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Factors Affecting Tourists' Satisfaction and Intention to Return a Destination: Measurement and Implications for Vietnam

Thang Dao Quang[1], Dung Nguyen Thai[2]*, Oanh Thai Thi Kim[3], Van Hoang Thi Thuy[3]

[1]Department of Academic Affair, Vinh University, Vietnam, [2]Youth Union, Vinh University, Vietnam, [3]College of Economics, Vinh University, 182 Le Duan, Vinh, 460000, Viet Nam. *Email: ntdung@vinhuni.edu.vn

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on measuring factors affecting tourists' satisfaction and intention to return to a destination in Vietnam. The theoretical model is built on basement of "Expectation - Perception," American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) and Holsat, suitable for the context of Vietnam tourism. Through surveying 398 observation samples using SPSS 29 and AMOS 29 software, testing unidirectional, multidirectional concepts and SEM linear structural model, the study has shown that tourists' satisfaction and return intention to the destinations in Vietnam is not only directly affected by destination image, perceived service quality, perceived value, perceived attractiveness, but also indirectly affected by expectations. The conclusions of the model are valuable in proposing management implications for tourism service businesses, destination managers and state tourism management agencies in Vietnam.

Keywords: Satisfaction and Return Intention, Factors Effect Satisfation and Return Intention of Tourists, Vietnamses Destinations
JEL Classifications: L83, M31, Z32, Z33

1. INTRODUCTION

For many countries around the world, tourism not only generates a large number of jobs and contributes to national GDP but also promotes trade, investment, and serves as a cultural bridge, enhancing mutual understanding among nations and ethnic groups (UNWTO, 2021). In the context of increasingly fierce global competition, tourist satisfaction has become a crucial factor in ensuring the sustainable development of the tourism industry. Satisfaction not only encourages repeat visits but also drives natural viral marketing through the sharing of positive travel experiences (Chi and Qu, 2008), creating a widespread ripple effect that influences the image and reputation of tourism destinations.

The satisfaction of international tourists contributes to elevating a country's position on the global tourism map. When tourists feel satisfied with a destination, they tend to spend more, extend their stay, and recommend the destination to others (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000).

Customer satisfaction originates from customers' evaluations after using a product or service (Hunt, 1977). According to Churchill and Surprenant (1982), customer satisfaction is composed of three factors: Expectation, the performance of the product/service in meeting customer needs, and disconfirmation. Oliver (1980) proposed that customer satisfaction is the reaction of customers when their needs and desires are fulfilled. Satisfaction is essentially an assessment of a product or service's ability to meet customer demands. The difference between perceived quality and expected quality determines customer satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Most studies on customer satisfaction emphasize perception and expectation (Alves and Raposo, 2007). Many researchers have introduced various models to measure tourist satisfaction, including Oliver's (1980) "Expectation-Disconfirmation" model, the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) developed by Fornell (1992), the European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) proposed by Dotchin and Oakland (1994), and the HOLSAT model developed by Tribe and Snaith (1998).

In Vietnam, tourism has been recognized as an emerging market that plays an important role in economic development, bringing tremendous benefits reflected through socio-economic indicators and offering numerous business opportunities, creating a foundation for a new strategy toward a sustainable pathway (Tung, 2020). Therefore, measuring tourist satisfaction, which is influenced by various factors, holds significant importance for tourism businesses—helping them refine their products and services—and for governmental agencies in formulating policies that foster sustainable tourism development, creating greater value for communities, society, and the nation.

This study aims to examine the factors affecting tourist satisfaction about Vietnamese destinations and return intention, thereby providing insights and implications for tourism businesses, the board of manager of destinations and state agencies to enhance tourist satisfaction and encourage return intention in the future.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS AND RESEARCH MODEL

2.1. Theoretical Basis

2.1.1. Expectation–disconfirmation theory

When discussing the measurement of customer satisfaction, numerous researchers have proposed various models. For instance, Oliver (1980) introduced the "Expectation-Disconfirmation" model, in which customer satisfaction is determined through two main stages: initial expectation and actual experience. This model has since been studied in various contexts.

Research by Lemon and Verhoef (2016) and Parasuraman et al. (2017) suggested that before experiencing a product or service, customers form expectations based on information, advertisements, or previous experiences. After engaging with the service or product, they evaluate their actual experience. Satisfaction reaches its highest level when the actual experience exceeds expectations. Conversely, if the experience fails to meet expectations, customers may feel dissatisfied.

2.1.2. American customer satisfaction index (ACSI)

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) model, developed by Fornell (1992), was designed to measure overall customer satisfaction based on the causal relationships between factors such as expectation, perceived quality, and perceived value.

According to Fornell et al. (2016), before experiencing a product or service, customers typically form expectations based on information, advertisements from sellers, and/or their previous experiences. After using the product or service, they evaluate the quality and value they receive. The higher the perceived quality and perceived value exceed the initial expectation, the greater the customer satisfaction. Conversely, if perceived quality and perceived value are lower than or do not meet initial expectations, customers may feel dissatisfied, which could lead to complaints and a decline in brand and business loyalty (Aksoy, 2017).

2.1.3. European customer satisfaction index (ECSI)

The European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) builds upon and extends the ACSI model, emphasizing the role of brand image in shaping customer expectations and satisfaction. This model is particularly suitable for analyzing service industries, where brand image plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining target customers.

According to Nguyễn and Nguyễn (2021), brand image directly influences customer expectations, which in turn affect perceived quality and perceived value, ultimately leading to overall satisfaction. In addition to measuring satisfaction, the ECSI model also provides a clear explanation of the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

2.1.4. HOLSAT model

Regarding the evaluation of satisfaction in the tourism sector, Tribe and Snaith (1998) introduced the HOLSAT model to measure tourists' satisfaction levels. According to Gronroos (1984), a positive image of an organization or destination can compensate for minor shortcomings in service delivery, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction. This model provides a comprehensive approach, not only assessing service quality but also identifying the role of brand image in shaping customer perception and satisfaction.

The HOLSAT model enables the measurement of tourist satisfaction by considering both positive and negative attributes, allowing for a more holistic assessment of the tourist experience. This model utilizes a Likert scale to measure the gap between initial expectations and actual perceptions after the trip.

2.2. Research Model and Proposed Measurement Scales

The proposed research model is developed by integrating key elements from the Expectation-Disconfirmation model, ACSI, ECSI, and HOLSAT, along with insights from both domestic and international studies, including Bigne et al. (2001), Um et al. (2006). This proposed model aims to provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing tourist satisfaction by combining various established theories and empirical findings. The research model is illustrated in Figure 1.

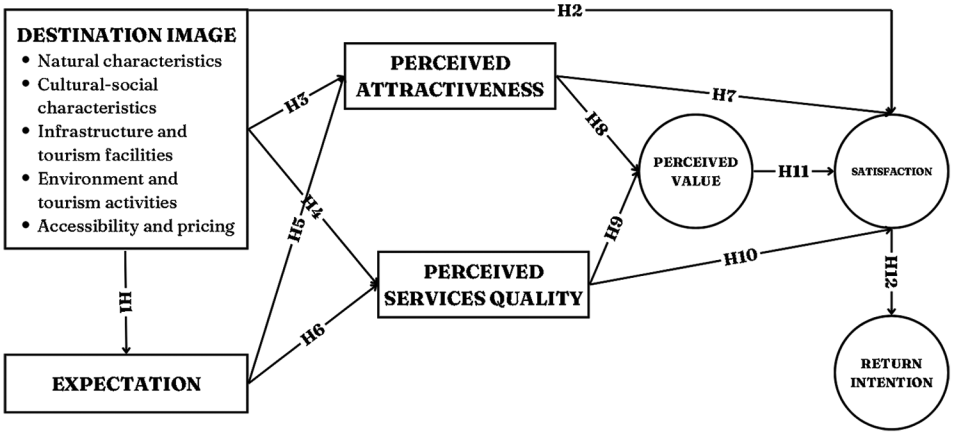
The hypothesis consisted of:

Hypothesis H_1: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' expectations (MD) of a destination.

Destination image (HA) plays a crucial role in attracting tourists and shaping their tourists' expectation (MD) before their visit. According to UNWTO (2019), a tourist destination is not only composed of natural resources and services but also serves as a fundamental unit in competitive tourism market strategies. This suggests that destination image (HA) can significantly influence tourists' perceptions and tourists' expectation (MD) right from the trip planning stage.

Previous studies have emphasized the role of destination image (HA) in shaping tourists' expectations. Kozak (2002) and Yoon

Figure 1: Proposed research model



and Uysal (2005) pointed out that a tourism destination is a composite product, consisting of multiple factors such as weather, infrastructure, services, landscape, and socio-cultural attributes. Among these, destination image (HA) directly influences tourists' expectation (MD) regarding the quality of experience at the destination.

Beerli and Martin (2004) also argued that destination image (HA) not only reflects the physical attributes of a destination but also shapes tourists' beliefs, perceptions, and expectations. When destination image (HA) is positively built through media, marketing, or past tourist experiences, visitors tend to develop higher tourists' expectation (MD) regarding service quality, experiences, and convenience that the destination can offer.

According to Nguyễn and Nguyễn (2021), destination image (HA) can enhance or adjust Tourists' Expectation (MD), helping them make destination choices that align with their preferences. The study emphasized that factors such as natural characteristics, culture, infrastructure, and pricing at a destination directly impact Tourists' Expectation (MD).

In the proposed research model, destination image (HA) is constructed as a second-order variable, consisting of five first-order dimensions, including: Natural characteristics (TN); culture-social characteristics (VX); infrastructure and tourism facilities (HT); environment and tourism activities (MT); accessibility and pricing (TC).

Hypothesis H_2: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.

Destination image (HA) not only plays a crucial role in attracting tourists but also directly impacts their level of satisfaction after experiencing the destination. According to Beerli and Martin (2004), destination image (HA) consists of both cognitive factors (what tourists know or believe about the destination) and affective factors (the positive or negative emotions they associate with the destination). When destination image (HA) is positively constructed, tourists are more likely to feel satisfied with their experiences due to the alignment between their initial tourists' expectation (MD) and their actual perceptions.

Kozak (2002) and Yoon and Uysal (2005) argue that a destination with a strong positive image generates higher tourists' expectation (MD) but also has the potential to meet or exceed these expectations, thereby increasing Tourists' Satisfaction (HL). If Destination Image (HA) is built upon elements such as scenic landscapes, well-developed infrastructure, rich local culture, and high-quality services, tourists are more likely to be satisfied with their trip.

Nguyễn and Nguyễn (2021) further emphasizes that destination image (HA) directly impacts tourists' satisfaction through factors such as tourism facilities, infrastructure, natural environment, and service quality. They affirmed that the components of Destination Image (HA), including environmental quality, diversity of tourism activities, and ease of access to services, significantly influence tourists' satisfaction levels.

Hypothesis H_3: Destination image (HA) Positively Influences Tourists' Perceived Attractiveness (HD) of the Destination.

Destination image (HA) plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions and evaluations of a destination's perceived attractiveness (HD). According to Hu and Ritchie (1993), perceived attractiveness (HD) consists of natural elements, cultural heritage, infrastructure, and tourism services, which together form the overall tourist experience. When Destination Image (HA) is positively constructed, tourists tend to perceive the destination as more attractive, thereby increasing their likelihood of choosing and revisiting the location in the future.

Krešić and Prebežac (2011) suggest that perceived attractiveness (HD) is strongly influenced by destination image (HA) in the minds of tourists. A destination with a positive image generates higher appeal through elements such as service quality, diverse tourism activities, rich natural environment, and well-developed infrastructure. When tourists develop a strong first impression of a destination, they are more likely to perceive it as more attractive compared to competing destinations.

Nguyễn and Nguyễn (2021) further emphasizes that a well-perceived destination image enhances its attractiveness through factors such as natural landscapes, cultural uniqueness, high-quality services, and entertainment offerings. They argued that Perceived Attractiveness (HD) is not only shaped by tangible attributes but also by tourists' emotions and personal experiences, which are amplified when a destination has a strong image in the eyes of visitors.

Hypothesis H_4: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' perceived service quality (CL) at the destination

Destination image (HA) plays a critical role in shaping tourists' perceptions of service quality at a destination. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), perceived service quality (CL) is not solely based on the actual service outcome but is also influenced by tourists' expectation (MD) prior to the experience. Destination Image (HA) can impact this perception by fostering trust in professionalism, staff friendliness, reliability, and overall service quality.

Research by Bigne et al. (2001) suggests that a positive destination image (HA) enhances tourists' perceptions of service quality, even before direct interaction with the services. A destination marketed with a professional image, modern facilities, and high-quality services encourages tourists to preconceive the service quality as superior compared to destinations with a weak or unclear image.

Trần (2019) highlights that destinations with a strong destination image (HA) tend to be rated higher in terms of service reliability, staff honesty, and overall professionalism. Furthermore, Nguyễn and Nguyễn (2021) assert that a well-established destination image (HA) increases tourists' trust in service quality, leading to higher satisfaction levels and stronger loyalty toward the destination.

Hypothesis H_5: Tourists' expectation (MD) positively influences tourists' perceived attractiveness (HD) of the destination.

Tourists' expectation (MD) plays a crucial role in shaping their perception of perceived attractiveness (HD) at a destination. According to Oliver (1980), tourists' expectation (MD) serves as a prerequisite factor in the evaluation process of customer experiences. In the tourism context, tourists form expectations based on available information from promotions, media, reviews, and past personal experiences. When their expectations are high, their perception of perceived attractiveness (HD) is also likely to increase, provided that their actual experience meets or exceeds those expectations.

Kozak (2002) and Yoon and Uysal (2005) argue that tourists' expectation (MD) not only influences satisfaction levels but also directly affects their evaluation of Perceived Attractiveness (HD). When tourists expect a destination with beautiful landscapes, well-developed infrastructure, and diverse activities, they tend to focus on these elements during their visit. If these attributes align with their expectations, tourists will perceive the destination as more attractive and worth exploring.

Tribe and Snaith (1998) developed the HOLSAT model to measure Tourists' Satisfaction (HL) by considering both positive and negative attributes of a destination. Their findings suggest that when the actual experience meets or exceeds Tourists' Expectation (MD), tourists are more likely to perceive the destination as highly attractive.

Additionally, Ćulić et al. (2021) found that destination attractiveness factors positively impact tourists' satisfaction (HL) and destination image (HA) in tourists' minds, thereby influencing future revisit intentions. This highlights that fulfilling tourists' expectations regarding infrastructure, entertainment, and tourism services enhances their perception of perceived attractiveness (HD).

Moreover, Slack (2019) states that when the actual experience matches or surpasses tourists' expectation (MD), tourists exhibit higher satisfaction levels toward the destination. This reinforces the connection between meeting expectations and enhancing perceived attractiveness (HD) of the destination.

Hypothesis H_6: Tourists' expectation (MD) positively influences perceived service quality (CL) at the destination.

The study by Parasuraman et al. (1988) indicates that service quality is evaluated based on the comparison between initial customer expectations and actual experiences. When tourists' expectations regarding infrastructure, staff attitude, and service professionalism are met or exceeded, they tend to assess the service quality of the destination at a higher level.

Similarly, Wu and Li (2015) emphasize that tourists' expectation (MD) has a significant impact on perceived service quality (CL). Tourists with positive tourists' expectation (MD) before their trip are more likely to perceive the service at the destination favorably, even if minor service shortcomings exist. This suggests that managing and aligning tourists' expectation (MD) effectively can be a crucial strategy for improving perceived service quality (CL).

Additionally, the study by Ali et al. (2016) reveals that high tourists' expectation (MD) enhances tourists' focus on key service attributes, such as staff professionalism, infrastructure convenience, and service responsiveness. When these elements align with initial expectations, perceived service quality (CL) is rated higher, subsequently enhancing tourists' satisfaction (HL) and fostering loyalty toward the destination.

Hypothesis H_7: Perceived attractive (HD) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.

The study by Ćulić et al. (2021) highlights that perceived attractive (HD) of a destination—including factors such as natural scenery, infrastructure, and tourism activities—has a significant positive impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL). When tourists perceive a destination as attractive and their experiences align with their tourists' expectation (MD), they tend to report higher levels of satisfaction.

Similarly, Prayag and Ryan (2012) indicate that perceived attractive (HD) serves as a crucial mediator in the formation of tourists' satisfaction (HL). Experiencing a unique natural environment, rich cultural heritage, or high-quality tourism services leads tourists to not only perceive the destination as attractive but also feel more satisfied with their overall trip.

Additionally, Chi and Qu (2008) assert that tourists' satisfaction is directly influenced by the perceived attractiveness of a destination. Elements such as the variety of recreational activities, service diversity, and environmental safety strongly impact overall Tourists' Satisfaction (HL). When these factors meet or exceed tourists' expectations, their satisfaction with the destination increases significantly.

Hypothesis H_8: Perceived attractive (HD) positively influences perceived value (VL) of the Destination.

Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived value (VL) as the overall assessment of a product or service's utility, based on the perceived balance between what consumers receive and what they give up. In the tourism context, when tourists perceive a destination as having attractive attributes such as beautiful landscapes, diverse entertainment activities, and rich cultural heritage, they are more likely to perceive the benefits as outweighing the costs incurred. This, in turn, enhances their perceived value (VL) of the destination.

Additionally, Chen and Tsai (2007) confirm that perceived attractive (HD) of a destination has a significant positive impact on perceived value (VL), which subsequently affects tourists' satisfaction (HL) and future revisit intentions. When tourists experience highly appealing attributes at a destination, they not only feel satisfied but also assign a higher overall value to their trip.

Hypothesis H_9: Perceived service quality (CL) positively influences perceived value (VL) of the destination.

Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived service quality (CL) as consumers' evaluation of the overall excellence or superiority of a product or service. In the tourism sector, perceived service quality (CL) encompasses various elements such as infrastructure, staff attitude, amenities, and additional support services. When tourists perceive that these factors meet or exceed their expectations, they tend to rate the service quality of the destination more highly.

Perceived value (VL) is considered an overall assessment of the benefits received compared to the costs incurred. Petrick (2002) highlights that perceived value (VL) in tourism services is influenced by factors such as perceived quality, emotional response, pricing, and reputation. Among these, perceived quality is identified as a key determinant of the overall perceived value (VL) tourists attribute to a destination.

Additionally, Trang and Ho (2019) confirm that perceived service quality (CL) has a direct positive effect on perceived value (VL). Specifically, when tourists highly evaluate the service quality at a destination, they perceive a greater overall value in their travel experience. This emphasizes the critical role of enhancing service quality to increase tourists' perceived value (VL) of the destination.

Hypothesis H_{10}: Perceived service quality (CL) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.

Research by Parasuraman et al. (1988) suggests that service quality is evaluated based on the comparison between initial customer expectations and actual experiences. When tourists perceive high perceived service quality (CL) at a destination, they are more likely to feel satisfied with their travel experience.

Similarly, Phạm T.S. (2024) confirms that Perceived Service Quality (CL) has a direct positive impact on Tourists' Satisfaction (HL). Specifically, when tourists highly evaluate the service quality at a destination, they tend to perceive the overall value of the destination more positively. This emphasizes the importance of continuously enhancing service quality to increase tourists' satisfaction (HL) and improve their overall travel experience.

Hypothesis H_{11}: Perceived value (VL) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.

Research by Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived value (VL) as tourists' overall assessment of the benefits received in relation to the cost incurred. When tourists perceive a high level of value from their travel experience, they are more likely to feel satisfied with their trip.

Similarly, Trang and Ho (2019) confirm that perceived value (VL) has a direct positive impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL). Specifically, when tourists recognize that their travel experience offers spiritual benefits, high-quality services, and reasonable costs, their satisfaction levels increase significantly. This highlights the importance of enhancing perceived value (VL) to strengthen tourists' satisfaction (HL) and improve overall destination attractiveness.

Hypothesis H_{12}: Tourists' satisfaction (HL) positively influences tourists' return intention (QL) the destination.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that tourists' satisfaction (HL) has a significant positive impact on their return intention (QL) a destination. Specifically, when tourists have a satisfying experience, they are more likely to return and recommend the destination to others.

The study by Hà and Anh (2024) confirmed a strong relationship between tourists' satisfaction (HL) and revisit intention among tourists at Đà Lạt Night Market, emphasizing that satisfaction plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' likelihood of returning. Similarly, Lan and Thích (2021) identified tourists' satisfaction (HL) as a key determinant of domestic tourists' revisit intention at Bình Quới Tourism Village.

Additionally, research by Giao and Ngân (2021) conducted in Bà Rịa – Vũng Tàu further supports the notion that tourists' satisfaction (HL) positively influences domestic tourists' return intention (QL). These findings highlight the importance of

enhancing tourists' satisfaction (HL) to increase the likelihood of return visits, thereby strengthening the long-term appeal of tourism destinations.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling Methodology

The observational samples were collected using a convenient and random sampling approach to ensure a diverse representation of respondents. The sample size was determined using Yamane (1967) formula, which is widely used in survey research to calculate an appropriate sample size based on population size, margin of error, and confidence level. The calculated sample size was n = 384.16, using the following parameters: Z = 1.96 (corresponding to a 95% confidence level); P = 0.5 (assuming the maximum variability); e = 5% (margin of error). This sample size is 398, ensures statistical reliability and validity in measuring factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and revisit intentions at the selected tourism destinations.

3.2. Build up the Questionaire

The questionnaire was developed using a 5-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to express their level of agreement with various statements. The survey consisted of general questions and questions designed to test the 12 proposed hypotheses. The observed questions were adapted from reliable sources, ensuring validity and consistency in measuring key constructs such as destination image, perceived attractiveness, service quality, perceived value, tourists' satisfaction, and revisit intention. The data collection period was conducted from January 2024 to May 2024, ensuring a sufficient timeframe to gather diverse responses and minimize potential biases.

3.3. Data Analysis Methodology

After the data was entered, it was processed using SPSS version 29 and AMOS version 29 through a structured data analysis procedure. The first step involved conducting descriptive statistics to summarize the characteristics of the research sample, including demographic information and key research variables.

To assess the reliability of the measurement scales, Cronbach's Alpha was applied. A Cronbach's Alpha value >0.7 was considered acceptable, ensuring the internal consistency of the scales. Additionally, an item-total correlation >0.3 was required to retain variables for further analysis, ensuring the reliability of each measurement item.

Next, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were performed to evaluate the validity of the measurement model and assess the relationships among the constructs. CFA was used to determine the model's fit with the collected data, ensuring that the measurement items accurately reflected their respective constructs. Several model fit indices were considered, including Chi-square/df (CMIN/df), where a value of ≤3 was considered good and ≤5 was acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Awang, 2012). Other key indices included CFI, GFI, TLI, and IFI, all of which needed to be ≥0.85 (Bollen, 1989), while the RMSEA value had to be ≤0.08 (Hair et al., 2010) to indicate a well-fitting model. Furthermore, PCLOSE values of ≥0.05 were considered good, while ≥0.01 was deemed acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

For the model to achieve convergent validity, factor loadings had to exceed 0.5, demonstrating that the measurement items strongly represented their respective constructs. Additionally, the composite reliability (CR) needed to be >0.7, and the average variance extracted (AVE) had to be above 50% to confirm reliability and convergent validity.

To ensure discriminant validity, a correlation test was conducted to verify whether the research constructs were distinct from one another. A bootstrap analysis with a 95% confidence interval was used to further confirm discriminant validity. If the 95% confidence interval of the correlation coefficients among the constructs did not contain 1, the constructs were considered distinct and valid for further analysis (Torkzadeh et al., 2003).

The study applies structural equation modeling (SEM) to assess the impact of various factors within the proposed relationships while testing the reliability and robustness of the estimated model. To ensure the model's appropriateness, several fit indices are evaluated. Specifically, a Chi-square/df (CMIN/df) value of ≤3 is considered a good fit, while ≤5 is deemed acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Awang, 2012). Additionally, the indices CFI, GFI, TLI, and IFI should be ≥0.85 to indicate an acceptable model fit (Bollen, 1989). The RMSEA value should be ≤0.08 (Hair et al., 2010), ensuring the model's error remains within an acceptable range. Lastly, the PCLOSE index should be ≥0.05 for a good fit, while ≥0.01 is still considered acceptable (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Reliability Test for Measurement Scales (Cronbach's Alpha)

According to the analysis performed in SPSS 29, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the measurement scales were relatively high, ranging from 0.842 to 0.931. Additionally, the corrected item-total correlations for all scales exceeded 0.3, meeting the correlation standard (Thọ, 2014). This indicates that all measurement scales used in the study are statistically valid and reliable. The Cronbach's Alpha analysis results for the measurement scales are presented in Table 1.

4.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis EFA

4.2.1. Measuring the multidimensional scale – destination image (HA)

This study employs a second-order construct (multidimensional scale) for the variable destination image (HA). The results of the measurement model analysis for the first-order constructs of the multidimensional scale indicate that the model fits well with the empirical data: Chi-square = 1.591, which is <5; CFI = 0.969, TLI = 0.965, IFI = 0.969, GFI = 0.922—all exceeding the 0.85 threshold; RMSEA = 0.039, which is lower than 0.08; and PCLOSE = 0.998, which is >0.05 (Figure 1).

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha of research variables

Observed variable	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Corrected item-total correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
HA	DESTINATION IMAGE (HA)			
TN	Natural characteristics, Cronbach's alpha=0.885			
TN1	11.45	5.004	0.796	0.844
TN2	11.34	5.196	0.746	0.856
TN3	11.48	5.223	0.663	0.875
TN4	11.40	5.087	0.704	0.866
TN5	11.41	5.215	0.715	0.863
VX	Culture–social characteristics. Cronbach's alpha=0.868			
VX1	11.90	4.737	0.715	0.834
VX2	11.92	4.959	0.669	0.845
VX3	12.00	4.945	0.692	0.840
VX4	11.88	4.874	0.677	0.843
VX5	11.93	4.630	0.703	0.837
HT	Infrastructure and tourism facilities. Cronbach's alpha=0.862			
HT1	12.09	4.971	0.668	0.836
HT2	12.20	4.722	0.722	0.822
HT3	12.13	4.876	0.675	0.834
HT4	12.19	4.781	0.648	0.842
HT5	12.23	4.780	0.690	0.830
MT	Environment and tourism activities. Cronbach's alpha=0.826			
MT1	12.49	4.407	0.651	0.785
MT2	12.49	4.190	0.626	0.790
MT3	12.67	4.173	0.660	0.780
MT4	12.69	4.145	0.656	0.781
MT5	12.61	4.294	0.529	0.820
TC	Accessibility and pricing. Cronbach's alpha=0.842			
TC1	12.06	4.243	0.648	0.810
TC2	11.80	4.596	0.620	0.817
TC3	12.07	4.240	0.697	0.796
TC4	11.74	4.581	0.632	0.814
TC5	11.98	4.393	0.640	0.812
MD	Tourists expectation (MD). Cronbach's alpha=0.907			
MD1	7.45	12.113	0.719	0.898
MD2	7.73	11.760	0.851	0.868
MD3	7.92	12.117	0.808	0.877
MD4	7.72	12.918	0.718	0.896
MD5	7.75	12.813	0.742	0.891
HD	Perceived attractive (HD). Cronbach's alpha=0.883			
HD1	9.71	9.198	0.775	0.844
HD2	9.77	9.419	0.794	0.842
HD3	9.77	9.176	0.793	0.840
HD4	9.59	9.960	0.637	0.876
HD5	9.94	9.196	0.624	0.885
CL	Perceived service quality (CL). Cronbach's alpha=0.911			
CL1	10.32	11.962	0.751	0.896
CL2	10.33	11.813	0.744	0.898
CL3	10.29	11.500	0.789	0.889
CL4	10.16	11.494	0.803	0.886
CL5	9.99	11.204	0.788	0.889
VL	Perceived value (VL). Cronbach's alpha=0.894			
VL1	10.11	9.238	0.731	0.873
VL2	10.18	8.862	0.784	0.861
VL3	10.26	9.108	0.750	0.868
VL4	9.91	9.746	0.685	0.883
VL5	10.08	9.069	0.748	0.869
HL	Tourists' satisfaction (HL). Cronbach's alpha=0.931			
HL1	10.09	7.378	0.854	0.908
HL2	10.05	7.577	0.846	0.910
HL3	9.90	7.780	0.791	0.921
HL4	10.03	7.584	0.810	0.917
HL5	10.03	7.669	0.790	0.921
QL	Return intention (QL). Cronbach's alpha=0.847			
QL1	10.37	8.783	0.751	0.789
QL2	10.47	9.101	0.695	0.805
QL3	9.90	9.443	0.670	0.812
QL4	9.93	9.124	0.608	0.831
QL5	10.29	10.287	0.564	0.839

Source: Calculated from SPSS 29

All observed variables have factor loadings >0.5, ensuring convergent validity. Furthermore, all standardized weights exceed 0.5, confirming the high reliability and adequacy of the observed variables.

The study used a second-order concept (multidimensional scale) which is the destination image (HA) variable. The results of the measurement model analysis with the first-order concepts of the multidimensional scale showed that the model is compatible with the actual data: Chi-square = 1.591 is <5, CFI = 0.969, TLI = 0.965; IFI = 0.969; GFI = 0.922 are all >0.85; RMSEA = 0.039 is <0.08; and PCLOSE = 0.998 is >0.05 (Figure 1). The observed variables all have factor loadings >0.5 and thus achieve convergence value. All standardized weights are >0.5, so the observed variables all have a high level of suitability. The results of bootstrap analysis with a sample size of 1000 showed that the 95% confidence intervals of the correlation coefficients between the components in the destination image (HA) scale did not contain the value 1 (Table 2). This shows that the components in the multidimensional destination image (HA) scale achieved discriminant validity and were unidimensional components in the multidimensional scale.

Conducting the assessment of convergence and discrimination in CFA analysis through the AVE, MSV indexes, Fornell & Larcker table (Hair et al., 2016), the results are shown in Table 3.

The results in Table 3 show that: all CR values are >0.7, so the scales ensure reliability; all AVE values are >0.5, so the scales ensure convergence; the square root of AVE is greater than the correlations between the latent variables, the MSV value is smaller than AVE, so discrimination is accepted.

Continue to add the second-order concept (HA - destination image) for analysis. The results of the measurement model analysis with first-order concepts and second-order concepts show that the model is compatible with the actual data: Chi-square = 1.646 is <5, CFI = 0.965, TLI = 0.961; IFI = 0.965; GFI = 0.918 are all >0.85; RMSEA = 0.040 is <0.08; and PCLOSE = 0.993 is >0.05 (Figure 2). No observed variable has a small factor loading coefficient (<0.5), all observed variables show convergence value.

Table 2: The 95% confidence intervals of correlation coefficients in the destination image (HA) scale

Relationship between variables			R	95% confidence interval of the correlation coefficient			
				Bias corrected percentile method		Bias percentile method	
				Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
VX	<-->	TN	0.666	0.592	0.729	0.597	0.732
HT	<-->	TN	0.590	0.514	0.657	0.516	0.659
TC	<-->	TN	0.591	0.511	0.661	0.516	0.663
VX	<-->	TC	0.646	0.559	0.706	0.575	0.715
HT	<-->	MT	0.566	0.482	0.639	0.482	0.639
VX	<-->	MT	0.565	0.490	0.640	0.490	0.640
HT	<-->	TC	0.588	0.503	0.660	0.503	0.660
MT	<-->	TC	0.667	0.592	0.728	0.595	0.729
VX	<-->	HT	0.740	0.687	0.792	0.685	0.790
MT	<-->	TN	0.535	0.456	0.614	0.453	0.610

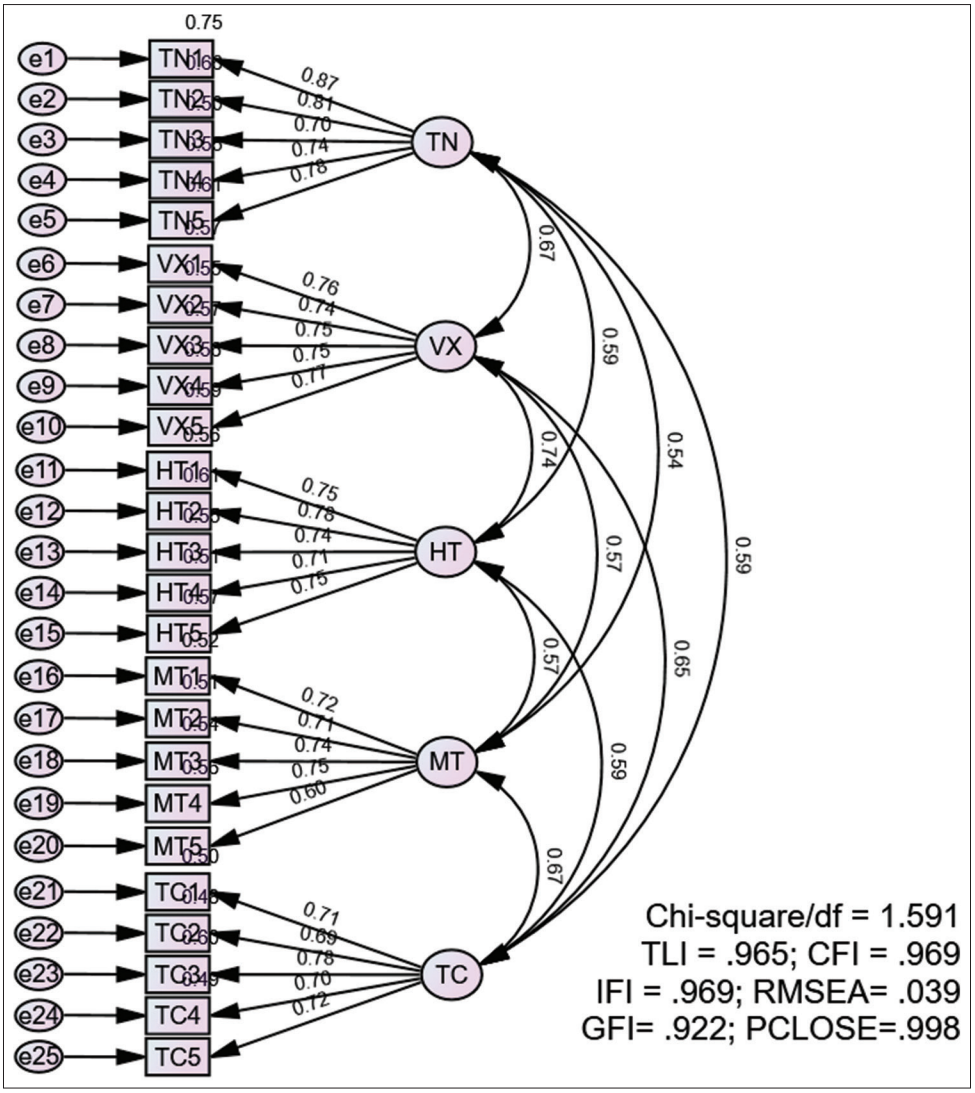
Source: Analysed in AMOS 29

Table 3: Results of convergent and discriminant analysis of the first-order scale

Variable	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	MT	VX	TN	TC	HT
MT	0.831	0.501	0.445	0.836	0.705				
VX	0.868	0.569	0.548	0.868	0.565	0.754			
TN	0.888	0.613	0.444	0.897	0.535	0.666	0.783		
TC	0.843	0.518	0.445	0.845	0.667	0.646	0.591	0.720	
HT	0.863	0.557	0.548	0.864	0.566	0.740	0.590	0.588	0.746

Source: Calculated from AMOS 29 and EXCEL

Figure 2: Standardized CFA Analysis for the Destination Image (HA) Scale with First-Order variables



In the output of the analytical model in Figure 3, the estimated regression weights show that the impact of the second-order variable (HA) on its component first-order variables all have P < 0.05. Thus, the component first-order variables are all suitable and explain well the second-order variable. In the estimated standardized regression weights, also known as the loading factor values (standardized regression weights), of the component first-order variables are significantly higher than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, the first-order variables all contribute very well to the second-order variable.

4.2.1.1. Model evaluation with unidimensional scales for the variables tourists expectation (MD), perceived attractiveness (HD), perceived service quality (CL), perceived value (VL), tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL)

The results of CFA in Figure 4 confirmed factors with the remaining unidimensional scales also show that the model is compatible with the actual data: Chi-square/df = 2.626 is <5, CFI = 0.928, TLI = 0.920, IFI = 0.928, GFI = 0.853 is >0.85, RMSEA = 0.064 is <0.08. The factor weights of each observed variable in the analyzed factors show that they have achieved convergent value.

Figure 3: CFA analysis of standardizing the Destination Image (HA) scale with second-order variable

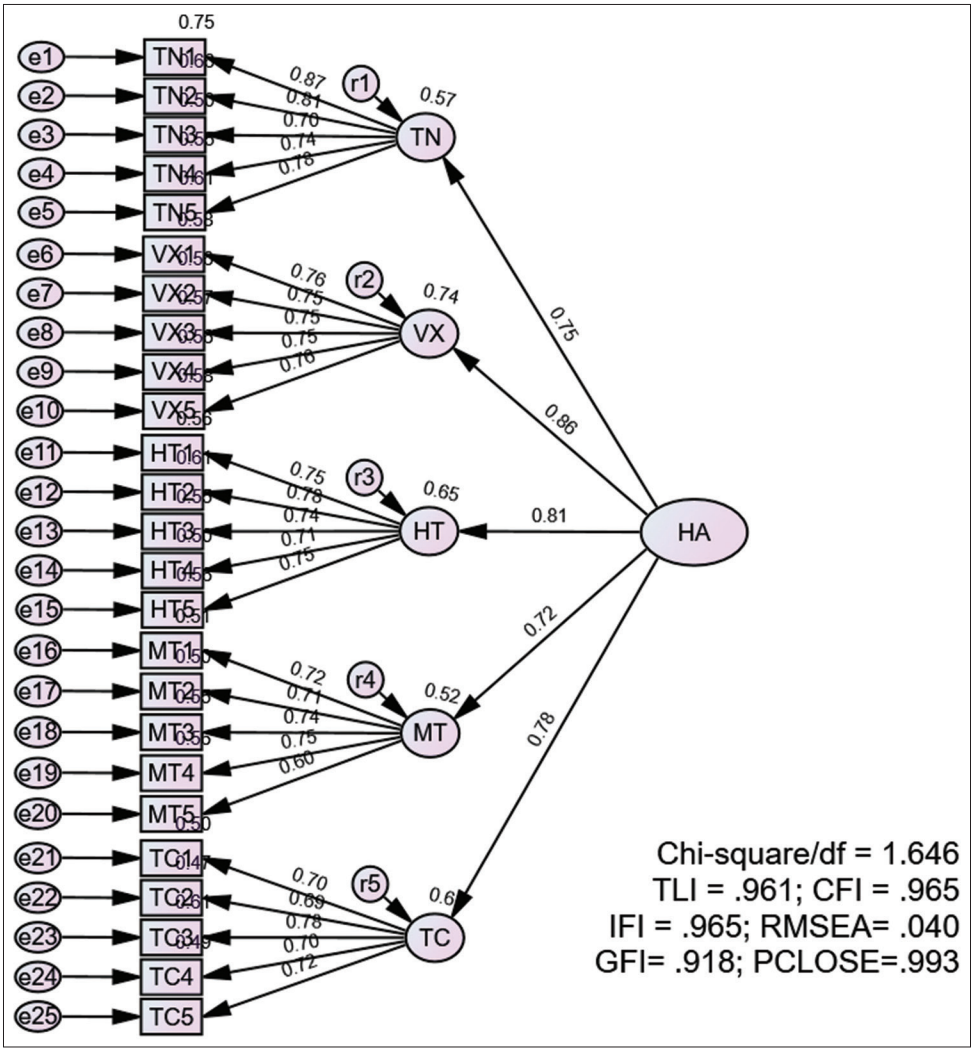
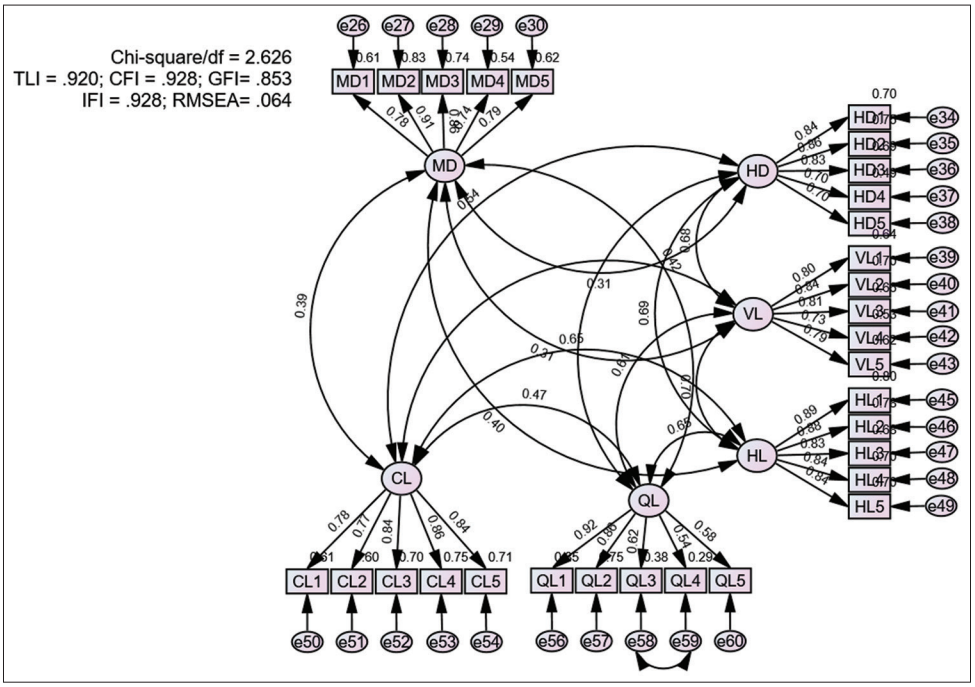


Figure 4: CFA analysis results of unidimensional scales



The bootstrap analysis results indicate that the correlation coefficients of the factors included in the analysis have 95% confidence intervals that do not contain the value of 1. This confirms that the measurement scales achieve discriminant validity and function as unidimensional scales (Table 4).

Regarding the quality of observed variables, the analysis is based on the regression weights and standardized regression weights tables from the AMOS output. The regression weights table shows that the estimated regression weights have $P < 0.05$, indicating that all observed variables are statistically significant within the model. Additionally, the Standardized Regression Weights table reveals that all standardized factor loadings exceed 0.5, confirming that the observed variables exhibit a high level of model fit.

Evaluate convergent and discriminant validity in CFA analysis using AVE, MSV indicators, and the Fornell & Larcker criterion (Hair et al., 2016). The results are presented in Table 5.

The results in Table 5 indicate that all CR values exceed 0.7, ensuring the reliability of the measurement scales. Additionally, all AVE values are >0.5, confirming convergent validity. The square root of AVE (bolded values) is higher than the correlations between latent variables (correlation coefficients below the bolded diagonal), and the MSV values are smaller than the AVE values, thereby confirming discriminant validity.

Table 4: The 95% confidence interval of the correlation coefficients in the unidimensional scale

Relationship between Variables			R	95% confidence interval of the correlation coefficient			
				Bias-corrected percentile method		Bias percentile method	
				Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
HD	<-->	VL	0.685	0.623	0.744	0.620	0.740
VL	<-->	HL	0.697	0.636	0.749	0.634	0.747
HL	<-->	QL	0.647	0.572	0.715	0.564	0.711
VL	<-->	QL	0.612	0.530	0.677	0.533	0.679
HD	<-->	QL	0.612	0.532	0.690	0.531	0.690
HD	<-->	HL	0.691	0.622	0.747	0.622	0.747
MD	<-->	HD	0.307	0.179	0.414	0.176	0.413
MD	<-->	VL	0.310	0.217	0.409	0.211	0.404
MD	<-->	HL	0.402	0.280	0.505	0.281	0.507
MD	<-->	CL	0.390	0.278	0.487	0.279	0.488
MD	<-->	QL	0.424	0.323	0.507	0.324	0.507
CL	<-->	QL	0.465	0.378	0.557	0.371	0.552
VL	<-->	CL	0.495	0.395	0.577	0.402	0.579
HL	<-->	CL	0.651	0.581	0.711	0.584	0.714
HD	<-->	CL	0.537	0.435	0.622	0.438	0.623

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29

4.2.1.2. Overall model analysis results

The preliminary assessment of the measurement scales indicates that the scales established to measure the factors in the research model meet the required reliability. The author further evaluates the reliability of the measurement scales using the official research sample.

The measurement scales are assessed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with both the measurement model and the overall model to evaluate convergent validity, the model's compatibility with empirical data, and discriminant validity among factors. The reliability of the scales is reassessed using composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE).

The evaluation results confirm that the model fits the survey data well, as indicated by the acceptable fit indices: Chi-square/df = 1.915, which is <3; CFI = 0.911; IFI = 0.912; and TLI = 0.906, all exceeding the threshold of 0.85. Additionally, RMSEA = 0.048 is below 0.08, and PCLOSE = 0.884 is >0.05 (Figure 5). These indicators confirm that the model achieves a good fit.

Regarding the quality of observed variables, the analysis is based on the regression weights and standardized regression weights tables in the AMOS output. The regression weights table shows that all estimated regression weights have a $P < 0.05$, indicating that all observed variables are statistically significant in the model. The standardized regression weights table reveals that all standardized factor loadings are >0.5, demonstrating a high level of fit for the observed variables.

The assessment of convergent validity and discriminant validity of the variables in the overall model was conducted using CFA analysis, based on AVE, MSV, and Fornell & Larcker's criteria (Hair et al., 2016). The results are presented in Table 6. According to Table 6, all CR values exceed 0.7, ensuring the reliability of the measurement scales. The average variance extracted (AVE) values are all >0.5, confirming convergent validity. The square root of AVE (bold values) is greater than the correlations between latent variables (correlation coefficients below the bold diagonal), and MSV values are lower than AVE values, thereby confirming discriminant validity.

4.3. Results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis

The results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, after adjusting for possible correlations between the error terms of observed variables within the factors, indicate that the model achieves a good fit with the data: Chi-square/df = 1.845 (<5),

Table 5: Results of convergent and discriminant analysis of the unidimensional scales

Variable	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	HD	VL	HL	QL	CL	MD
HD	0.891	0.622	0.477	0.904	0.789					
VL	0.894	0.629	0.486	0.898	0.685	0.793				
HL	0.932	0.731	0.486	0.934	0.691	0.697	0.855			
QL	0.839	0.522	0.419	0.909	0.612	0.612	0.647	0.722		
CL	0.912	0.674	0.424	0.915	0.537	0.495	0.651	0.465	0.821	
MD	0.909	0.667	0.180	0.923	0.307	0.310	0.402	0.424	0.390	0.817

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29 and Excell

Figure 5: Results of CFA Analysis for Measurement Scales in the Overall Model

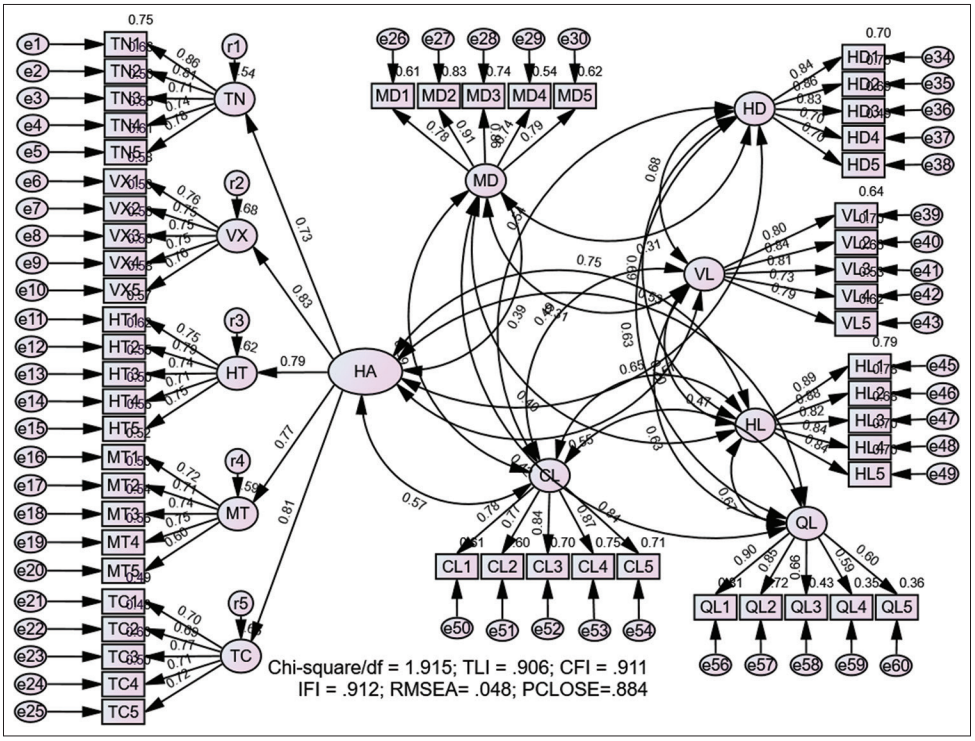


Figure 6: Results of the (Standardized) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis

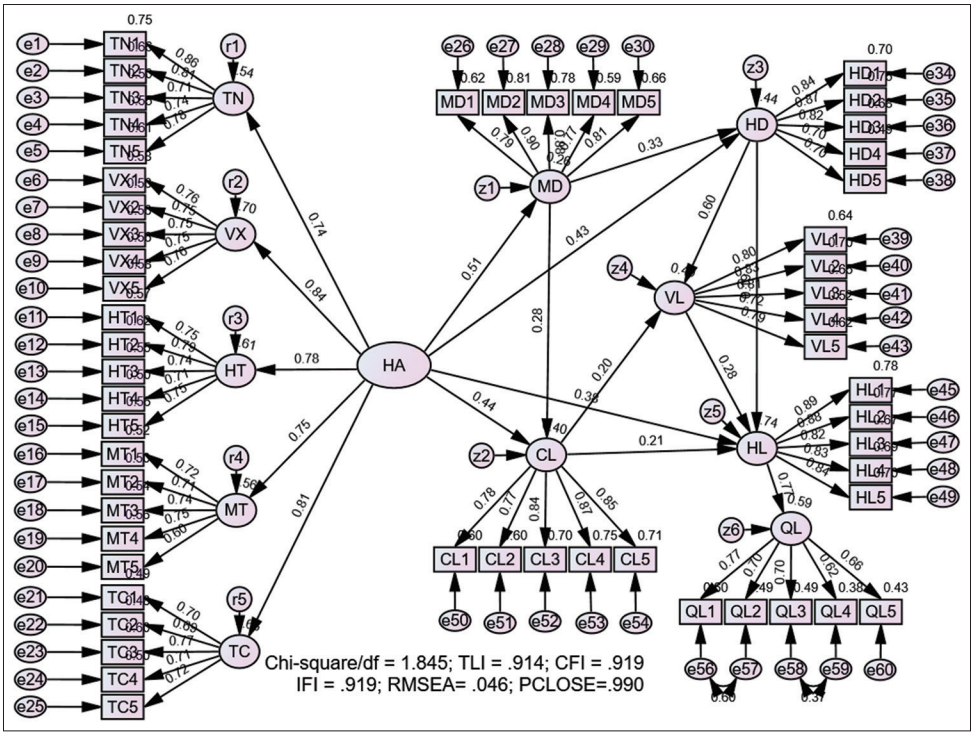


Table 6: Results of convergent and discriminant analysis of scales in the overall model

Variable	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR (H)	VL	MD	HA	QL	HL	HD	CL
VL	0.895	0.630	0.486	0.898	0.793						
MD	0.909	0.667	0.180	0.923	0.310	0.817					
HA	0.890	0.619	0.561	0.893	0.552	0.388	0.787				
QL	0.848	0.535	0.445	0.897	0.634	0.424	0.526	0.731			
HL	0.932	0.732	0.561	0.934	0.697	0.401	0.749	0.667	0.856		
HD	0.891	0.622	0.477	0.904	0.685	0.307	0.573	0.627	0.691	0.789	
CL	0.912	0.674	0.424	0.915	0.495	0.390	0.565	0.475	0.651	0.537	0.821

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29 and Excell

Figure 7: Results of the (standardized) structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis

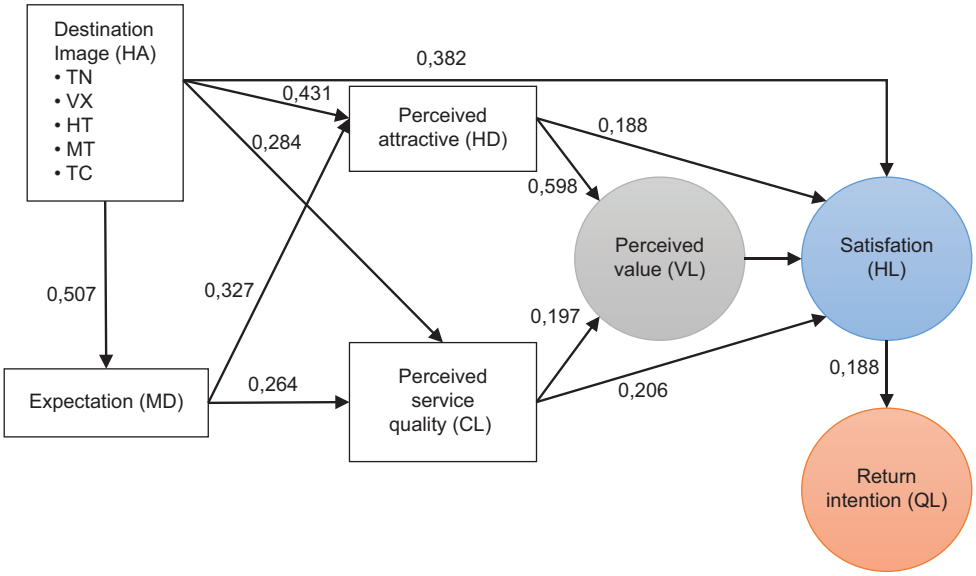


Table 7: Results of the estimated impact between variables in the research model

Relationship between variables			Hypothesis	Standardized beta coefficient	Standard error (S.E.)	Critical ratio (C.R.)	P-value
MD	<---	HA	H1	0.507	0.115	8.211	<0.001
CL	<---	HA	H4	0.439	0.110	6.878	<0.001
HD	<---	MD	H5	0.327	0.053	5.923	<0.001
CL	<---	MD	H6	0.284	0.052	5.076	<0.001
HD	<---	HA	H3	0.431	0.110	6.976	<0.001
VL	<---	HD	H8	0.598	0.053	10.561	<0.001
VL	<---	CL	H9	0.197	0.047	4.031	<0.001
HL	<---	HA	H2	0.382	0.093	6.759	<0.001
HL	<---	HD	H7	0.188	0.050	3.452	<0.001
HL	<---	CL	H10	0.206	0.042	4.666	<0.001
HL	<---	VL	H11	0.284	0.049	5.617	<0.001
QL	<---	HL	H12	0.769	0.061	13.638	<0.001

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29 and excell

CFI = 0.919, TLI = 0.914, IFI = 0.919 (>0.85), RMSEA = 0.046 (<0.08), and PCLOSE = 0.990 (>0.000) (Figure 5). Therefore, it can be concluded that the model is well-aligned with the market data (Figure 6).

The results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, based on standardized regression coefficients (standardized beta) obtained from running the SEM model in AMOS, are presented in Table 7. The findings indicate that all relationships are statistically significant at the 0.01 (1%) level (P-value), with relatively high standardized Beta coefficients. This confirms that the proposed research model meets the required criteria, and all research hypotheses are supported. These results are illustrated in the research framework in Figure 7.

4.3.1. Results of the stability assessment of the research model

The study employed bootstrap testing with 1,000 resamples to assess the robustness of the estimated model. The analysis results indicated that the bias of the beta coefficients between the original sample and the average of the beta coefficients from the bootstrap analysis was minimal (maximum 0.004) (Table 8). Therefore, the estimated model can be considered robust and reliable, suitable for generalization to the overall.

Table 8: Model stability assessment results

Relationship between variables			Standardized estimates	Estimates using bootstrap	Bias	SE-Bias
MD	<---	HA	0.941	0.940	0.000	0.004
CL	<---	HA	0.759	0.764	0.005	0.004
HD	<---	MD	0.315	0.316	0.001	0.002
CL	<---	MD	0.264	0.265	0.000	0.002
HD	<---	HA	0.771	0.774	0.003	0.004
VL	<---	HD	0.559	0.558	−0.001	0.002
VL	<---	CL	0.191	0.194	0.002	0.002
HL	<---	HA	0.626	0.629	0.003	0.004
HL	<---	HD	0.172	0.173	0.001	0.002
HL	<---	CL	0.195	0.197	0.002	0.002
HL	<---	VL	0.278	0.277	−0.001	0.002
QL	<---	HL	0.831	0.832	0.001	0.002

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29 and excell

4.3.2. Results of testing research hypothesis

Based on the analysis of the linear structural model of factors affecting tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists through SEM analysis on AMOS and testing the stability of the model, the results of testing the research hypothesis are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9: Summary of research hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Standarlized beta	P-value	Conclusion
Hypothesis H_1: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' expectations (MD) of a destination.	0.507	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_2: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.	0.382	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_3: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' perceived attractiveness (HD) of the destination.	0.431	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_4: Destination image (HA) positively influences tourists' perceived service quality (CL) at the destination.	0.439	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_5: Tourists' expectation (MD) positively influences tourists' perceived attractiveness (HD) of the destination.	0.327	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_6: Tourists' expectation (MD) positively influences perceived service quality (CL) at the destination.	0.284	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_7: Perceived attractive (HD) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.	0.188	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_8: Perceived attractive (HD) positively influences perceived value (VL) of the destination.	0.598	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_9: Perceived service quality (CL) positively influences perceived value (VL) of the destination.	0.197	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_{10}: Perceived service quality (CL) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.	0.206	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_{11}: Perceived value (VL) positively influences tourists' satisfaction (HL) with the destination.	0.284	<0.001	Accepted
Hypothesis H_{12}: Tourists' satisfaction (HL) positively influences tourists' return intention (QL) the destination.	0.769	<0.001	Accepted

The hypothesis testing results indicate that among the factors directly influencing tourists' satisfaction (HL) with destinations in Vietnam, destination image (HA) has the strongest impact, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.382. The second most influential factor is perceived value (VL), with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.284. Service quality (CL) ranks third, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.206. Lastly, perceived attractiveness (HD) has a slightly lower impact, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.188. Overall, these factors have a significant direct effect on tourists' satisfaction with destinations in Vietnam.

4.3.3. Results of assessing the combined (standardized) impact of factors on tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists

Tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists is not only directly affected by destination image (HA), service quality, perceived value (VL) and perceived attractiveness (HD) but also indirectly affected by tourists expectation (MD). Similarly, tourists' return intention (QL) is not only directly affected by tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists but also indirectly affected by the remaining factors. The analysis results show that all factors have an impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL). Of which, destination image (HA) has the largest total impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists ($\lambda = 0.748$), followed by perceived attractiveness (HD) ($\lambda = 0.357$), perceived value (VL) ($\lambda = 0.284$), perceived service quality (CL) ($\lambda = 0.262$), and the smallest impact is tourists expectation (MD) ($\lambda = 0.191$). For the dependent variable return intention (QL) of tourists, the factor with the strongest total impact is tourists' satisfaction (HL) ($\lambda = 0.769$), followed by destination image (HA) ($\lambda = 0.575$), perceived attractiveness (HD) ($\lambda = 0.275$), perceived value (VL) ($\lambda = 0.218$), perceived service quality ($\lambda = 0.201$), and finally tourists expectation (MD) ($\lambda = 0.147$) (Table 10).

Table 10: Results of assessing the combined impact of factors on tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL)

Dependent variable	Kind of effect	HA	MD	CL	HD	VL	HL
Perceived value (VL)	Direct	-	-	0.197	0.598	-	-
	Indirect	0.472	0.252	-	-	-	-
	Overall	0.472	0.252	0.197	0.598	-	-
Tourists' satisfaction (HL)	Direct	0.382	-	0.206	0.188	0.284	-
	Indirect	0.366	0.191	0.056	0.170	-	-
	Overall	0.748	0.191	0.262	0.357	0.284	-
Return intention (QL)	Direct	-	-	-	-	-	0.769
	Indirect	0.575	0.147	0.201	0.275	0.218	-
	Overall	0.575	0.147	0.201	0.275	0.218	0.769

Source: Analysis and calculation from AMOS 29 and excell

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

5.1. Discussion

The study provides a detailed and systematic analysis of the factors affecting tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists at tourist destinations in Vietnam, thereby providing important implications for businesses and tourism management agencies. The research results show that all the factors proposed in the model have a significant impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL) of tourists, which confirms the suitability of the research model.

5.1.1. Strong influence of destination image (HA) on tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL)

One of the most important findings of the study is that destination image (HA) has the strongest impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.382. In addition, when considering the combined impact, destination image (HA) has the strongest impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) ($\lambda = 0.748$) and is the second strongest factor on return intention (QL) ($\lambda = 0.575$). Similar to the study by Lan and Thich (2021), Destination Image (HA) is considered an important factor affecting tourist attraction and retention. At the same time, this result also shows consensus with the research of Giao and Ngan (2021), Chi and Qu (2008), Prayag and Ryan (2012) showing that destination image (HA) directly affects return intention (QL) and tourists' recommendation intention. However, according to Stylidis et al. (2017), although the image of destinations in Greece has a strong impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL), it does not directly affect return intention (QL). This shows that for destinations in Greece, which face strong competition from destinations in the European region, destination image (HA) is not a decisive factor in tourists' return intention (QL).

5.1.2. The important role of perceived value (VL) and perceived service quality (CL)

The study also shows that perceived value (VL) has the second strongest impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.284, followed by perceived service quality (CL) with a Beta coefficient of 0.206. In the combined impact, perceived value (VL) ($\lambda = 0.284$) and service quality ($\lambda = 0.262$) also play a significant role in enhancing tourists' satisfaction (HL). Similar to the conclusions in the studies of Ha and Anh (2024), Petrick (2002), perceived value (VL) plays an important role in determining tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists at tourist destinations, thereby affecting the return intention (QL) of tourists.

Different from the research results presented by the group, the research of Bigne et al. (2001) in Spain showed that the perceived service quantity has a stronger impact than perceived value (VL) on tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists. This also reflects the difference in the perception of perceived value (VL) and perceived service quality (CL) of tourists to two countries: Vietnam and Spain. The survey sample in the research of the group of authors showed that the respondents believed that the fit between the cost spent and the benefits received was a more important factor in evaluating tourists' satisfaction (HL) and the ability to return to a destination in Vietnam.

5.1.3. Perceived attractiveness (HD) and tourists expectation (MD) have an impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) but at a lower level

Although perceived attractiveness (HD) has an impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) (Beta = 0.188), the impact is lower than that of other factors. However, in terms of total influence, perceived attractiveness (HD) is still an important factor with $\lambda = 0.357$ for Tourists' Satisfaction (HL) and $\lambda = 0.275$ for Return Intention (QL). This result is quite different from the results of Kozak (2002) when studying tourism in Spain and Türkiye. Accordingly, Kozak (2002) suggested that perceived attractiveness (HD) of the destination plays a decisive role in influencing tourists' satisfaction (HL). In addition, tourists expectation (MD) has an indirect impact on tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL) with the lowest level of influence ($\lambda = 0.191$ for tourists' satisfaction (HL) and $\lambda = 0.147$ for return intention (QL)). This shows that although tourists' initial expectations can influence their perception of the destination, this factor does not play a decisive role.

5.1.4. Tourists' satisfaction (HL) has the strongest and most direct influence on return intention (QL)

The study results also show that tourists' satisfaction (HL) is the factor that has the strongest influence on return intention (QL) of tourists with $\lambda = 0.769$. This emphasizes that the level of satisfaction of tourists can determine their ability to return to a destination in the future. This conclusion is similar to the conclusion in the studies of Yoon and Uysal (2005), Chen and Tsai (2007). This is an important finding for tourism businesses, as it emphasizes the importance of not only attracting tourists but also creating great experiences to encourage them to return and recommend the destination to others.

5.2. Implication

Vietnam's tourism industry is facing increasing competition from attractive destinations in the region and around the world. To attract tourists and increase their chances of returning, tourism businesses and destination management agencies need to implement comprehensive strategies to enhance experiences, optimize services and build a positive image for Vietnam tourism. Specifically:

5.2.1. Building and managing an attractive destination image (HA)

Destination image (HA) plays a key role in attracting tourists to Vietnam, directly affecting their tourists' satisfaction (HL) and return intention (QL). A positive image is not only built through promotional activities but also must truly reflect the quality of services, natural landscapes, culture and local people. Research by Giao and Ngan (2021) has shown that factors such as environment, infrastructure, accessibility, entertainment activities, cost value, tourism atmosphere and cuisine all have a positive impact on return intention (QL) of domestic tourists in Ba Ria - Vung Tau.

Thus, businesses and management boards of tourist destinations in Vietnam need to:

- Strengthen communication and promotion of destinations on digital platforms, take advantage of social networks, travel videos, personal blogs and official information channels to spread a positive image of Vietnam.
- Clearly position the tourism brand, emphasizing the unique features and advantages of each destination, from eco-tourism, islands to culture and high-end resorts.
- Enhance the real experience, ensure that the promotional image reflects the quality of service, create trust for tourists and maintain the reputation of the destination. Cụ thể:

5.2.2. Optimizing perceived value (VL) and service quality

Tourists' perceived value (VL) is not only based on cost but also depends on the overall experience they receive. When tourists feel that the service is worth the money they spend, they will be satisfied and tend to return. Research at Da Lat night market shows that quality value and emotional value have a strong impact on both tourists' satisfaction (HL) and tourists' behavioral intentions (Ha and Anh, 2020).

To optimize tourists' perceived value (VL) at destinations in Vietnam, tourism businesses need to:

- Improve service quality, especially in the fields of accommodation, transportation, cuisine and tour guides, to ensure professionalism and convenience in each trip.
- Diversify service packages and prices, creating conditions for all tourist segments to access services that suit their budget and needs.
- Leverage technology in tourism, provide ticket booking support applications, digital guides, smart maps and quick customer feedback to enhance the experience.

5.2.3. Develop unique and sustainable tourism products

Diversifying tourism products not only helps attract more tourists but also enriches the tourism experience in Vietnam. The State needs to:

- Promote green and sustainable tourism, encourage environmentally friendly tourism models, preserve indigenous cultures and create authentic experiences for tourists.
- Promote businesses to apply technology in tourism, develop virtual reality experience programs, smart tourism to enhance the perceived attractiveness (HD) of destinations.
- Promote and support businesses to apply technology to enhance personalization in services, provide flexible tourism packages, customized experiences according to each tourist's preferences to create a unique mark.

5.2.4. Enhance the travel experience to increase the likelihood of returning

Tourists' satisfaction (HL) of tourists is a decisive factor in their return intention (QL). Therefore, ensuring a smooth and memorable travel journey is very important. Destination management boards and tourism businesses need to focus on:

- Improving tourism infrastructure, from transportation, roads to tourism information systems, helping tourists access destinations more easily and conveniently.
- Focusing on customer interaction and care, training a team of friendly and professional service staff, and having a quick response mechanism to resolve problems that arise for tourists.
- Building loyalty programs, providing incentives for returning tourists, staying connected through communication channels and sending information about new events and tourism programs.

In summary, to improve the tourism experience and return intention (QL) of tourists in Vietnam, a comprehensive strategy is needed including destination image (HA) management, perceived value (VL) optimization, creative tourism product development and service quality improvement. Implementing these strategies will not only help Vietnam compete better on the international tourism map but also contribute to building a sustainable and long-term tourism industry.

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