

DISSERTATION INFORMATION

Title of the Doctoral Dissertation: The Impact of Destination Attachment, Service Quality, and Authentic Experience on Satisfaction and Return Intention of Spiritual Tourists in Vietnam

Major: Business Administration Code: 62.34.01.02

PhD Candidate's Name: Nguyen Minh Huong PhD Candidate's Code: 1640102

Academic supervisors:

Supervisor 1: Prof Nguyen Viet Bang

Supervisor 2: Dr Tran Thanh Long

Training Institution: University of Economics and Law, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City

1. ABSTRACT

This dissertation evaluates the impact of components of destination attachment (including Destination Identity and Destination Dependence), a component of Service Quality, and Authentic Experience on the satisfaction and return intention of tourists at spiritual destinations in Vietnam.

Using primary data collected in 2022-2023, the dissertation employs tools listed below:

- Cronbach Alpha and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to test the reliability of the scales used with the data.
- Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to explore and predict the impact of independent factors on the return intention of spiritual tourists in Vietnam.
- Descriptive statistical methods to assess the observed sample.

Additionally, the dissertation uses various qualitative analysis methods to clarify the research objectives.

The research findings indicate that all the proposed hypotheses are statistically significant. Factors such as Destination Identity, Destination Dependence, Service Quality, Authentic Experience, and satisfaction all have a positive impact on tourists' return intentions. These factors account for 65.2% of the variation in tourists' return intentions. The findings also confirm the crucial mediating role of satisfaction, which has the strongest positive impact on the return intention of spiritual tourists in Vietnam. Based on this, the study proposes three managerial implications to enhance the satisfaction and return intention of spiritual tourists in Vietnam.

2. NEW FINDINGS OF THE DISSERTATION

Theoretical and Scientific Contributions:

The dissertation has summarized the theoretical foundation of spiritual tourism and the direct and indirect relationships between key factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and return intentions to spiritual destinations in Vietnam.

The dissertation has clarified research gaps related to the return intention of spiritual tourists. It has provided empirical evidence on the evaluation of the impact of components of destination attachment and a component of service quality, alongside other factors such as authentic experience and satisfaction, on the intention to revisit spiritual destinations across the country.

The dissertation has refined and newly developed the measurement scale (evaluation criteria) for the variable of actual experience. It suggests new research directions by proposing additional variables for the authentic experience scale in spiritual tourism activities.

It provides academic references in business administration related to enhancing tourist satisfaction at spiritual destinations in Vietnam, while also stimulating their intention to revisit in the future.

Practical Contributions:

The research findings help the management boards of spiritual destinations and local authorities better understand the importance of destination attachment, service quality, and actual experience in relation to tourists' satisfaction and return intentions. This understanding can lead to solutions to increase satisfaction and the likelihood of returning tourists.

3. APPLICATIONS/PRACTICAL APPLICABILITY AND REMAINING ISSUES THAT REQUIRE FURTHER RESEARCH

Research Limitations:

Firstly, the research is limited to certain specific spiritual destinations and primarily focuses on surveying tourists, lacking diversity in other subjects such as travel agencies, local tourism management organs, and managers of spiritual sites and destinations.

The number of spiritual destinations where direct information was collected is limited due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, which made it difficult to access tourists. Additionally, limited funding meant that the survey focused on tourists at the seven most famous spiritual destinations in the seven economic regions across the country (representing the regions), accounting for approximately 66% of the total survey responses. The remaining 34% of survey responses were collected from tourists who have visited or are currently visiting other spiritual sites in various provinces and cities across the country.

Future Research Directions:

To sustainably develop Vietnam's spiritual tourism industry, future research will focus on: expanding surveys to various spiritual destinations to increase representativeness; diversifying survey subjects, including travel agencies, local tourism

