Development Policy on Sustainable Tourism of Bac Lieu Province - Access from Tourist Behavior

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Abstract

The study aims to propose several development policies for tourism in Bac Lieu Province towards sustainability. Based on the tourists' behavior and the local marketing approach, several implications on tourism development policy are proposed as follows: Firstly, attract investments to develop in-depth tourism; Secondly, build attractive promotion programs to promote destination image; Thirdly, develop guidelines to improve the quality of human tourism resources.

Keywords: tourist behavior, local marketing, tourism development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bac Lieu is a coastal province in the Mekong Delta, located on the Ca Mau Peninsula which is the southernmost land of Vietnam. Bac Lieu Province owns excellent potentials for tourism development. The tourism industry in Bac Lieu Province has a wealth of tourism resources, including mangrove ecosystems, coastal plain estuaries, famous nature reserves, where many cultures (Kinh, Khmer, and Chinese) and traditional trade villages exist. Primarily, Bac Lieu is known as the cradle of Southern amateur folk music (also known as "Don ca tai tu") in Vietnam and the land of the immortal song "Da co hoai lang" composed by composer Cao Van Lau. Domestic and foreign

tourists also know about Bac Lieu through the famous anecdote "Prince of Bac Lieu".

In recent years, the tourism industry in Bac Lieu Province has had many positive changes. Tourism infrastructure system has been upgraded, and new tourist destinations have emerged with better sizes and high quality. Bac Lieu's tourism products have gained a particular position in the tourism market, attracting a large number of visitors. As a result, tourism goals are achieved and exceeded; the growth rate of the tourism industry is always at an acceptable level. However, the development of the tourism industry in Bac Lieu Province is still not commensurate with the potential resources. It lacks in-depth strategies to develop tourism towards sustainability. The local marketing approach should be taken into consideration which promotes the advantages of the tourism industry. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the relationships among tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, and tourist behavioral intention, thereby proposing policies on developing sustainable tourism for Bac Lieu Province following the approach from the local marketing.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research hypotheses

Based on the literature review related to the relationships among tourist motivation, tourist satisfaction, and behavioral intention. Especially, base on studies on tourist behaviors by Rust et al. (1995), Ryan and Deci (2000), Turner and Reisinger (2003), Kim et al. (2003), Homburg et al. (2005), Qiao et al. (2008), Chen and Chen (2009), Latiff and IMM (2013), Ivyanno (2013), Zupan and Milfelner (2014), Pratminingsih et al. (2014), Fangxuan and Chris (2014), some research hypotheses are proposed. H1: Push factors have a positive impact on tourists' destination satisfaction with Bac Lieu Province. H2: Pull factors positively affect tourists' destination satisfaction with Bac Lieu Province. H3: Destination satisfaction positively impacts tourists' return intention to Bac Lieu Province. H4: Destination satisfaction positively influences tourists' willingness to pay for tourism in Bac Lieu Province. H5: Destination satisfaction positively impacts tourists' word of mouth intention towards Bac Lieu Province.

The research model on the impact of tourist motivation on destination satisfaction and behavioral intention to Bac Lieu Province is proposed as follows:
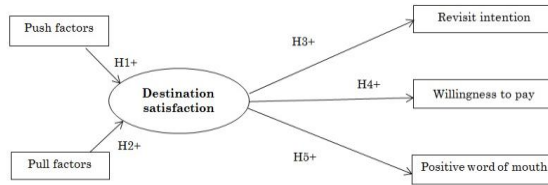
Figure 1: Proposed research model

Table 1: Interpretation of observations in the research model

Factor	Observed variables	Scale	Reference resources
Push factors	PUS1: Desire to learn new and novel things	Likert 1-5	Qiao et al. (2008), Zupan and Milfelner (2014), Pratminingsih et al. (2014)
	PUS2: Enjoy meeting and interacting with new friends	Likert 1-5	
	PUS3: Enjoy visiting fascinating natural destinations	Likert 1-5	
	PUS4: Like to learn about culture and history	Likert 1-5	
	PUS5: Enjoy experiencing a new life	Likert 1-5	
	PUS6: Want to rest and relax	Likert 1-5	
Pull factors	PUL1: The natural beauty in Bac Lieu Province is attractive	Likert 1-5	Qiao et al. (2008), Fangxuan and Chris (2014), Pratminingsih et al. (2014)
	PUL2: Bac Lieu culture and history are very interesting	Likert 1-5	
	PUL3: Bac Lieu has many excellent and unique dishes	Likert 1-5	
	PUL4: Bac Lieu people are friendly and hospitable	Likert 1-5	
	PUL5: Bac Lieu has favorable conditions for transportation and accommodation	Likert 1-5	
	PUL6: Bac Lieu has many new and attractive products	Likert 1-5	
Destination satisfaction	DS1: Bac Lieu is a worthy destination.	Likert 1-5	Kim et al. (2003), Turner and Reisinger (2003), Chen and Chen (2009)
	DS2: Satisfied with Bac Lieu culture and history	Likert 1-5	
	DS3: Satisfied with Bac Lieu's natural products and cuisine	Likert 1-5	
	DS4: Satisfied with Bac Lieu natural landscape	Likert 1-5	
	DS5: The trip to Bac Lieu Province met my expectations	Likert 1-5	
Revisit intention	RI1: I will buy more tourism products and use services in Bac Lieu in the future	Likert 1-5	Pizam (1994), Beeho and Prentice (1997), Yoon and Uysal, (2005)
	RI2: Traveling to Bac Lieu is my priority choice	Likert 1-5	
	RI3: I will keep in touch with people I knew at tourist destinations in Bac Lieu	Likert 1-5	
	RI4: I will return to Bac Lieu in the future	Likert 1-5	
Willingness to pay	WTP1: If the cost increases, I am still willing to travel to Bac Lieu	Likert 1-5	Homburg et al. (2005), Latiff and IMM (2013)
	WTP2: I am willing to pay more than expected to use travel services in Bac Lieu	Likert 1-5	
	WTP3: The cost of the trip was worth what I received from it	Likert 1-5	
	WTP4: I am willing to pay to revisit Bac Lieu.	Likert 1-5	
Word of mouth	WOM1: I will share with the community about tourist attractions in Bac Lieu Province	Likert 1-5	Rust et al. (1995), Latiff and IMM (2013), Ivyanno (2013)
	WOM2: I will introduce my relatives and friends about Bac Lieu tourist sites	Likert 1-5	
	WOM3: I will give good comments about tourist destinations in Bac Lieu Province	Likert 1-5	
	WOM4: I will recommend my relatives and friends to travel to Bac Lieu Province	Likert 1-5	

Source: Author's proposal, 2018

2.2 Data and analytical method

In this study, the analytical techniques are used in the following order: reliability evaluation of all scales by Cronbach's Alpha, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM). The SEM method requires a large sample size because it is based on the sampling distribution theory (Raykov and Widaman, 1995). To achieve reliability in the appropriateness test for the SEM model, the sample size from 100 to 200 is satisfactory (Hoyle, 1995). Besides, Hoelter (1983) suggested that the sample size in the linear structure should be 200.

From October 2018 to November 2018, the study used a quota sampling method combined with face-to-face interviews to collect data. Survey subjects are tourists who have visited and experienced tourist destinations in Bac Lieu Province. In which, some famous destinations were focused on such as Nha Mat tourist area, Cao Van Lau Theater, Xiem Can Pagoda, Bac Lieu Bird Sanctuary, and Prince of Bac Lieu House. The number of tourists surveyed was 225. After eliminating 13 questionnaires that were not appropriate, the study reached a final sample size of 212 observations, including 46 oversea tourists (accounting for 20.7 %). During the survey, demographic criteria were considered to ensure the representativeness of the research data.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Assess the reliability of the scales

The study used Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to test the reliability of the rankings. Secondly, the study examined the factor structure with exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Thirdly, using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to evaluate reliability. This help to assess convergent and discriminant validity of the market data. The analytical results show that the research data meets all the requirements above. Hence, the model is used for the hypotheses test by structural equation modeling (SEM).

3.2 Test research hypotheses by the structural equation modeling

The structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test the research hypotheses. The result of trying the relationships among factors is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Evaluation of relationships among factors

Relationship			Unstandardized			Standardized estimated value	P-value	Hypothesis
			Estimated value	Standard error S.E	Critical ratio C.R			
DS	<---	PUS	0.624	0.080	7.823	0.658	***	H1
DS	<---	PUL	0.661	0.085	7.776	0.772	***	H2
RI	<---	DS	0.753	0.118	6.360	0.638	***	H3
WTP	<---	DS	0.935	0.124	7.552	0.833	***	H4
WOM	<---	DS	0.733	0.126	5.827	0.513	***	H5

Source: Survey data, 2018   Note: ***: 1% significance level

Based on Table 2, tourist motivation has a positive impact on their destination satisfaction, in which pull factors are more potent than push factors. This finding agrees with the researches of Crompton (1979) and Kim et al. (2003). This shows that the destination's attributes related to the attractiveness of the natural landscape, natural beauty, exciting culture and history, unique cuisine, novel tourism products, convenient transportation and accommodation, friendly and hospitable people positively influenced tourist satisfaction. Besides, the study has pointed out that destination satisfaction positively impacts the intention to return to the destination, willingness to pay, and positive word of mouth of visitors. In other words, tourists choose Bac Lieu Province as a destination when they satisfied with natural products, cuisine, natural landscape, culture and history. They will be willing to pay a higher service fee, have positive word of mouth, and tend to return to Bac Lieu. This finding is an essential scientific basis for the tourism industry in Bac Lieu Province to build a strategy to attract tourists and increase tourists' expenditure.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the study has demonstrated the importance of tourism motivation on destination satisfaction and behavioral intention of tourists towards Bac Lieu tourism. Specifically, push and pull factors positively affects tourist destination satisfaction, thereby promoting

the revisit intention, expenditure, and positive word of mouth of tourists. In which, pull parts show a more critical role than push factors. This proves the importance of destination attributes in attracting visitors. Therefore, follow the local marketing approach, some implications for tourism sustainable development in Bac Lieu Province are proposed below.

Firstly, attract tourism investments in depth.

The Bac Lieu of tourism authority needs to focus on "pull factors" to attract more tourists and improve tourist motivation. The province manager needs to focus on the depth of tourism products' quality. Moreover, the comprehensive investment in tourism infrastructure may help visitors reach destinations and use more tourism services. Therefore, the local authority needs to pay attention to the quality of tourism services in new destinations, upgrade tourism infrastructure under the direction of socialization, and make use of non-state resources. This will help the private sector to invest in tourism while reducing the burden on the local budget. Forms of investment should be diversified, such as BOT, BTO, BCC, BT, and PPP to encourage enterprises to invest in infrastructure. The decision on investment forms depends on the portfolio investment and the time of purchase.

Secondly, build attractive promotion programs about destination image.

The local authority needs to develop a beautiful program to promote destination image and improve the traction of tourist sites in Bac Lieu Province. In recent years, Bac Lieu tourism has been known by domestic and foreign tourists with attractive tourist destinations such as Prince of Bac Lieu House, Bac Lieu Offshore Wind Farm, Tac Say Church, Quan Am Phat Dai Temple, Hung Thien Pagoda, Xiem Can Pagoda, "Don ca tai tu" and composer Cao Van Lau Musician Memorial Park, etc. Therefore, the lovely promotion program will enhance destinations' image, attract the most domestic and foreign tourists. The communication program should be done on both online and offline channels.

Thirdly, develop the strategy to improve the quality of human tourism resources

Tourism human resources play a very crucial role in remaining the quality of travel services and improving destination satisfaction, thereby enhancing destination loyalty and positive word of mouth. Therefore, Bac Lieu Province should develop strategies to improve the quality of human tourism resources: (1) For tourist guides, prepare knowledge of the history and folk tales associated with the destinations; (2) For service staff, should be trained the skills related to serving, bar, kitchen, room, and reception in a professional manner. Several soft skills should be provided to tourism staff such as foreign language, communication, and problem-solving. The most important is an enthusiastic and respectful service attitude.

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