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.05$ while Item #4 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.89$.

This factor in the Customer Service Theory pertains to and ensures that customers can readily communicate with the store and its employees, in either one or a combination of the several contact channels such as phone, email, web chat and social media. However, the customers despite being able to get the store's business cards with contact details, opined having some difficulty contacting the shops/stores. One possible explanation to this customer's dilemma would be the limited number of employees or staff manning a small, micro, and medium size business enterprise. At any given time, a store is simply manned by at least two to at most three people with one acting as store supervisor and cashier while the other two as sales staff and all-around utility personnel. Thus, answering phone calls, emails, and social media queries might be next to impossible, especially when the store is filled with customers.

Table 4. Respondents' assessment of availability and accessibility.

AVAILABILITY and ACCESSIBILITY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Customers are free to get business cards with contact details from shops/stores to reach them easily.	3.98	0.84	Very Satisfied
The shops/stores can be reached thru email.	4.01	0.79	Very Satisfied
The shops/stores have a website so customers can communicate prior to their visit to the shop/store.	4.00	0.81	Very Satisfied
The shop/store can be contacted even after shop/store hours.	3.89	0.83	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees readily make themselves available when customers call them.	4.05	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL AVAILABILITY and ACCESSIBILITY	3.99	0.38	Very Satisfied

4.1.5. Friendliness

Table 5 on the next page displays that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor FRIENDLINESS based on the Customer Service Theory attained a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.98$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor FRIENDLINESS indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #1 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.04$ while Item #2 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.95$.

While respondents opined that it is common to see shop/store employees in Dongguan Street smiling at customers ($\bar{x} = 4.04$), they also observed that some store employees do not always project a warm aura of kindness to attracting customers ($\bar{x} = 3.95$). This kind of assessment by the respondents would fall under the "Excitement" attribute in the Kano (1984) model, which until today remains a useful tool in product and service development.

The model categorizes product/service attributes based on how customers perceive them and their impact on customer satisfaction. The classifications serve to guide design decisions by indicating when good enough is good enough and when more is better. Customers do not express these excitement attributes openly, and they are generally unexpected. As in Item #1, the appearance of these attributes delights the customer and results in high satisfaction. However, unlike in Item #2, the loss of these characteristics does not result in dissatisfaction. The excitement attributes appear to meet the customers' latent needs.

There may be various reasons why some store employees in Dongguan Street are unable to always project a warm aura of kindness that attracts customers. First, may be the sheer volume of customers in any given day is already a gargantuan task to the store staff. Second, given the limited number of employees in the store (minimum of two to a maximum of three), it is easy to get tired entertaining customers unless there is no customer entering the store.

Table 5. Respondents' assessment of friendliness.

FRIENDLINESS	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
It is common to see shop/store employees in Dongguan Street smiling at customers.	4.04	0.79	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees in Dongguan Street always project a warm aura of kindness that attracts customers.	3.95	0.81	Very Satisfied
Customers feel comfortable when attended to by shop/store employees that are courteous.	3.96	0.83	Very Satisfied
Customers at times are not in the mood to buy but changes their minds when friendly shop/store employees talk to them.	3.96	0.83	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees conducting themselves fairly establishes a strong bond with their customers.	4.01	0.84	Very Satisfied
OVERALL FRIENDLINESS	3.98	0.38	Very Satisfied

4.1.6. Simplicity

The table (**Table 6**) presents the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor SIMPLICITY based on the Customer Service Theory got a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.00$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor SIMPLICITY indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #5 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.09$ while Item #3 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.96$.

In some instances, and because of the language barrier, the power of the calculator cannot be over emphasized as a basic communication tool for the buyer and the seller to better understand each other, especially when we are talking about two foreign nationals and when the buyer is trying to haggle for higher discounts. Thus, Item #5 received the highest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.09$.

On the other hand, Item #3 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.96$. This, however, does not mean the customers are not satisfied with the other simple things that store employees do for them. It simply shows that while the customers enjoy the simple things store employees do for them, they do not mind such so much as their concentration is more on the buying mode and getting big discounts. As explained, using the calculator as the basic communication tool where the customers and sellers properly understand each other already signifies that the principle of SIMPLICITY is inherent in the quality and performance of the store employees.

4.1.7. Empowerment

Table 7 shows that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor EMPOWERMENT based on the Customer Service Theory obtained a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.99$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor EMPOWERMENT

Table 6. Respondents' assessment of simplicity.

SIMPLICITY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Facility in the English language of shop/store employees is key to successful communication with customers.	3.98	0.81	Very Satisfied
Customers are usually happy when shop/store employees make the transactions simple.	3.98	0.84	Very Satisfied
Customers enjoy the little/small/simple things that shop/store employees do for them.	3.96	0.80	Very Satisfied
Customers appreciate more small deeds from shop/store employees.	3.98	0.83	Very Satisfied
Sometimes shop/store employees and customers easily agree with the use of a calculator.	4.09	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL SIMPLICITY	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied

Table 7. Respondents' assessment of empowerment.

EMPOWERMENT	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Shop/Store employees in Dongguan Street always give importance to customer suggestions.	4.01	0.82	Very Satisfied
The experience shown by shop/store employees in Dongguan Street to facing customer complaints reflects their professionalism to handling criticism of customers.	4.04	0.85	Very Satisfied
Customers leaving the shop/store smiling reflects satisfaction to the quality of service rendered by the employees.	4.00	0.79	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees fully understand that the only way to improving service is to accept customer feedback.	3.95	0.83	Very Satisfied
Customers provide suggestions because they also want the shop/store to be successful.	3.95	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL EMPOWERMENT	3.99	0.37	Very Satisfied

indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #5 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.04$ while Items #4 and #5 both received the lowest mean ratings of $\bar{x} = 3.95$.

This principle refers to the customers of having that feeling of being able to have a say in the service and/or giving them self-service options and the ability to provide feedback. It can be said that store employees in Dongguan Street were able to exhibit professionalism, especially in facing customer complaints including the handling of criticism from customers ($\bar{x} = 4.04$).

Store employees are also aware and fully understand that to improve their services would entail accepting customer feedback ($\bar{x} = 3.95$); customers also want the store to be successful ($\bar{x} = 3.95$), which, in turn, is because of the store employees' improvement in their services.

Today, companies of all sizes and industries use this marketing concept/principle. For instance, Enterprise Rent-A-Car found that its clients preferred not to drive to its locations. As a result, Enterprise began delivering cars to clients' homes or places of business. Disney found that some of its patrons detested standing in line. As a result, Disney started charging more for "Fast-Pass", which enables visitors to skip waiting in line for attractions.

4.1.8. Accuracy

The table (Table 8) exhibits that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor ACCURACY based on the Customer Service Theory got a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.00$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor ACCURACY indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #4 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.03$ while Item #3 received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.97$.

The principle of ACCURACY refers to ensuring store employees are doing things right for the customers, i.e., providing accurate service to customers including prices of products, giving exact changes, proper packaging of products, and of course, showing courtesy and respect to customers even when the customers are being difficult at times. This requirement to meeting this principle and the store employees doing them correctly would entail due diligence from the store owner to continuously provide training, tools, and processes needed to

Table 8. Respondents' assessment of accuracy.

ACCURACY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Shop/Store employees in Dongguan Street ensures that information is given to customers.	4.00	0.81	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees making certain of doing their job with accuracy helps customer conclude the shop/store is credible.	3.98	0.80	Very Satisfied
Customers often saw that shop/store employees being accurate in their job is tantamount to quality service.	3.97	0.81	Very Satisfied
Customers are always watchful of how shop/store employees do their job accurately.	4.03	0.82	Very Satisfied
Customers have observed that shop/store employees who are honest are also accurate in their work.	4.02	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL ACCURACY	4.00	0.37	Very Satisfied

deliver correct and accurate service in a fast manner. Today, many firms adopt this marketing concept diligently. The goal of marketing is to establish exchanges, which often occur when two parties give one another something of value in order to meet each other's needs or desires.

4.1.9. Details

Table 9 displays that the respondents' overall assessment of the Customer Satisfaction factor DETAILS based on the Customer Service Theory acquired a mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.02$ with a verbal interpretation of Very Satisfied. All the items included in the assessment of the factor DETAILS indicated that customers are Very Satisfied with Item #3 obtaining the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 4.06$ while Items #2 and #4 both received the lowest mean rating of $\bar{x} = 4.00$ (**Table 9**).

This principle pertains to paying attention to the small stuff that customers are regularly observing and expecting from store employees, i.e., being careful and detail oriented. The results showed that they become satisfied as customers with the amount of pampering they received from store employees ($\bar{x} = 4.02$) rather than with what they have bought from the store.

Store employees, on the other hand, would want to make a sale so they need to be sensitive to even the smallest needs of their customers ($\bar{x} = 4.00$) because they know that the smaller the detail of service they provide, the greater it is for the customer ($\bar{x} = 4.00$). However, the store employees would tend to overdo providing the customers with too detailed a service and make the customers

Table 9. Respondents' assessment of details.

DETAILS	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
Customers are not happy with what they have bought from the shop/store, but rather with the pampering they received from the shop/store employees.	4.04	0.78	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees know that to make a sale, they need to be sensitive to even the smallest needs of their customers.	4.00	0.83	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees exerting extra effort attending to customer details is rewarding because it ends in customer satisfaction.	4.06	0.83	Very Satisfied
Shop/Store employees fully understand that the smaller the detail of service they provide, the greater is its importance to the customer.	4.00	0.82	Very Satisfied
Customers are usually satisfied by the extent of spoiling treatment they received from shop/store employees.	4.02	0.82	Very Satisfied
OVERALL DETAILS	4.02	0.37	Very Satisfied

annoyed in the process instead of being happy. This is because the store employee is too anxious to make a sale and it becomes obvious for the customer.

Only the customer can determine the worth of both the benefits and the sacrifices. However, other factors such as product reviews, recommendations from family and immediate relatives, and the perspectives of colleagues and friends who purchased the same product, among others, can sometimes influence the customer (Kotler et al., 2017).

4.2. Customer Loyalty

4.2.1. Cognitive Loyalty

The overall average assessment of the level of customer loyalty from the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in terms of cognitive loyalty attained $\bar{x} = 3.99$ with verbal interpretation of Agree. Among all items identified as Agree, the highest mean score is Statement #5 ($\bar{x} = 4.05$) while the lowest mean score is Statement #3 ($\bar{x} = 3.94$) (Table 10).

The respondent's cognitive loyalty is built on thinking and believing a brand or service, or product to be superior. In the case of Statement #5, the customer-respondents believe and think that the service they received from the store staff is incomparable with that of other store staff from other stores ($\bar{x} = 4.05$). In like manner, the customer-respondents would continue to patronize the store products even when the store raises the prices of its products ($\bar{x} = 3.94$).

The ratio of benefits received by the customer (or organization) to the expense incurred in achieving those benefits is known as customer value. The value of the advantages and the costs can only be determined by the consumer. However, other factors such as product reviews, recommendations from family and immediate relatives, and the experiences of colleagues and friends who purchased the same product, among others, can sometimes influence the customer. Many successful businesses base their core business strategy on creating customer value.

4.2.2. Affective Loyalty

While cognitive loyalty is about thinking, affective/attitudinal loyalty is about feeling; in short, the affectively loyal customers genuinely like the brand. In this instance, the Heritage Tourism Site of Dongguan Street and the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises therein (Table 11).

Table 1 presents the overall average assessment of the level of customer loyalty from the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in terms of affective loyalty is $\bar{x} = 4.02$ with verbal interpretation of Agree. All the items included in the assessment under affective loyalty determine the customer level of loyalty that are identified as Agree. Among all items identified as Agree, the highest mean score is Statement #2 ($\bar{x} = 4.09$) while the lowest mean score is Statement #3 ($\bar{x} = 3.95$).

Table 10. Respondents' assessment of cognitive loyalty.

COGNITIVE LOYALTY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
When I visit Dongguan I always buy at the same stores.	3.99	0.83	Agree
I feel secure buying products from the same stores.	4.00	0.83	Agree
Even when the store raises the prices of its products, I would still buy there.	3.94	0.81	Agree
Even when other stores are offering lower prices, I would still prefer to buy at the same store	3.96	0.81	Agree
No other store staff performs/delivers quality service than in this store.	4.05	0.82	Agree
OVERALL COGNITIVE LOYALTY	3.99	0.35	Agree

Table 11. Respondents' assessment of affective loyalty.

AFFECTIVE LOYALTY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
My deep liking for this store is because of the quality of service the store staff provides to its customers.	3.97	0.80	Agree
I like the warmth feeling when I visit Dongguan Street Heritage Tourism site.	4.09	0.81	Agree
I like the ambiance of the coffee shop in Dongguan Street despite it not being Starbucks.	3.95	0.80	Agree
I feel safe when I go shopping in the different stores in Dongguan Street.	4.06	0.78	Agree
I always love how the store staff in Dongguan Street entertains its customers.	4.00	0.81	Agree
OVERALL AFFECTIVE LOYALTY	4.02	0.35	Agree

The intensity of positive feelings can have a large impact on affective loyalty. At the most basic level, it can easily be a pleasurable experience such as satisfaction or delight. It can be impassioned and depict a deep degree of emotional resonance in the consumer at the higher end. This profound affective loyalty provides a much solid defense against potential detractors of loyalty.

4.2.3. Conative Loyalty

The conative layer is where consumers start to develop brand loyalty. This is the point at which ideas and emotions become a drive to act. **Table 12** presents the overall average assessment on the level of customer loyalty from the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in terms of conative loyalty is $\bar{x} = 3.95$ with verbal interpretation of Agree. All the items included in the assessment under conative loyalty determine the customer level of loyalty

Table 12. Respondents' assessment of conative loyalty.

CONATIVE LOYALTY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
I would visit again the same stores in Dongguan Street because of the quality of service the store provides to its customers.	3.93	0.83	Agree
I feel safe in Dongguan Street Heritage Tourism site, so I would most likely visit it again.	3.98	0.83	Agree
Given the chance to go back to Dongguan Street, I would not hesitate to do so.	3.95	0.80	Agree
Dongguan Street provides visitors that warmth feeling making you want to stay there for a while.	4.05	0.83	Agree
I know I am helping in a way the small, micro, and medium size business entrepreneurs in Dongguan Street when I buy from their stores.	4.05	0.83	Agree
OVERALL CONATIVE LOYALTY	3.99	0.37	Agree

that are identified as Agree. Among all items identified as Agree, the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 4.05$) are Statements #4 and #5 while Statement #1 is the lowest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.93$).

Customer value is based on the idea that, in some cases, considerations other than price are important. A company that prioritizes cost of production and price to the consumer is run as if it were a commodity with price as the only point of differentiation. Businesses who value their customers may believe that customers are willing to pay more for superior customer service or accept fewer services at a lower cost. A classic example of this in the case of the Philippines is the application and processing to secure a passport. Applicants are willing to price extra so that their passports are released earlier than the standard processing time.

Because clients who value price alone will purchase from a competitor as soon as that competition can offer a lower price, it is crucial not to base value on price (rather than on service or quality). Marketing methods centered on client relationships and service are much more successful and harder for rivals to imitate. Assigned seating, meals, or in-flight entertainment are all unavailable on Southwest Airlines flights. Instead, the low-cost airline keeps its commitment to depart on time. Southwest frequently surpasses full-service carriers like American Airlines, who include frills like movies and meals on a few of its long-haul flights, in "service value" polls.

4.2.4. Action Loyalty

Action loyalty exemplifies a certain level of determination, in which consumers are devoted to making a repeat purchase even in the face of obstacles, such as word-of-mouth promotion of the brand. The table presents the overall average assessment on the level of customer loyalty from the small, micro, and medium business enterprises in Dongguan Street in terms of action loyalty is $\bar{x} = 4.01$

with verbal interpretation of Agree (**Table 13**). All the items included in the assessment under action loyalty determine the customer level of loyalty that are identified as Agree. Among all items identified as Agree, the highest mean score are Statements #2 and #3 both with mean ratings of $\bar{x} = 4.05$ while the lowest is Statement #1 with mean rating of $\bar{x} = 3.96$.

In the context of business, a customer's desire to work with a particular company affects further purchases of its products and services, which in turn leads to recommendations of those products and services to friends and business partners (Bose & Rao, 2011). In a similar vein, Musriha (2012) defines customer loyalty as a consumer's intention to repurchase or enroll in a good or service. Additionally, it is believed that one of the most crucial aspects of a company's success is its ability to retain customers. A customer's assessment of the company's customer service is a critical prerequisite for retaining customers (Krumay & Brandtweiner, 2010).

4.3. Marketing Strategies That Can Help Entrepreneurs of the Small, Micro, and Medium Business Enterprises Improve Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

The degree of satisfaction of a customer is the main factor in determining loyalty. Creating exchanges between two parties in which each provides something of value to the other in order to meet their respective needs or desires is what marketing implies.

Many people mistakenly believe that there is no distinction between sales and marketing, even though they are two distinct functions that are both essential to a business's strategy. The former involves the sale of a business's goods or services. On the other hand, the latter refers to a strategy for persuading customers of a product or service's value in order to make a sale.

Table 13. Respondents' assessment of action loyalty.

ACTION LOYALTY	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
I would visit again the same stores in Dongguan Street because of the quality of service they provide their customers.	3.96	0.80	Agree
Given the opportunity, I would bring my family to visit Dongguan Street Heritage Tourism site.	4.05	0.82	Agree
I would encourage friends or colleagues to try visiting Dongguan Street to have a great shopping experience.	4.05	0.81	Agree
Dongguan Street provides visitors that warmth feeling making you want to stay there for a while.	3.98	0.85	Agree
Because of my personal experience in visiting Dongguan Street, I would visit it again without any hesitation.	4.02	0.82	Agree
OVERALL ACTION LOYALTY	4.01	0.37	Agree

In the context of the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in Dongguan Street, both selling and marketing are performed by the store staff and/or store owners. The typical scene in the store begins with the store staff or employees welcoming and greeting the visitor-tourists and presenting the store's products, usually from the most to the least expensive, or sometimes from the fast- to the slow-moving items (marketing), and in the process, will entice the customer to buy and eventually make a sale (selling).

While the overall results of the level of Customer Satisfaction showed that the respondents are VERY SATISFIED from the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in the Heritage Tourism site of Dongguan Street on the bases of the eight factors of the Customer Service Theory, three of the eight factors, i.e., Friendliness ($\bar{x} = 3.98$), Empowerment ($\bar{x} = 3.99$), and Availability and Accessibility ($\bar{x} = 3.99$), should be given utmost importance and priority to strengthen the business entrepreneurs marketing strategy.

Friendliness is one of the vital parts of good customer service. However, it is also one of the most challenging factors to inculcate in the employee's mindset and it is a must that employers provide training to employees. Difficult to inculcate because it is somewhat attitudinal and behavioral, and such does not happen overnight. The same is also challenging when it comes to training employees as there is no standard training program on the subject and often the approach to designing one is done on a case-to-case basis. In addition, while the business entrepreneur may be willing to send store staff to attend such training, finding a standard training program may also pose a challenge. It is also a fact that the limited employees manning the store when pulled out to attend training may impact the store operations because of their limited number.

Availability and accessibility refer to the store ensuring customers can readily communicate with the store and its employees, in either one or a combination of the several contact channels such as phone, email, web chat and social media. Following the explanation above, because of the limited store staff or employees manning the shop, their priority and focus would be the customers at the store already. Answering phone calls every now and then may be possible while there are customers present in the store. However, immediately answering emails, web chats, and social media inquiries might be difficult, but not impossible. The strategy is for the business entrepreneur to allocate the first and last store hours when the store opens and closes, respectively, attend to and answer all the emails, web chats, and social media queries. In this way, the queries that came in when the store closes at the end of the day are immediately responded to at the start of the next day while the queries that came in within the day are responded to at the end of the day. Providing immediate feedback to customers would make them feel important.

Empowerment is the customer's feeling of being able to have a say in the service and/or giving them self-service options and the ability to provide feedback. With the approach of the business entrepreneurs relative to the factor on Avail-

ability and Accessibility as explained above, customers are likewise able to provide immediate feedback at the store level to the business entrepreneur and store staff as well.

5. Conclusion

The respondents were very satisfied in terms of customer satisfaction of the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in the Heritage Tourism site of Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China, based on the eight factors of the Customer Service Theory, namely: 2.1) Speed, 2.2) Transparency, 2.3) Availability and Accessibility, 2.4) Friendliness, 2.5) Simplicity, 2.6) Empowerment, 2.7) Accuracy, and 2.8) Details.

They agreed with their customer loyalty with the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in the Heritage Tourism site of Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China obtaining a mean rating of 4.00 on all the four stages of customer loyalty namely cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty.

The overall results of the level of Customer Satisfaction showed that the respondents were VERY SATISFIED from the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises in the Heritage Tourism site of Dongguan Street on the bases of the eight factors of the Customer Service Theory. The small, micro, and medium size business entrepreneurs should give utmost importance and priority to three of the eight factors of the Customer Service Theory to strengthen the business entrepreneurs marketing strategy. These are: 1) Friendliness ($\bar{x} = 3.98$), 2) Empowerment ($\bar{x} = 3.99$), and 3) Availability and Accessibility ($\bar{x} = 3.99$).

6. Recommendations

Friendliness is one challenging factor to inculcate in the employee's mindset and employers should provide training to its employees. The aspect of the difficulty and challenge inculcating the subject into the minds of the employees is its being attitudinal and behavioral in nature, and such does not happen overnight and/or change immediately after the employees' attending a training. As there is no standard training program on the subject, it is often approached to designing one on a case-to-case basis. And pulling out limited employees manning the store to attend training would impact daily store operations. Thus, it is recommended that the business entrepreneurs themselves conduct a continuing daily session on the "friendly approach" to handling customers, preferably immediately after and before the opening and closing of store hours, respectively.

Availability and Accessibility, it is easy for the store to ensure customers can readily communicate with the store and its employees, in either one or a combination of the several contact channels such as phone, email, web chat and social media. However, the store being able to immediately respond to these communications from the customer is quite challenging. Given the limited store staff or

employees manning the shop, their priority and focus would be the customers already at the store. Answering phone calls every now and then may be possible while there are customers present in the store.

However, immediately answering emails, web chats, and social media inquiries might be difficult, but not impossible because it is a simple matter of time management. Thus, the strategy recommended is for the business entrepreneur to allocate the first and last store hours when the store opens and closes in the morning and afternoon or early evening, respectively, as the number of customers is still few, attending to and answering all queries thru emails, web chats, and social media will be more convenient. In this way, the queries that came in when the store closes at the end of the day are immediately responded to at the start of the next day while the queries that came in within the day are responded to before the end of the day. Providing immediate feedback to customers would make them feel important.

Empowerment, the customers feeling of being able to have a say in the service and/or giving them self-service options and the ability to provide feedback is also too important. The business entrepreneurs can put up a “smiley” chart where customers can immediately give their feedback about the delivery of customer service by the store staff. At the end of the day, the store owner can tally such feedback and improve accordingly on their shortcomings. Another approach is for the business entrepreneur to use of QR Code, or lesser known as Quick Response Code, which the customer can scan and electronically provide their feedback and opinion about the store and its staff.

The small, micro, and medium size business enterprises through their owners may collectively act as a group and take advantage of the opportunity that are available from the appropriate government bodies with jurisdiction in the Heritage Tourism site of in the Dongguan Street in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province in China. The government agencies may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Municipal Commission of Industry and Information Technology (MCIIT). The small, micro, and medium size business entrepreneurs can ask help from the MCIIT, specifically on the area of information technology to make these small, micro, and medium business enterprises in the Heritage Tourism site of Dongguan Street visible on the internet. In so doing, despite these business enterprises being small, micro, and medium in size, their owners will be proud of their stores’ presence on the internet. And because of the nature of their size, the maintenance of the web sites of these business enterprises can be easily maintained through the MCIIT as well.
- Municipal Taxation Bureau. Likewise, the business entrepreneurs or owners may, individually or collectively, revisit the existing policies on taxation, especially those pertaining to small, micro, and medium size enterprises, to take advantage on tax policy incentives to enticing new and encouraging existing business entrepreneurs to enter and continue, respectively, to take part

in the small, micro, and medium size business industry.

- Municipal Finance Bureau. This agency of the government may provide support to small, micro, and medium size business enterprises and entrepreneurs in the form of financial assistance and other financial support programs, and/or subsidized loans, especially on occasions of difficult times, recessions, or force majeure events like this COVID-19 pandemic. The business owners and entrepreneurs when they are able to survive and stand up from these business challenges with the support of their government, will in the end give back and/or share to their community and government their earning and profit.

Strengthen the marketing strategy of the small, micro, and medium size business enterprises and help the entrepreneurs in the Heritage Tourism site in Dongguan Street focusing on three of the eight factors in the Customer Service Theory.

This study takes Dongguan Street in Yangzhou as a case and makes a statistical analysis. Although the results have a certain universality, they need to be further demonstrated in other similar tourist destinations.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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