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Factors Affecting International Tourists' Perceived Service Quality and Return Intention—A Study in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Mai Ngoc Khuong[1] & Nguyen Phuong Quyen[1]

[1] School of Business, International University, Vietnam National University-HCMC, Vietnam

Correspondence: Mai Ngoc Khuong, School of Business, International University, Vietnam National University-HCMC, Vietnam. E-mail: mnkhuong@hcmiu.edu.vn

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Abstract

This research aimed to measure key factors affecting international tourists' perceived service quality and their return intention towards Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. A quantitative method was used with structured questionnaire directly delivered to 1,673 tourists who had already visited or stayed in the city for more than three days. The empirical results of this study showed that recreation and entertainment had the strongest effect; other factors such as perceived service quality, culture, history and art, safety and security, local cuisine, negative attributes, perceived price, natural environment, and destination image also had positive effects on international tourists' return intention. Conversely, infrastructure provided negative effect on tourists' return intention.

Keywords: Ho Chi Minh City, path analysis, perceived service quality, return intention

1. Introduction

Vietnam has always been well-known for having many great tourist attractions. From the beautiful bays of Ha Long and NhaTrang to the breath-taking mountainous wonders of both the Northwest and Tay Nguyen ranges, or the exotic untamed rainforests and delta of the Southwest. Each has their own unique appeal. Besides the numerous gifts of nature, Vietnam is also lucky to have many wondrous cities, with great histories, fascinating cultures, and irresistible delicacies. Everything it possibly needs to become a great international destination.

Being one of the largest cities in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City has a wide range of historical cultural sites, recreational areas, monasteries system, potentials for eco-tourism thanks to biosphere reserves, and there are many traditional villages. Moreover, the developed system of transport infrastructure and connected to many areas in the country, Ho Chi Minh City often selected as the first destination for international visitors. The city has a high-concentrated population from surrounding regions and even across the country, and this creates a multi-culture to help Ho Chi Minh City seem likely a smaller version of Vietnam.

A report of The Culture, Sport and Tourism Department of Vietnam on 18, January 2016 showed that tourism contributed 4.2 billion USD to the city or 9.88% of its GDP, tourism is definitely a strong aspect of the former "Pearl of the Far East's" economy. However, when compared with other big urban tourist hotspots in South East Asia, the phenomenal that most tourists won't have the intention to return to Ho Chi Minh City after the first visit. Follow a post by The Saigontimes, there was only about 6% of international tourists return to tourism sites in Vietnam. And thus, despite a large number of visitors each year, Ho Chi Minh City's tourism industry still cannot quite match that of the neighbouring countries. For example, in 2014, Thailand's amount of tourists achieved nearly 24.78 million while Vietnam's amount of tourists only jumped for 7.87 million (Asian tourism statistics, 2015), despite the advantages in having more aesthetically pleasing nature sceneries and more stable political environment, and almost the same culture background.

To sum up, there are several problems that affect to the devotion of international holiday makers. To increase the competitiveness of Vietnam's tourism in general, and Ho Chi Minh city's tourism in particular, what we need to do is that give out the methods to clarify those and prevent them from deterioration. This research was conducted with the intention of shredding some insight into the field.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Return Intention

A key factor of revisiting a particular destination is loyalty. Loyal customers are frequently repurchasing products or advise others to buy the products (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Oliver (1993) stated that loyalty is a deeplyheld commitment to rebuy a brand or service consistently in the future. Loyalty is the ability of customers returning to a place (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). The loyalty is commonly reflected in theintention of visitors to repeat destination (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Oppermann, 2000).

Oppermann (2000), re-visits have been concerned as desirable in marketing and tourism analyses. The reasons were listed: Firstly, comparing with the first time, from the second time onwards, the marketing costs for revisiting tourists will be lowered. Secondly, revisiting is an indicator of tourists' positive satisfaction. Thirdly, according to Oppermann (1998), the possibility of return increases with the positive attitude of visitors.

Feng and Jang (2004) subdivided the tourists revisiting intention of tourism destinations (TRDI) as (1) Continued re-visitors (a high revisit intention); (2) Moratorium re-visitors (Revisit intention starts out weak, and then grows stronger with time); (3) Continued conversion repeaters (low revisiting intention). Feng and Jang (2007) divided revisit intention into short-term (1 year), medium-term (3 years); long-term (5 years); the length of time affect visitors' novelty seeking and satisfaction on repeat destination. Carlsen and Charters (2007) stated that over time, the perceptions, experiences and memory of a journey they gained in the past will be replaced by newer one.

Seoho Um Kaye Chon, the awareness of destination's attributes, service quality, and price, satisfaction level is the premiere of returning. Better services will make a tourist more loyal toward the destination (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

2.2 Perceived Service Quality

Day and Crash (2000) and Oh (2003) examined perceived quality and perceived values are the best variables to showcase visitors' loyalty and satisfaction. Consumers' expectation based on perceived quality they received (Oliver, 1997), consumers' beliefs about the future result or product's performance (Olson & Dover, 1979). Parasuraman et al. (1985) determined perceived quality as the resulting attitude from the comparison between a consumer's expectations and the actual performance. Bolton and Drew (1991) stated that the perceived quality of a destination has been known as a consolidation of visitors' trip experiences and perceived service that was received in relation to their expectations of the actual service performance. Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) showed that service quality is an evaluation of standard or quality of the service for purchasers. Service quality plays a vitally important role of the well-being of the business service industry (Shahin & Dabestani, 2001).

Quality of the service is the first concern of travellers than ever. By meeting the expectation of the tourists, tourists pay more attention when the trip has good service quality (Kamndampully & Duddy, 2001). If service quality is improved, managers can achieve visitors' satisfaction and their loyalty (Tian-Cole & Cromption, 2003). Meanwhile, inferior service quality can hinder the potentiality of any business and encourage clients to switch service suppliers (Sparks & Westgate, 2002).

Good quality services and satisfaction can increase the likelihood of tourists' revisits (Appiah-Adu et al., 2000; Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bigne et al., 2001) and influence tourists' expectationon the same destinations in future revisits (Mazursky, 1989; Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003).

2.3 Cultural and Historical Attractions

Cultural environment includes arts/customs/habits that differentiate a specific nation, region or society. The cultural environment is a combination of "life quality; language barriers; hospitality and friendliness of the local residents; festival or concert; religion; historical attractions; customs and lifestyle" (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Special events which create motivation of visitors help to boost the tourism attention (Uysal et al., 1991). Besides, historical attraction is defined as a connecting place with important historical periods. Visitors participate in a process orientation tend to enjoy meeting local artisans, listening to their stories while observing physical craft demonstrations and obtaining historical and cultural knowledge for a local significant craft (Yu & Littrell, 2003). Light (1996) researched the case about historical re-enactments at a heritage site in South Wales, showed the characteristics of visitors to a special event, most tourists were satisfied with the cultural/heritage destination and it leads tourists to extend the length of stay and return intention.

2.4 Local Cuisine

Hudman (1986), food has been becoming a progressively integral element in the tourist industry by giving the fact that up to a quarter of total tourist expense is spent for foodstuff and this is increasing gradually. Food has been becoming a basic essential for tourists as well as an integral element of regional culture (Jones & Jenkins, 2002). By spending more effort in discovering local cuisine, tourists will approach opportunities to have a better memorable and excited holiday than expected (Quan & Wang, 2004). Knowledge about different cultural visitor dining habit will effectively complement the tourism satisfaction and also service for the specific region. For local food suppliers, it is extremely necessary to be well-educated about tourism dining culture, which includes their dining habits, tastes, and also the original customs to satisfy their experiences, that leads to a great customer service (Quan & Wang, 2004).

2.5 Perceived Cost

Perceived cost is determined by the expense that visitors need to spend to obtain benefits from the product and service they experienced (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). Price affects the customer expectation at service level. A ground-level low price is possibly a factor indicating inferior quality (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996) and risky product. Hoffman and Bates (1997), service consumers are willing to spend more for a service to avoid risky or unfamiliar service suppliers. Price is a visible indicator of a service's level and quality (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991) and also a risk-reducing mean (Boshoff, 2002). Customers are willing to spend more for a service at a strange place if they determine its association with exquisite or luxury illustration (Bagwell & Berheim, 1996). With the sophistication or richness of the destination, they tend to take out more money in their pocket for products (Papatheodorou, 2001).

2.6 Safety and Security

Safety and security are considered two of the most basic needs of all human by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. When a tourist feels unsafe in an environment, he/she will very likely to withhold any intention of revisiting. Security is the protection from intended incidents, rather than unintended ones (Idso & Jakobsen, 2000). Albrechtsen (2003), removing any hazards, threats and ensuring a safe and secure environment are conditions to take care of people. Safety tends to focus on protection of health and human lives; security is concerned particularly with the protection against criminal activities. Beerli and Martin (2004) provided some items like crime rate or terrorist attacks.

2.7 Infrastructure

Yates and Maanen (2001) stated that infrastructure is tools which are available for public usage, large in scope, embedded within public structures—like power grids, water, the Internet, airlines. Infrastructure contains public infrastructure (health cares, telecommunications, etc.) and in tourism infrastructure like housings, hotels, restaurants, tourism centres, etc. (Beerli & Martin, 2004).

2.8 Natural Environment

Nature environment insists of climate, weather, natural resource, etc., which are not created by human (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Nature environment is an important source of attraction in the tourism business (Inskeep & Pelancongan, 1996). The natural atmosphere and climate condition of the tourist destination geography affect the visitors' satisfaction (Coban, 2012).

2.9 Entertainment and Creation Activities

Entertainment is defined as time used to do what a man enjoys when he or she does not have to work or studying which is as medias/activities utilized to amuse individual (Oxford dictionary, 2005). They are procurement, outdoor adventure activities, nightlife, etc. (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Entertainments in tourism include theatre, concerts, bars, restaurants, etc. (Mazanec, 1997).

2.10 Negative Attributes

Negative attributes are characteristics that can leave unfavourable impression about a trip (Truong & Foster, 2006). Most tourists want to experience a pleasurable time when they visit a tourism destination. However, undesirable features such as pollution, overcrowding, etc. in any particular destination can hamper tourists' enjoyment, and consequently lower revisiting intention such as pollution, overcrowding, etc. To evaluate tourist's satisfaction with a tourist destination, it is important to take into account the impact of both positive and negative attributes (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Holiday satisfaction can be affected by negative attributes (Tribe & Snaith, 1998).

2.11 Destination Image

One of the most examined and analysed concepts in modern tourism is destination image (Pan & Xiang, 2011). Image can be expressed in many ways: as a person's collection of theories, opinions, and impressions about an object, a review of all informationacquired through different channels or an intellectual implication the person has about something external physical awareness (Aksoy & Kiyci, 2011).

In over four decades, destination image has been regarded as one of the important areas in tourism study (Svetlana & Juline, 2010). Destination image is defined as "the sum of knowledge, impressions, bias, imaginations and emotional thoughts an individual has about the product or destination" (Lawson & Baud, 1977; Crompton, 1979; Kotler et al., 1994). Image is defined as "The people's feelings of anything that they aware" (Boulding, 1956; Parenteau, 1995). The definitions above from Gallara et al. (2002) research paper.

Hsu et al. (2004), better destination image is an important factor to attract tourists toward a particular destination. A successful key in the tourism business is creating positive destination image in the minds of the tourists (Hankinson, 2004). A positive destination image can be advantageous against other competitors (Mykletun et al., 2001; Fan, 2006). A positive and favourable awareness destination image will make tourists a destination more often (Laws, 2002; Beerli, 2004; Bonn et al., 2005).

Chen and Tsai (2007), Bigne et al.'s (2001), destination image influence directly on the visitors' intentions, quality of travelling, perceived value, and satisfaction. Alcaniz et al. (2009), destination image affect directly on travel intentions. They discovered a connection between thefunction of image and revisit intention, as well as between psychological image and intention to introduce to others. Castro et al. (2007) discovered a positive indirect relationship between the destination images and travel intention, service quality and visitor satisfaction. Destination image and the representation of a destination can affect tourists' intention to visit or revisit (Morgan et al., 2002).

In order to confirm the direct and indirect effects on tourist return intention this study hypothesized that:

H1: Factors of cultural and historical attractions, local cuisine, perceived cost, safety and security, infrastructure and accessibility, natural environment, entertainment and recreation activities, negative attributes, destination image directly affect perceived service quality.

H2: Factors of cultural and historical attractions, local cuisine, perceived cost, safety and security, infrastructure and accessibility, natural environment, entertainment and recreation activities, negative attributes, destination image, and perceived service quality directly affect tourist return intention.

H3: The effect of cultural and historical attractions, local cuisine, perceived cost, safety and security, infrastructure and accessibility, natural environment, entertainment and recreation activities, negative attributes, destination image on tourist return intention is mediated by perceived service quality.

3. Methodology

3.1 Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

This study adapted quantitative approach as the major method by gathering real data from questionnaire survey. The questionnaires were directly delivered to 1,673 tourists who stayed in Ho Chi Minh City at least three days or more to evaluate the factors affect their perceived service quality and return intention. Structure of most of questions in the survey used 5-point Likert scale ranging from one to five, 1="strongly disagree" and 5="strongly agree".

3.2 Factor Analysis and Reliability

The first Exploratory Factor Analysis was applied for the group of 9 independent variables with 55 items and 2 dependent variables with 8 items for the purpose of obtaining the highest reliability and validity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olk in Measure of Sampling Adequacy value was 0.911>0.6 for the group of independent variables and 0.819 for the dependent variables which were greater than 0.7 and the Sig. of Bartlett's test at 0.000 level ($p<0.05$) (Pallant, 2005). Therefore, the data set was considered appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 1. Summary of independent variables with reliability coefficients

Variables	Number of items	Alpha
Cultural and Historical Attractions (CULHISART)	4	.824
Safety and Security (SAFSEC)	5	.761
Local Cuisine (LOCUIS)	4	.806
Negative Attributes (NEGAT)	6	.759
Perceived Price (PERPRICE)	5	.801
Natural Environment (NANENVI)	5	.774
Infrastructure and Accessibility (INFRAS)	3	.756
Destination Image (DESIMAGE)	4	.752
Entertainment and Recreation Activities (RECENTER)	3	.699

The Kaiser's criteria helped to know exactly how many components to extract. If the eigenvalues were greater than 1, components were considered appropriate for retaining. Thus, the first 9 components recorded eigenvalue above 1 which were explained 59.8 percent of the total variance and Cronbach's coefficients ranged from .669 to .824 which indicated good subscale reliability.

The second Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted for the two dependent variables of perceived service quality and return intention including 8 items and the total variance were 65.2 percent, components were considered appropriate for retaining. Cronbach's coefficients ranged from .847 to .770, indicating good subscale reliability.

Table 2. Summary of dependent variables with reliability coefficients

Given names	Number of items	Alpha
Perceived Service Quality (PERSEQUA)	5	.847
Tourist Return Intention (TORETIN)	3	.770

4. Research Findings

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

In Table 3, the proportion of male accounted for 53.4%, which was more than female 46.6%. Most of tourists separated equally from young visitors to middle-aged as follow: 18-35 (25%), 26-30 (24%) and 31-40 (23%). Asian tourists represented almost half of the total tourists, Europe took 32%, while the other group such as USA/Canada, Australia, Latin America and Africa which constituted only 11%, 8%, 2% and 1% respectively. Whereas the majority of the visitors with bachelor and master or higher occupied nearly 60% in total, only a small minority of undergraduate students (14.9%). Regarding the number of times visiting HCMC, although the first time accounted for 65%, only 15.3% for the second time and 7.3% for the third time. However, there was a slight increase to 12.6% for "more than three times". Out of 100% purpose of visiting HCMC, leisure occupied 62.9% which are the largest percentage in total.

Table 3. The summary of demographic information of respondent (N=1,673)

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	893	53.4
	Female	780	46.6
Age	<18	34	2.0
	18-25	419	25.0
	26-40	405	24.2
	31-40	387	23.1
	41-60	310	18.5
	>60	118	7.1
Nation	Europe	529	31.6
	USA/Canada	193	11.5
	Latin American	26	1.6
	Asia	777	46.4
	Australia, NZ	136	8.1
	Africa	12	.7
Education	High-school degree	191	11.4
	College degree	233	13.9
	Undergraduate	249	14.9
	Bachelor degree	647	38.7
	Master degree or higher	353	21.1
Times to place	1	1085	64.9
	2	256	15.3
	3	122	7.3
	>3	210	12.6
Purpose to visit	Business	251	15.0
	Leisure	1052	62.9
	Visiting friends/relatives	177	10.6
	Others (...)	193	11.5

4.2 Relationship between Independent Variables, PERSEQUA and Tourist Return Intention

Looking at the Table 4, the data indicated influence between all of independent variables, PERSEQUA and TORETIN. To be more specific, other variables including CULHISART, NATENVI, RECENTER and PERSEQUA had strong correlations with TORETIN (r=.340, r=.346, r=.366 and r=.344 respectively). It means that the higher cultural and historical attractions, natural environment, entertainment and recreation activities will lead to the higher tourist return intention. The other five groups of SAFSEC, LOCUIS, PERPRICE, INFRAS, DESIMAGE variables had moderately positive relationships with TORETIN (r=.241, r=.270, r=.291 r=.256 and r=.288, respectively). Conversely, NEGAT variable with TORETIN (r=-.003, p>0.05), which indicated that no correlations between negative attributes and tourist return intention.

Table 4. Correlations between variables

	TORETIN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. CULHISART	.340**	1.000								
2. SAFSEC	.241**	.292**	1.000							
3. LOCUIS	.270**	.400**	.355**	1.000						
4. NEGAT	-.003	-.033	-.029	.036	1.000					
5. PERPRICE	.291**	.410**	.353**	.580**	-.086**	1.000				
6. NATENVI	.346**	.509**	.406**	.312**	-.157**	.347**	1.000			
7. INFRAS	.256**	.407**	.423**	.497**	-.106**	.520**	.437**	1.000		
8. DESIMAGE	.288**	.392**	.280**	.519**	-.040*	.529**	.286**	.489**	1.000	
9. RECENTER	.366**	.479**	.253**	.383**	-.086**	.466**	.411**	.421**	.473**	1.000
10. PERSEQUA	.344**	.396**	.406**	.548**	-.147**	.515**	.390**	.574**	.514**	.405**
Mean	3.59	3.60	3.52	4.07	3.64	3.82	3.38	3.70	3.95	3.46
S D.	.885	.717	.713	.659	.704	.666	.743	.718	.654	.709

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the .005 level.

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level.

4.3 Direct Effects on Perceived Service Quality

Based on Multiple Regression analysis, which was helpful to measure the hypothesis that seven independent variables had direct effects to PERSEQUA. Using unstandardized coefficients (B), NEGAT (B=-.098), DESIMAGE (B=.167), SAFSEC (B=.106), LOCUIS (B=.228), PERPRICE (B=.086), NATENVI (B=.046), INFRAS (B=.219). It showed that when the group of these factors made visitors felt good, the perceived service quality was likely to increase.

4.4 Direct Effects on Tourists' Return Intention

Five out of nine independent variables had direct effects to tourists' return intention. CULHISART (B=.120, p<0.001), RECENTER (B=.218, p<0.001), NEGAT (B=.080, p<0.05) and NATENVI (B=.191, p<0.001). It illustrated that if cultural and historical attractions, negative attributes, natural environment, entertainment and recreation activities are improved, the amount of tourist return intention will increase (positive effect). Conversely, infrastructure had a negative effect on tourist return intention INFRAS (B=-.089, p<0.05), when tourists felt dissatisfied with infrastructure; it will lead to bad effects on revisiting.

Turning to relationship between tourists' return intention and perceived service quality, PERSEQUA also had a positive effect on TORETIN (B=.216, p<.001). It indicated that the more tourists' perceived service quality, the more return intention.

4.5 Indirect Effects on Tourists' Return Intention

From the result of multiple regression analysis, there were seven independent variables effects on TORETIN through PERSEQUA. The effect of independent variables on dependent variable was mediated by mediator variable, which was the total effect of independent variables on mediator variable and mediator variable on dependent variable, Preacher and Hayes (2008). Seven factors directly influenced on PERSEQUA, after that PERSEQUA directly affected on TORETIN (B=.216). Hence, through the mediator variable, the factors of NEGAT, DESIMAGE, SAFSEC, LOCUIS, PERPRICE, NATENVI and INFRA Sindirectly affected on TORETIN at (.059), (.036), (.023), (.049), (.019), (.201) and (-.042) respectively.

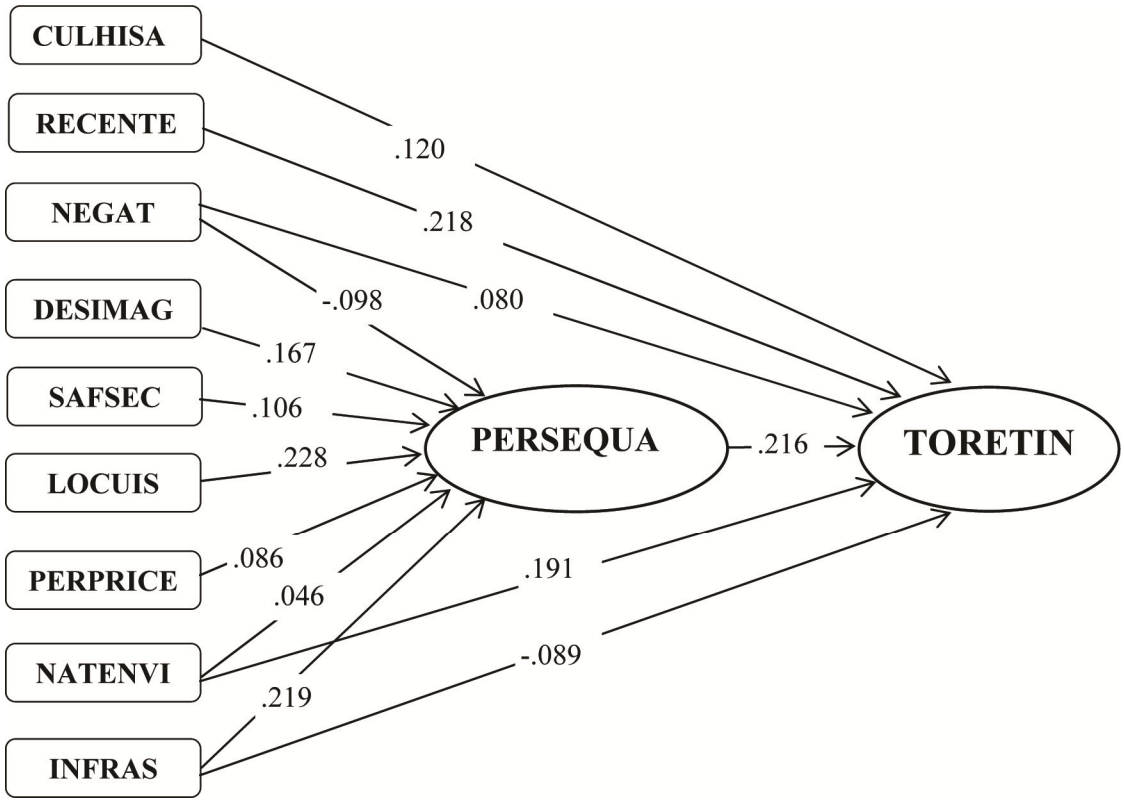

Figure 1. Path coefficients of the TORETIN model

Note. All coefficients in the model were significant at the .05 level.

4.6 Significant of the Indirect Effect

According to Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008), using bootstrapping method to examine the indirect effects or mediation, 95% confidence intervals was showed in this study. If ZERO (0) happens within the interval range between LL (lower boundary) and UL (Upper boundary), with 95% confidence, there is no mediation or indirect effect. Conversely, if no ZERO (0) lies between the UL and the LL, with 95% confidence, the mediation or indirect effect was significant. In this case, the indirect effects of SAFSEC, LOCUIS, DESIMAGE, PERPRICE, NEGAT, INFRAS, and NATENVI, on TORETIN through the PERSEQUA mediator were estimated to lie between (.0138 and .0334), (.0331 and .0672), (.0228 and .0505), (.0087 and .0301), (-.0306 and -.0128), (.0318 and .0643) and (.0027 and .0183) respectively. Thus, with 95% confidence, and no Zero within these intervals, so the true indirect effects of these variables on TORETIN were indeed significant at $p<.05$ (two tailed).

4.7 Total Causal Effect of Tourists' Return Intention

As the result from Table 5, it was divided into two groups; there were direct and indirect effects on TORETIN. Besides, the table illustrated the influence of independent variables with PERSEQUA on TORETIN. As can be seen clearly, at total effect, RECENTER had the strongest effect on TORETIN (B=.218) with moderate effect (Vaus, 2002). Next, positive effects on TORETIN are PERSEQUA factor (B=.216), NATENVI (B=.201), CULHISART (B=.120), NEGAT (B=.059), LOCUIS (B=.049), DESIMAGE (B=.036), SAFSEC (B=.023) and PERPRICE (B=.019) respectively. However, INFRAS with B=-.042 had negative effecton TORETIN. To sum up, the total effect on tourists return intention was .899.

Table 5. Direct, indirect and total causal effect

Variables	Causal effects			LL	UL
	Direct	Indirect	Total		
SAFSEC	-	.023	.023	.0138	.0334
LOCUIS	-	.049	.049	.0331	.0672
DESIMAGE	-	.036	.036	.0228	.0505
PERPRICE	-	.019	.019	.0087	.0301
NEGAT	.080	-.021	.059	-.0306	-.0128
INFRAS	-.089	.047	-.042	.0318	.0643
NATENVI	.191	.010	.201	.0027	.0183
CULHISART	.120	-	.120		
RECENTER	.218	-	.218		
PERSEQUA	.216	-	.216		
Total	**.736**	**.163**	**.899**		

5. Discussion and Recommendation

5.1 Discussion of Finding

In Table 5, it showed that the most influence was Recreation and entertainment; Perceived service quality also had a strong influence on Tourist return intention. Hence, the results explained that the higher perceived service quality, the higher tourist return intention. The others positive effects had positive B values including Culture, history and art, Safety and security, Local cuisine, Negative Attributes, Perceived price, Natural environment, Destination image. Conversely, with negative B value, Infrastructure had negative effect on Tourist return intention. The results based on many antecedent researches such as Chen and Tsai (2007), Huang and Hsu (2009), Yoon and Uysal (2005), etc. Overall, based on the results, this research had some recommendations to improve tourism not only in Ho Chi Minh City but also in other places.

5.2 Recommendations

One problemof Ho Chi Minh City's tourism is the lack of frequent tourists. This is caused by either the lack satisfaction in the first visit or the unflattering information from the media. The bad impressions make the visitors no longer interested in coming back, or recommending Vietnam to their friends. In addition, there are many reasons behind the low returning intention, such as quality of service, cost, infrastructure, environmental issues, etc. The following recommendations are combinations of the empirical results and development suggestions from people who work in tourism.

5.2.1 Perceived Service Quality

Firstly, the process to get visitor visa to Vietnam, which often costs travellers from 2 to 5 days—which can be annoying, needs to be simplified. Although the Vietnamese government currently has visa exemption policy for visitors from around 80 countries, such policy is not applied to North American and Western European tourists. It is recommended to apply visa exemption status to and develop better relations with these nations. "Visa on arrival" should be used to minimize wasted time.

Secondly, the quality of workers in the tourism industry and other related businesses needs improvement to professional standards. Cooperation between tourism companies and vocational training centres to increase the capability of potential employees is needed. Use policies, laws and promotions to encourage citizens to be friendly to tourists. Shift the focus of foreign languages teaching from grammar to communication. Steps should be taken to make tourists feel more comfortable in dealing with legal issues through polices and customs service, especially in Tan Son Nhat Airport—the gateway to the city. People who work in tourism, especially drivers, should be made able to communicate foreign languages and more knowledgeable about local tourists attractions. Hotels need to provide tourism information to travellers for free. Quality of service and fair competition must be enforced to ensure the benefit of tourists and the development of the city's tourism.

5.2.2 Cultural and Historical Attractions

Traditional Vietnamese Arts (such as CaiLuong, NhaNhac, Cheo, QuanHo, etc.) should be integrated to promotions. Traditional cultural advantages should be maximized by investing in local festivals to advance them to national level, strengthening folklore activities at tourist attractions, and encourage culture exchanges. These steps will increase cultural diversity and advertise Vietnamese culture.

Renowned architectural structures like temples, pagodas, and churches should be incorporated into the tours. Tourism managers need to organize overseas exhibitions of Vietnam's tourism, culture, art, and produces to promote its image. Ho Chi Minh City should have at least one theatre prioritizing playing traditional arts. These plays should be short and should be performed continuously to allow visitors to select their appropriate periods. Controlled street performances of traditional arts (such as Nguyen Hue pedestrian) should be promoted to stimulate tourists' curiosity.

The preservation and renovation of historical relics are needed. The teaching of history can be adjusted to create a more accurate views to raise students' interest in history, allows them to serve as ambassadors to tourists. Introducing boards with foreign languages subtitles should be put near tourist attractions to make them easier to locate. The use of modern equipment in museum and library could give visitors easier access to Vietnam culture and history.

5.2.3 Local Cuisine

Department of Health should update new regulations and enforced them using health inspectors to ensure food safety. Besides, it is important to strengthen the food quality control system by additional training for managers, inspectors and laboratory staffs. There should be special traditional Vietnamese culinary zones with reasonable cost and good safety standards. Broadcasted culinary competitions focus on Vietnamese dishes can be beneficial to tourism (shows, websites, books and advertisement such as Vietnam Travel TV show, Discovery channel, etc.). Street vendors are unique feature that need to be preserved and manage effectively.

5.2.4 Perceived Cost

Measures must be taken to ensure pricing transparency and prevent overcharging. Visitor visa charge should also be reduced. Policies to stabilize prices are needed, and inspections to ensure the implementation of these policies. Tourism business must have set prices, and must be inspected often to confirm that the real prices are similar to listed ones. Tourists should be advised to only shop in establishments where the prices are listed. Local tourism businesses should implement "industry linking" and "region linking" to develop "travel service chains" with similar standards and prices. Discounts for groups and tax exemption/refund should be considered.

5.2.5 Safe and Security

Hotlines and support centres are very necessary in assisting travellers in special circumstances such as being robbed or losing ID. General safety advices should be provided to travellers in crowded area like airports, stations, etc. Security at tourist attraction spots should be tightened by placement of security camera. A polices department specialized in tourist-related incidents should also be created to support tourists immediately after the occurrence of unexpected incidents.

At gateway, it is necessary to tighten inspections for diseases which can be transmitted by travelling; updates equipment to effectively monitor cargo and luggage in order to prevent crimes as well as the smuggling of prohibited goods, but still have to ensure, a friendly atmosphere to make tourists feel comfortable. Strong links between domestic insurers with foreign insurance companies are needed to react quickly with unexpected situations happen to foreign travellers in Vietnam.

5.2.6 Infrastructure

Managers should outline the policies to attract the foreign and private investment (the exemption of taxes and leasing prices), create fair competition to encourage quantity and quality of restaurants, hotels, trade centre, etc. This provides more choices for tourist.

Regarding traffic, the expansion of routes and the addition of new highways help reduce travel time. Major road junctions need to be relocated outside the city to reduce big vehicles traffic in city streets. Traffic signs and signposts with English subtitles are necessary to help visitors to easily read and understand. It's also important to complete the metro line between Ben Thanh Market and SuoiTien Culture Park to shorten the travel time and increase travel safety. Next, it's highly recommended to develop a system of riverside posts to take advantages of the robust river system of the city. These river routes can also help in the development of waterway tourism.

Finally, public transportation should be improved in both quality and quantity, and bus routes map in foreign languages should be provided to tourists.

Infrastructures for health care, trading, recreational activities and environmental sanitation should also be improved upon. Tan Son Nhat airport ought to be expanded and upgraded by applying appropriate improvements from other airports around the world such as tree planting, installation of more equipment to serve tourists better. This included professional staffs and simplified administrative procedures.

5.2.7 Natural Environment

The quality of the environment must be checked regularly for on-going harmful effects and/or polluting behaviours. Tourism businesses such as restaurants, hotels and resorts must be enforced to protect the environment. Build more public restrooms, put more garbage bins and plant more trees in public area as well as dreg of canals likely ThiNghe, NhieuLoc canal. Increase the frequency of cleaning in crowded places. Ecotourism should be promoted to take advantages of nature resources like Can Gio Biosphere Reserve, thereby enriching the tourism experience and raising tourists' awareness about nature. Tour guides can be trained with in-depth knowledge about environment protection to provide to visitors.

Factories and material processing facilities should berelocatedin certain locations to manage easily in matters of waste, exhaust gas and waste water. This method will also reduce the number of large vehicles in inner city streets and improve traffic safety and reduce air pollution.

5.2.8 Entertainment and Recreation Activities

Tourism manager in Ho Chi Minh City should develop eco-tourism and adventure tourism to attract visitors with special activities (mountain climbing, bungee jumping, sliding grass, etc.) and build more traditional culture recreation areas. Government can promulgate policies to expand nightlife activities and collaborate with business to develop traditional folk games of Vietnamese, encourage domestic and foreign enterprises to invest in entertainment industry. Moreover, shopping centres and shopping mall should be developed to satisfy the diverse needs of travellers.

Hotels and restaurants should be expanded serving styles such as introduce Vietnamese traditional dishes on menu, donate tickets to the art performing shows, organize traditional music like water puppet as well as develop display areas which show the unique aspects of Vietnam.

5.2.9 Negative Attributes

Enact new laws and tighten the enforcement of existing laws that prohibit acts of robbery and counterfeits trading. Policies to reduce beggars and hawkers in the city are necessary (parks, museums, Ho Chi Minh post office, Ben Thanh market, etc.). Sidewalk and bridges must be monitored carefully to ensure the safety of pedestrians.

Unfair business should be decreased by increasing the links between tourism services such as transportation, accommodation, dining, attractions, entertainment services and travel guides in order to control input costs and product prices.

5.2.10 Destination Image

It is necessary to enhance friendliness and hospitality of local people to bring positive feelings for tourists toward HCMC. Besides, authorities ought to issue policies reduce crime rate, preferably by helping ex-criminals to reintegrate to society and avoid relapse.

Media needs to be growth strongly in posting articles and video clips about lifestyle, and broadcasting channels to introduce and promote the best images of the lifestyle, the people of HCMC to the world. City decoration should be based on reasonable themes to increase the professional image and attractiveness of the city.

5.3 Limitations of the Study and Future Research

The data collection conducted only tourists who are already visited or stayed more than three days in Ho Chi Minh City, not in Viet Nam. Besides, the lack of capability approach in time, budget, location, and conveniences, it was hard to cover all feedbacks of foreign tourists in Vietnam. Consequently, this research could not generalize all of tourists. In short, the outcome of this study also a reference for further researchers in related fields or sectors. Additionally, further researches with better questionnaires, with more relevant, meaningful and accurate factors and items, were needed. With that, the number of factors excluded after analysis test can be reduced. Moreover, future researcher can expand in other aspects of tourist return intention like word of mouth, tourist loyalty, destination satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

To summarize, this research aimed to identify important factors that affect international tourists' return intention. By analysing data and information gathered from 1,673 respondents who travelled to and stopped by the city for more than three days, the research provided the following empirical results: Recreation and entertainment was the strongest predictor of tourists' revisiting intention with (B=.218), other variables such as perceived service quality, culture, history and art, safety and security, local cuisine, negative attributes, perceived price, natural environment, and destination image also had positive effects on return destination while infrastructure had negative effect on tourist return intention.

From these results, practical improvement and development suggestions were provided to the local tourism decision makers in order to improve tourists' intention to revisit HCM city, which can provide a great contribution to the success of its tourism industry.

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