

ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE DECISION TO CHOOSE PHAN THIET CITY OF DOMESTIC TRAVELERS

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Abstract: The decision to choose a destination of tourists is influenced by many factors. Conducting research on these factors is an urgent issue to evaluate accurately and objectively the factors affecting the choice of the destination of the tourist. In this research the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) has been used to build a model to evaluate the factors affecting the choice of destination in Phan Thiet City of domestic tourists. The results show that there are 3 factors, including pulling and pushing motivation, price, publicity with different levels of impact. A number of suitable solutions to attract tourists to Phan Thiet have been developed.

Keywords: Domestic tourist; Phan Thiet City; tourist destination; Exploratory Factor Analysis.

1. Introduction

Phan Thiet City is one of the famous tourist centers in Vietnam. Tourism is a driving force to promote local socio-economic development. According to Phan Thiet Statistical Yearbook, the number of tourists to the city keeps increasing and accounts for a high proportion in the whole province. Those statistical results show that Phan Thiet is an attractive destination for tourists.

In a study published in 2017 by the authors Huynh Nhat Phuong and Nguyen Thuy An titled “Analysis of factors of tourist destination affecting the tourists’ intention to return - the case of Can Tho City”, the destination factors were considered as the conditions affecting the intention of tourists. The approach from the authors mainly focuses on the pull motivation factors in tourism. Thereby, it is necessary to clarify more pushing motivation factors in choosing a tourist destination of tourists.

Tran Kim Thoa (2018) has published a research result on the factors affecting the decision to choose a tourist destination of tourists from Western Europe and North America, the case of Hoi An, in which the author had identified internal and external factors affecting the selection of tourist destination such as motivation, attitude, experience, destination image, references from previous groups, price, communication, and the characteristics of the trip. The characteristics of Hoi An tourist destination are different from those of Phan Thiet and the research object of author Tran Kim Thoa is international tourists. So, it has certain difference between selection factors.

From the above analysis, it is necessary to study in an overview and focus on the factors affecting the choice of destination of tourists in Phan Thiet City. In this study, the author summarizes and synthesizes the factors affecting the choice of destination of tourists which consist of 4 main factors including destination image; travel motivation; tourism promotion and trip expense. Through those factors, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and regression analysis have been carried out to determine the degree of impact of these factors on the tourists' decision to choose a tourist destination in Phan Thiet.

1.1. Research methods

Qualitative research methods were used, including data collection and data processing, analysis - comparison - synthesis. Methods of field research and expert interviews are also used to build models, scales, and survey variables. Quantitative research method is carried out by means of a questionnaire survey. The number of survey questionnaires is 272 visitors who have been to Phan Thiet and potential visitors are suitable for convenient sampling method.

Likert scale, a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaires, was used to measure the decision to choose a destination based on the statements expressing the destination image, travel motivation, trip expenses and promotional activities. To quantitatively evaluate the collected data, SPSS software with descriptive statistics techniques, testing the reliability of the scale using Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and multivariate regression analysis, has been used.

1.2. Research model

The decision to choose a tourist destination is a complex act, interwoven between many factors, especially when the number of tourist destinations is relatively large. Mathieson and Wall's (1982) determined that the tourist's decision to choose a destination depends on the characteristics of the tourism resource, trips, and visitors (Mathieson, 1982).

Woodside and MacDonald's (1994) model divides the decision to choose tourism services into three stages, the pre-decision stage includes information search, evaluation, and intention formation; the decision-making stage to choose tourism services; and the post-purchase stage includes evaluation of the experience, satisfaction and shaping experiences for future decisions. Um and Crompton proposed a model that includes 6 factors: internal motivation, destination image, communication, recommendation by others, tour price, and visitor experience (Um, 1990).

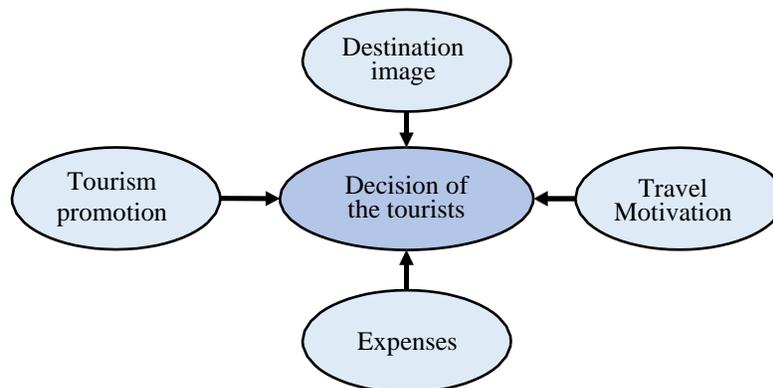


Figure 1: Research model

From previous studies, the author has proposed a research model including 4 factors: destination image, travel motivation, trip expenses and tourism promotion activities (Figure 1). The model has the following hypotheses:

➤ **Hypothesis H1:** Destination image has a positive impact on tourists' decision to choose a destination.

- **Hypothesis H2:** Tourism motivation has a positive impact on tourists' decision to choose a destination.
- **Hypothesis H3:** Trip expense has a positive impact on tourists' decision to choose a destination.
- **Hypothesis H4:** Tourism promotion have a positive impact on tourists' decision to choose a destination.

2. Research content

2.1. Overview of tourism in Phan Thiet City

Phan Thiet City is the most important administrative, economic and cultural center of Binh Thuan Province. Phan Thiet's tourism activities officially began with the last total solar eclipse of the twentieth century, attracting a huge number of tourists to come here to admire and study. With the advantage of marine tourism resources with a beautiful and 57.4 km long coastline (Phan Thiet City Statistical Office, 2017), white and gentle sandy beaches, Phan Thiet City has favourable conditions to develop local tourism activities. In Phan Thiet City, a system of diverse and unique tourism resources combined with an increasingly upgraded and modernized tourism service system has formed tourism products such as resorts, sea sports, sightseeing and entertainment, ecology.

The number of tourists to Phan Thiet City increased steadily over the years. In the period from 2010 to 2017, an increase of 2,398,693 visitors was recorded, the average growth rate was 8.05%. Considering the percentage of visitors to Phan Thiet City, it accounts for more than 90% of the total number of tourists in the province. Phan Thiet's total tourism revenue reaches 70 to 80% of the province's tourism revenue. In 2017, revenue from tourism activities reached 9,400 billion VND. Revenue from tourism activities of Phan Thiet has grown steadily over the years with the average growth rate in the period 2010-2017 reaching 29.2% (Binh Thuan Department of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, 2018). Thereby, the tourism situation of Phan Thiet in recent years is relatively developed; however, the development rate is still low compared to other coastal tourist centers of the country.

2.2. Analysis of factors affecting domestic tourists' decision to choose destinations by EFA

2.2.1. Descriptive statistics

According to Hair (2010), when analyzing EFA exploratory factors, it is necessary to determine a minimum sample size of 5 times the number of observed variables. With a study based on 18 observed variables, the minimum sample size guaranteed in the study is 95 questionnaires. In this survey, 272 questionnaires for domestic tourists were conducted, of which 7 were unsatisfactory and were discarded. Among the respondents, 249 people have been to Phan Thiet City, accounting for 94% of the survey, 16 people have not been to Phan Thiet City, accounting for 6%. Analyzing by sex, there are a total of 113 survey questionnaires conducted by men, 148 surveys conducted by women, accounting for 55.8%. Regarding age, from 23 to 30 years old accounted for 58.9%, from 31 to 55 years old accounted for 22.3%. In 18 observations, there are 4 independent variables with 14 observations and 1 dependent variable with 4 observations.

With the proposed model (Figure 1), the authors choose to use scales from different sources and make specific adjustments as follows:

- Destination image (I): I1 - A place with beautiful and attractive landscapes and natural resources, I2 - Good quality of accommodation and restaurants; I3 - Good quality of tourism human resources, friendly locals, I4 - Safe destination, stable social security situation (Tran Kim Thoa, 2018; Huynh Nhut Phuong and Nguyen Thuy An, 2017).

- Tourism motivation (M): M1 - Tourists travel to experience, study, research and work, M2 - Tourists travel for relaxation, M3 - Tourists travel for entertainment and relaxation (Tran Kim Thoa, 2018)

- Travel price (P): P1 - Reasonable tour cost in Phan Thiet City, P2 - Prices of accommodation, travel, and food services of the Phan Thiet City are reasonable, P3 - Ticket prices for sightseeing, entertainment of the Phan Thiet City is reasonable (Tran Kim Thoa, 2018; Huynh Nhut Phuong, Nguyen Thuy An, 2017).

- Tourism promotion (Pro): Pro1 - Tourism promotion activities in Phan Thiet are attractive, impressive, and sympathetic, Pro2 - Tourism promotion activities in Phan Thiet appear frequently in the media, Pro3 - The content of the promotion is true to reality in Phan Thiet, Pro4 - Phan Thiet's tourism promotion activities strongly influence tourists' choice decisions (Tran Kim Thoa, 2018).

2.2.2. Evaluation of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient

The reliability of the scale is an important step to ensure the accuracy of the EFA Exploratory Factor Analysis. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient analysis has been used to assess the reliability of the scale and observed variables. According to Hoang Trong (2017), for Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to be reliable, the correlation coefficient of the total variable must be less than 0.3 and the coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha must be less than 0.6.

In the proposed research model, the author has built 4 independent variables with 14 observations and 1 dependent variable with 4 observations. The number of observations in each variable meets the ability to analyze Cronbach's Alpha, greater than 2 observations in each variable. Each variable will be analyzed for Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, if any observation or variable does not meet the requirements, it will be eliminated and re-analyzed for the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The results of evaluation of Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the scales are shown in Table 1. Overall, the factors are satisfactory, because the correlation coefficient of the total variable and Cronbach's Alpha both meet the requirements of the theory.

Table 1: *Results of evaluation of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient*

Encoding the scale	Number of observed variables	Corrected Item - Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
I (Image)	4	0.614	0.849
M (Motivation)	3	0.534	0.824
P (Price)	3	0.714	0.862
Pro (Promotion)	4	0.662	0.872
Decision	4	0.660	0.839

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the motivation scale has the lowest value in the evaluated scales, reaching 0.824 and the smallest total correlation coefficient is 0.534. The correlation coefficients of the total variables of the observed variables are all greater than 0.3. From the analyzed results, 18 observed variables all ensure the reliability coefficients and are used for further analysis.

2.2.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis have proved the reliability and usability of 18 observations belonging to 4 independent variables and 1 dependent variable, built based on the proposed model of domestic tourists' decision to choose Phan Thiet City as a destination. In Exploratory Factor Analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient needs to fluctuate in the condition from 0.5 to 1 (Hoang Trong, 2017). The closer the KMO value is to 1, the more relevant the discovery factors are to the survey data. KMO coefficient of the proposed model is 0.896. When considering the Barlett test, the Sig index is equal to 0.00, less than 0.05. It shows that the observed variables are linearly correlated with the representative factors. Based on Total Variance Explained results, the extracted variance value of the model is 69.75%, which proves that 65.75% of the variation of survey data is explained by 3 newly created factor groups.

The results obtained in the Exploratory Factor Analysis with loading factor 0.5 for the dependent variables showed that 14 observations were satisfactory and distributed into 3 groups: renamed as Pull and Push, Price and Promotion. The results of the rotation matrix with the redistribution of the scale in the factors are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary results of the rotated component matrix factors used in the model

Items	Component			Factor group
	1	2	3	
Tourists travel for entertainment and relaxation	0.833			Pull and Push
Tourists travel to relax	0.806			
A place with beautiful and attractive landscapes and natural resources	0.781			
Safe destination, stable social security	0.739			
The quality of human resources in tourism is good, the local people are friendly	0.674			
Good quality of accommodation and restaurants	0.642			
Tourists travel to experience, study, research and work	0.537			

Items	Component			Factor group
	1	2	3	
Tourism promotion in Phan Thiet appears frequently in the media		0.855		Promotion
Tourism promotion in Phan Thiet is true to local reality		0.760		
Promoting tourism in Phan Thiet is impress, sympathize		0.740		
Tourism promotion in Phan Thiet strongly influences tourists' choice decisions		0.721		
Prices for accommodation, travel and dining services of Phan Thiet are reasonable			0.874	Price
The cost of tours in Phan Thiet is reasonable			0.786	
Ticket prices for sightseeing, entertainment and entertainment of Phan Thiet are reasonable			0.701	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.				

2.2.4. Linear regression analysis

The built regression model is suitable with the collected survey data because the obtained F-test value is 190.47 with a Sig index of $0.000 < 0.05$. The value of the Adjusted R Squared of the regression model was 68.3%; thereby, showing that the independent variables included in the model could explain 68.3% of the change of the dependent variable (the decision of the destination choice of tourists is Phan Thiet City), other factors and random error outside the model accounted for 31.7%.

Table 3: Correlation between independent variables and dependent variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson coefficient
1	0.829 ^a	0.686	0.683	0.39611	2.056
a. Independent Variables: (The Constant), Price, Push and Pull, Promotion					
b. Dependent variable: Decision					

The analysis values of the variance magnification factor VIF all reached values below 2; thereby, there is no multicollinearity in the model. Therefore, the independent variables are not correlated with each other. Consider the significance of the independent variables, all the obtained values are less than 0.05, demonstrate that the dependent variable has a strong correlation with the independent variables with a confidence level of over 95%.

Table 4: Regression analysis results of factors affecting the destination choice of domestic tourists to Phan Thiet City

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T-Test (t)	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			VIF	
1	Constant	0.421	0.169		2.496	0.013	
	Push	0.233	0.052	0.209	4.454	0.000	1.833
	Promotion	0.414	0.040	0.489	10.235	0.000	1.901
	Price	0.244	0.046	0.250	5.256	0.000	1.889

After performing the regression, the overall regression equation analyzing the influence of factors on the decision to choose a destination of domestic tourists in Phan Thiet City is shown as follows:

$$CDDT = \beta_0 + \beta_0 + \beta_1 \cdot X_1 + \beta_2 \cdot X_2 + \beta_3 \cdot X_3 + ei$$

In which, CDDT is the choice of destination by domestic tourists (Phan Thiet City), X1 is the push and pull motivation, X2 is promotion, X3 is the price. The value of the standardized β coefficient is always positive, through which, the factors of pull and push motivation, promotion and price have a positive relationship affecting the choice of destination of tourists.

The factor with the most importance normalized coefficient is promotion, followed by *price*, *pulls* and *push motivation*. This proves that tourism promotion factors and prices have a strong impact on tourists' destination decisions. On the contrary, destination image lacks influence on tourists' choice. Tourism activities of Phan Thiet City have been developed for a long time. Therefore, tourism promotion to create competitive values in the market is an important factor. The building and shaping of Phan Thiet's tourism brand compared with other tourist destination in the same region such as Nha Trang and Tuy Hoa has become a basic competitive strength for local tourism development. Therefore, in the future, Phan Thiet needs to develop an overall tourism promotion program focusing on the strengths and differences of the destination.

3. Recommend solutions

3.1. Push and pull motivation factors

Phan Thiet City is a destination with a beautiful and friendly image, the purpose of tourists mainly focuses on resort activities. Although Vietnam is a country with a long coastline, diverse and rich coastline, the tourist destinations have not really left a strong impression in the minds of tourists. That leads to a relatively limited tourist motivation. To develop and promote tourists to choose Phan Thiet as a destination, the author proposes the following solutions:

- Developing the image of a destination associated with tourists' travel motivation, focus on specific local products, and at the same time, it is necessary to develop new tourism products that can compete with other tourist destinations in the region.

- Diversify tourism motives, in addition to attracting tourists with the main

purpose of resorting, it is necessary to develop amusement parks attached to the sea, develop coastal constructions, integrate other technical service facilities besides hotels - restaurants such as marine sports training centers, aquariums, etc.

3.2. Price factors

Price is an important factor affecting tourists' decision to choose a destination. Because the tourism development goal in the previous periods, Phan Thiet City was strongly focused on high-class beach resort tourism, therefore, price is one of the issues of strong concern to visitors. Therefore, to match the city's tourism development, the author proposes the following solutions:

- Diversify the prices of goods and services for specific types of tourists, and develop budget hotels for young tourists with limited income. It is necessary to ensure low prices of accommodation services to prolong the stay of tourists to stimulate shopping.

- Adjust reasonable prices for tourism products, increase the competitiveness of Phan Thiet's tourism business prices compared to other sea tourism centers of the country. It is necessary to regulate the listed prices and brands of tourism specialties, avoiding the situation of raising the price of tourism services compared to the actual experience.

- Promotions are offered for local special productions, handicrafts, tax-free support or transportation costs for passengers within a distance of 200 km. Building brands for tourism products and stimulating tourism demand to raise tourism prices in the next period.

3.3. Promotion factors

- Diversify tourism promotion products, support and encourage tourism business enterprises to improve physical infrastructure for tourism, diversify tourism products, focus on developing "ecotourism" in combination with high-class resorts and professional sports.

- Diversify tourism promotion activities, develop meaningful promotional strategies for community culture, environmental protection values and professional marine sport tourism. Develop a plan to promote tourism in the medium and long term, towards sustainable local tourism values.

- Phan Thiet City needs to develop a system of geographical symbols and build a tourism brand, develop local indigenous culture; the main content is condensed, easy to remember and unforgettable for visitors. Enhance visitor experience and satisfaction, develop a strategy to develop promotional activities by the visitors' recommendations with their own relationships.

4. Conclusions

The research results show that the choice of destination of tourists is influenced by many factors, in which promotional factors and price have a strong impact on the decision of tourists. The model proposed in the study is relatively consistent with some previous studies, thereby, can serve as a basis for subsequent studies. The proposed hypotheses are consistent with the research model and practice. The results also show that the factor of destination image and tourist motivation has a rather low β coefficient compared to other factors. Therefore, it is necessary to consider building a more

impressive destination image in the minds of tourists, and at the same time, develop typical tourism products that are competitive with other tourist centers, develop diverse and unique tourism activities to help increase the motivation and purpose of tourists' trip to Phan Thiet City.

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TÓM TẮT

PHÂN TÍCH CÁC YẾU TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN VIỆC LỰA CHỌN ĐIỂM ĐẾN DU LỊCH THÀNH PHỐ PHAN THIẾT CỦA KHÁCH DU LỊCH NỘI ĐỊA

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Quyết định lựa chọn điểm đến của du khách bao gồm nhiều yếu tố, thực hiện nghiên cứu các yếu tố là một vấn đề cấp thiết nhằm đánh giá chính xác và khách quan các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến sự lựa chọn điểm đến của du khách. Bài báo sử dụng phương pháp phân tích nhân tố khám phá (Exploratory Factor Analysis - EFA) để xây dựng mô hình đánh giá các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến lựa chọn điểm đến Thành phố Phan Thiết của du khách nội địa. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy có 3 yếu tố (động cơ kéo và đẩy, giá cả, quảng bá) tác động ở các mức độ khác nhau. Từ đó xây dựng các giải pháp thích hợp nhằm thu hút du khách đến Thành phố Phan Thiết.

Từ khóa: Du khách nội địa; du lịch Thành phố Phan Thiết; điểm đến du lịch; nhân tố khám phá EFA.