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Factors Affecting the Satisfaction of Foreign Tourist to Can Gio Ecotourism Destination of Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

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Abstract:

This study aims at identifying and measuring factors affecting satisfaction of foreign tourist to Can Gio ecotourism destination. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, 226 foreign tourists were surveyed subjects to Can Gio ecotourism destination. The study results showed that 6 factors affect tourists' satisfaction, including: (1) Environment and Climate; (2) Ancillary service; (3) Value for money; (4) Infrastructure and Accessibility; (5) Ecosystems (Ecology); (6) Human. From these results, a number of recommendations were recommended to enhance the ability to attract foreign tourists to Can Gio ecotourism destinations.

Key words: Satisfaction, Ecotourism, Community Ecotourism, Vietnamese Travel, Vietnam education.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, Vietnamese tourism is seen as one of the key economic sectors, contributing to the development of other economic sectors, increasing foreign exchange, creating jobs, raising Vietnamese living standards as well as contributing actively to the renewal process and international integration of Vietnam. There are many types of tourism development in Vietnam such as cultural tourism, resort tourism, recreational

tourism, eco-tourism, MICE tourism, sports tourism, etc in which ecotourism is esprecial strength. Ecotourism is a type of tourism based on natural conditions, in association with the local cultural identity, with the participation of local communities in their areas. A country with beautiful nature and rich national identity like Vietnam, the development of eco-tourism will have a lot of advantages compared to other destinations in ASEAN region. Vietnam has many unique ecological tourist destinations; however, the attractiveness for foreign tourists to this destination is not high. And one of the destinations is Can Gio Ecotourism.

Can Gio Ecotourism Destination or Can Gio Biosphere Reserve Zone is located in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, which is species population of plants and animals on land and aquatic forests. It was formed on the vast delta of Dong Nai, Sai Gon River and Vam Co river mouth, with an area of 75740 hectares, of which 4721 ha core zone, 41139 ha buffer zone, and 29880 ha of transition area. This is the mangrove forests with a population of diversified flora and fauna, among which long-tailed monkeys (Macaca fascicularis) are highlighted, many species of birds and other rare storks. It is also associated with Sa Huynh cultural relics and many prominent historical events of the early modern Vietnam. This world biosphere reserve with flora and fauna typical unique diversity of mangrove areas were recognized by UNESCO. It is also the national key tourist area by Vietnam recognization. Can Gio Ecotourism zone is considered an ideal destination for attracting tourists at home and abroad. However, the development of tourism is limited, inadequate and unequal with its potential. From this fact, "A study of factors affecting the satisfaction of foreign tourist to can gio ecotourism destination" is chosen targeting to attract tourists coming to this destination more in the coming period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many different definitions of customer satisfaction. According to Johnson, Anderson, & Fornell (1995), satisfaction is to evaluate customers' satisfaction through perceived differences between expectation before consuming and real percieved of the product after consuming it. It can be said before using a service, the customer has certain expectations about it and customers are happy with the product that meets the expectations and level of satisfaction expressed by more or less differences between the expected value and perceived value of products and services affecting customers' emotions (Oliver, 1980). In particular, if the perceived value is greater than the expected value, the value that customers receive from the services is higher than the expected value of the customer, the service is considered good; If the perceived value is equal to the expected value, the value that customers receive from the actual services provided in line with the expectations of customers, the service is assessed satisfactory; If perceived value is less than the expected value, the value that customers receive from real service providers lower than the expectations of customers, the service is considered poor. For simplicity, it can be understood that customers' satisfaction or non-satisfaction is the customer's perception from the comparative values obtained after using the service compared with the expectations before (Bachelet, 1995). In particular, customers' expectations are formed from the consumers' experience, friends, colleagues and the information of the salesman and the competitors offer. Thereby, customers' satisfaction is based on customers' understanding a product or service forming the evaluations or subjective judgments. In short, the satisfaction or frustration is customers' evaluation from the comparison between the actual benefits received and expectations before using their services. Satisfaction levels depend on difference between getting results and the initial expectations, if actual

results are below expectations, customers are not satisfied, if actual results commensurate with the expectations, customers will be satisfied, if the actual result is higher, customer expectations are very pleased.

Multi-linear structures have been applied for measuring customers' satisfaction through their comments to entertainment programs, professional service quality and adventurous experience of travelers in travelling (Lee, 2009). If the properties of the tourism industry at the destination meet visitors' needs, it will provides tourists positive psychological reaction to the destination. And the overall satisfaction of tourists positively correlated with the quality of entertainment experience in destinations (Tribe & Snaith, 1998).

Lee (2009) presented structural model testing factors how destination image, attitude and motivation influence the future behavior of customers the mangrove of Cigu, Sihcao and Haomeiliao in southwest Taiwan. Research results showed that tourists' satisfaction directly affected by three factors: (1) destination image is the overall perception of tourists on a specific destination and this perception was formed through tourists' comments about: Landscape ecology, environmental diversity, species diversity, water recreation services, ecological characteristics, ecological experiences; (2) Attitude is the psychological tendency to express the appreciation of the tourists while travelling; (3) The motivation factor is derived from the needs of tourists, the travel needs are different travelers, the formation of tourist motivation are different such as being close to nature, observing mangroves, wildlife, experiencing the wetland environment, learning about the wetlands, learning about ecosystems, seeking novelty, exercising, relaxing, increasing the relationship or friendship. However, this study focuses on researching the core elements of ecotourism and the perserved tourists to consider how direct effect on satisfaction and indirectly to tourists' behaviors without considering other external factors influence or not to

the satisfaction of tourists visiting ecosystem although they also have influence which is important to tourists such as services, prices, etc.

Yumi & David (2010) launched four direct factors influencing satisfaction in tourism and indirectly affect tourists' behaviors in the future, including: (1) The environment is issues related to tourism resources, landscape, air, water. Environmental factors are evaluated according to the author through beautiful beaches, exciting water sports, suitable accommodation, safety, good security, attractive local cuisine, unpolluted environment, good infrastructure, cleanliness, hygiene and safety; (2) Scenic is the scenic area or beautiful old and famous architecture; (3) Value for money is the amount of value that tourists spend on travel products and services worth to the previous expectations, and be assessed through the perception of the value that tourists spend. (4) The weather conditions at the destination is good or bad for tourists and makes tourists comfortable or not. Climatic factors can be considered through two factors: good, hot and warm weather. This study has demonstrated the factors "Environment", "Scenic spots" and "Value for money" have great influence on customers' satisfaction, which is the indispensable element for tourism. "Climate" factor also affects. However, this research is at a general level and only tests the important issues which do not get into details in considering more specific influence to satisfaction in tourism.

Camelis and Maunier research (2013) conducted surveys on 1,137 tourists, who traveled to tourist destinations in New-York (352), Rome (521), Dominican Republic (153) and Costa Rica (111). The study results showed that the direct impact of tourism satisfaction were: (1) The territory is what exists within the territories of any destination, including air, country, facility, climate, etc.; (2) Personal service is a combination of factors related to the services provided at a destination for tourists which significantly impact on customers' satisfaction.

Personal services are expressed through satisfaction of flights, accomodation, restaurants, prices in restaurants, entertainment, entertainment service price, car rental services, taxi services, shopping centers and service outlets; (3) the human factor is the most important one forming tourists' satisfaction when going sightseeing in one place, a certain location. The author states that there is an interaction among people, and this will create satisfaction or dissatisfaction for tourists visiting a destination. These factors starting satisfaction related to human factors, including: the hospitality of the locals, study the local culture, local traditions and local customs, local living standards, safe destination not discriminatory or racist, tour guide, the presence of other tourists, to meet with the other tourists, behavior the other tourists, the presence of family or friends, the joy of family members or friends when travelling together and health of family members or friends when joining the trip. This study indicates that the factors related to humans at the destination is the most important.

Based on these above studies with the consultation of experts, research model is proposed as follows: Ancillary service, Value for money, Infrastructure and Accessibility, Human, Ecology, Environment and Climate.

RESEARCH MODEL & HYPOTHESIS

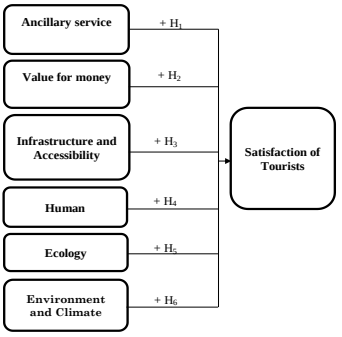

Figure 1 – Model study of the factors affecting satisfaction of foreign tourists to Can Gio ecotourism destination of Ho Chi Minh city.

Hypothesis 1: "Ancillary service" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 2: "Value for money" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 3: "Infrastructure and Accessibility" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 4: "Human" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 5: "Ecology" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.
Hypothesis 6: "Environment and Climate" has a positive impact to tourists' satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out through three steps:

Step one, expert interview methods are used, based on experts' consultations and group discussions for improving scales and designing survey questionnaire.

Step two, checking the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Exploratory Factor Analysis. The aim of EFA - Exploratory Factor Analysis is to reduce and summarize the data. This method is based on factor ratio extraction (Eigenvalue), factor analysis is appropriate and in the overall observed variables are correlated with each other when the total variance extracted > 50%, coefficient of KMO is from 0.5 to 1, the coefficient Sig. ≤ 5%, the Factor loading of all the observed variables are> 0.5; λiA- λiB weight difference are> 0.3 (Nguyen Dinh Tho, 2011).

Step three, performing confirmed factor analysis CFA and verifying research model by analyzing a linear structural model SEM (Structural Equation Modeling). The purpose of CFA helps clarify: (1) Single-direction; (2) The reliability of the scale; (3) The value of convergence; (4) Discrimination Value. According to Steenkamp and Van Trijp (1991); Hair et al

(1998), a research model is considered suitable with market data if testing valuable Chi-quare P-value> 5%; Cmin / df ≤ 2; GFI index, TLI, CFI ≥ 0.9. However, according to recent perceptions, GFI can be acceptable when it is larger than 0.8 (Hair et al, 1998); RMSEA ≤ 0:08. In addition to the above criteria, testing results must also ensure the synthetic reliability > 0.6; variance extracted must be greater than 0.5 (Hair et al, 1998) [5,9].

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Testing the average value for the observed variable

Factors	Code	Variables observed
Ancillary service	DV1	Medical services, rescue in Can Gio
	DV2	There are many diverse and attractive experience activities for tourists
	DV3	Cuisine is particular and specific
	DV4	I feel safe when traveling in Can Gio
Value for money	TT1	Fares to visit eco parks are reasonable
	TT2	Prices for public transport are reasonable
	TT3	Catering service prices are reasonable
	TT4	Accomodation prices are reasonable
Infrastructure and Accessibility	CS1	Telecommunications network is Convenient.
	CS2	The types of accommodation are suitable for tourists
	CS3	Road traffic is easy
	CS4	Waterway transport systems are good and convenient
Human	CN1	Traveling in Can Gio helps me understand the local culture.
	CN2	The local people here are friendly and hospitable.
	CN3	Employees in the tourism industry are friendly and professional.
Ecology	ST1	Flora and fauna in Can Gio
	ST2	Ecology landscape is attractive.
	ST3	Ecosystems have distinct features.
Environment and Climate	MT1	Ecological environment in Can Gio is not polluted
	MT2	Can Gio has a temperate climate.
Overall satisfaction	SHL1	Overall, I am happy about this destination
	SHL2	I will be returning to this destination.
	SHL3	I will recommend the destination to others

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

The research results showed that there were 20 items processed. The average results of auditing the scales showed

that most of the scales are average and good. Standard deviation (SD) value is around 1.0. This showed that the Data is very good for the testing of Cronbach's Alpha following.

Table 2: Results of testing the scales

Code	Factors	Cronbach's Alpha
DV	Ancillary service	0.674
GTT	Value for money	0.863
CS	Infrastructure and Accessibility	0.653
CN	Human	0.847
ST	Ecology	0.765
MT	Environment and Climate	0.675

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

The results of reliability of testing scales showed the scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient> 0.6 and the total variable correlation coefficients of the factors measuring variables are standard (> 0.3). Therefore, all the scales are accepted and included in the analysis to Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 3: Factor analysis table (EFA – Exploratory Factor Analysis

Code	Fact1	Code	Fact2	Code	Fact3	Code	Fact4	Code	Fact5	Code	Fact6
TT3	.900	CN1	.885	DV3	.770	ST3	.900	CS3	.832	MT1	.830
TT1	.887	CN3	.872	DV4	.743	ST2	.778	CS4	.637	MT2	.709
TT2	.777	CN2	.864	DV2	.655	ST1	.750	CS2	.601		
TT4	.755			DV1	.614			CS1	.589		

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

EFA results showed that the variables are extracted into 6 groups, and variance extracted is 65.8% > 50%, the scale is accepted; KMO coefficient = 0.779 in the range of $0.5 \leq 1 \leq$ KMO, factor analysis is appropriate; Bartlett testing with Sig. =. 000, showing a high level of significance. Factor loading of all the observed variables are greater than 0.5. This result showed that the observed variations in the overall correlated with each other.

Table 4: Factor analysis table

Factor	SHL_2	SHL_3	SHL_1
1	.787	.733	.603

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

Factor analysis results showed that the total variance extracted = 50.7%> 50%, the scale is accepted; KMO coefficient = 0.577 in the range $0.5 \leq 1 \leq$ KMO, factor analysis is appropriate; Bartlett testing with Sig. = .000, showing a high level of significance. Factor loading of all the observed variables are greater than 0.5. The data has been collected and summarized into one small group, no variables were excluded, there is no disruption so the name of the group factors are remained with 3 variables observed.

Table 5: Confirmed Factor analysis CFA

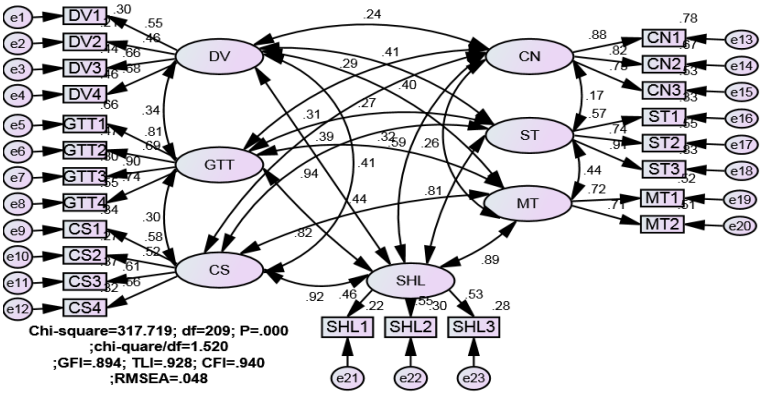

Figure 1: CFA Results of the critical model

CFA Results of model was measured finally (the critical model) showed the model is consistent with the data, chi-squared = 317,719; degrees of freedom = 209, value P = 0,000; Cmin / df = 1,520 <3. The measurement of GFI = 0,894; TLI = 0,928; CFI = 0,940 are greater than 0,8; RMSEA = 0,048 <0,08 is satisfactory. Thus, the results of the CFA for the final measurement model showed the elements in the model are single-direction, ensuring the convergence value, the reliability,

and differentiated value. Research model is consistent with market data.

Table 6: Testing the research model and hypotheses

The estimation results (standardized) of model showed chi-squared value = 355,566, degrees of freedom = 210, value P = 0,000; Cmin / df = 1,693 <3. Other Measures are satisfactory (GFI = 0,885; TLI = 0,904; CFI = 0,920 are greater than 0,8; RMSEA = 0,056 <0,08) showed the model is proper to the data research.

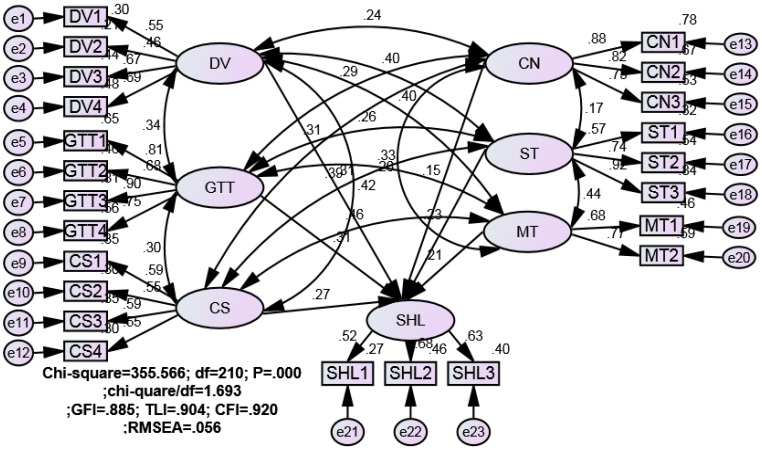

Figure 3: SEM Results (standardized) of research model

Testing the estimation model by Bootstrap. The estimation results with N = 500 are averaged enclosed showed the bias appear but very small. Therefore, it can be concluded that the estimation in the model can be trusted.

Table 7: Coefficient of regression of official models

Relation		Coefficient	Standardized	S.E.	C.R.	P	Conclusions
SHL	DV	.180	.311	.051	3.492	***	Accepted H1
SHL	CS	.191	.269	.068	2.810	.005	Accepted H3
SHL	CN	.079	.146	.035	2.254	.024	Accepted H4
SHL	ST	.215	.234	.071	3.031	.002	Accepted H5
SHL	MT	.193	.209	.083	2.323	.020	Accepted H6
SHL	TT	.223	.308	.051	4.337	***	Accepted H2

(Source: The researcher's collecting data and SPSS)

Model estimation results of and Bootstrap analysis in linear structural model (SEM) showed the relationship model suggested in the official study had a statistically significant p-value for the highest 0,024 is less than 0,05 meeting the necessary level of significance (at 95% reliability). In other words, the hypothesis in the study model are formally accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

The study results showed that 6 factors affecting positively influence to tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism destinations. The degree of influence of each factor is different, as follows: Ancillary service (0,311); Value for money (0,308); Infrastructure and accessibility (0,269); Ecology (0,234); (5) Environment and Climate (0,209); and Human (0,146). This result compared to the study by Yumi & David (2010) added the elements associated with Can Gio ecotourism destinations including Ancillary service, Infrastructure and Accessibility, Ecosystems and Human. And compared with Camelis and Maunier research (2013) including factors such as Territories, personal services, human. Based on the results of this study, a number of measures to develop strategies to attract tourism in the near future are proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for "Ancillary service"

Ancillary service factors have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing $\gamma = 0,311$. Therefore, it is necessary to diversify tourism products and Ancillary service to attract tourists such as developing Homestay tourism, maintaining and developing river tourism, developing local traditional village model village, building health service centers, rescue centers – first aid in Can Gio in order to ensure absolute safety for tourists to resort etc.

Recommendations for "Value for money"

Value for money factor have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing $\gamma = 0{,}308$. Hence, it is necessary to strengthen the price control and state management of prices as listed price which make tourists secure and confident. Besides, it is also advisable to improve propaganda, organizations and individual business travel services on branding in the tourism business such as not raising service prices unreasonably, not forcing prices for tourists, ensuring safety and security at destination and avoiding hawkers clinging customers, etc.

Recommendations for "Infrastructure and accessibility"

Infrastructure and have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing $\gamma = 0{,}269$. Thus, policies need calling for investment in infrastructure for tourism such as road transport infrastructure and waterways; Constructing stop stations, or kiosks serving tourist cars more convenient such as refueling, repairing; the constructing standard accommodation facilities for tourists; Improving infrastructure to ensure tourists'communication thoroughly.

Recommendations for factor group "Ecology"

Ecology factors have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing $\gamma = 0{,}234$. Therefore, it should have strategies to manage and protect the diverse ecosystems in Can Gio such as increasing natural forests, building policies to encourage local people to participate in conservation and sustainable development of mangroves and implementating programs to raise awareness about the significance of Can Gio ecological conservation.

Recommendations for factor group "Environment and Climate"

Natural environmental factors have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing γ = 0,209. Thus, it is necessary to promote education and raise awareness in the community about environmental preservation, improve individual organizational responsibility in handling treatment of all kinds of waste in treatment in order not to pollute the natural environment; Strengthen state management in order to avoid polluting the natural environment; Encourage tourism companies in designing programs about participate in protecting the environment and climate such as tree planting as souvenirs and caring of trees, cleaning beaches, ...

Recommendations for "human"

Human factors have affected the level of tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism weighing γ = 0,146. Hence, it is necessary to strengthen training of personnel management, tour guide, tourism marketing force, direct selling tourism products for tourists and supplying unit for local ecotourism activities; ask local people to participate directly in the tourism business so they have a sense of forest protection, landscape and environment and sustainable tourism development; Organize training courses to improve the qualifications, knowledge, service attitude, communication skills, cultural behavior and language skills for staff directly related to travel business toward tourism professional development.

Limitation and further research

This study stops at the determination and measurement of factors affecting tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism. This research is limited in determining the relationship among these factors. 226 foreign tourists to Can Gio were surveyed which is less than the total number of tourists coming here every year. From the limitations of this study, further

researchers would not only specify and measure factors affecting tourists' satisfaction to Can Gio ecotourism but also define the relationship among them and expanding to other ecological attractions.

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