

THE IMPACT OF DESTINATION QUALITY AND IMAGE ON TOURISTS' LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of destination quality and image on the loyalty of tourists.

Method: There were many research papers that were analyzed critically to find out the connection between quality, image, and the loyalty of tourists. We utilize a quantitative research method through structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. The sample size includes 583 respondents who are tourists in the provinces of the North Central Coast of Vietnam.

Results: The research findings show that, in direct relationships, destination image positively influences both attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. However, there is no direct impact of destination quality on attitudinal loyalty; instead, it only affects tourist behavioral loyalty. The study also demonstrates the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between destination quality, image, and both aspects of loyalty, namely the attitudinal and behavioral loyalty of tourists.

Conclusions: The tourist industry on the North Central Coast of Vietnam has many positive points, despite just going through the COVID-19 pandemic and economic growth. Tourist loyalty to destinations is quite high because they like destination image and satisfaction with destination quality. This article is an academic contribution that enables understanding of the research developed and focuses on destination image, destination quality, and tourist loyalty on the North Central Coast of Vietnam, considering data from several reference research databases and survey results.

Keywords: destination quality, destination image, satisfaction, loyalty attitude, loyalty behavior, tourists, Vietnam.

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O IMPACTO DA QUALIDADE DO DESTINO E DA IMAGEM NA LEALDADE DOS TURISTAS

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo deste estudo foi investigar o impacto da qualidade do destino e da imagem na lealdade dos turistas.

Método: Houve muitos trabalhos de pesquisa que foram analisados criticamente para descobrir a conexão entre qualidade, imagem e a lealdade dos turistas. Utilizamos um método de pesquisa quantitativa através da análise de modelagem de equações estruturais (SEM). O tamanho da amostra inclui 583 entrevistados que são turistas nas províncias da Costa Central Norte do Vietnã.

Resultados: Os resultados da pesquisa mostram que, em relações diretas, a imagem de destino influencia positivamente tanto a lealdade comportamental quanto a lealdade comportamental. No entanto, não há impacto direto da qualidade do destino na lealdade comportamental; em vez disso, afeta apenas a lealdade comportamental turística. O estudo também demonstra o papel mediador da satisfação na relação entre qualidade de destino, imagem e ambos os aspectos da lealdade, ou seja, a lealdade comportamental e de atitude dos turistas.

Conclusões: a indústria do turismo na Costa Norte Central do Vietnã tem muitos pontos positivos, apesar de ter acabado de passar pela pandemia da Covid-19 e pelo crescimento econômico. A fidelidade turística aos destinos é bastante elevada porque eles gostam da imagem de destino e satisfação com a qualidade de destino. Este artigo é uma contribuição acadêmica que permite a compreensão da pesquisa desenvolvida e se concentra na imagem de destino, qualidade de destino e lealdade turística na Costa Norte Central do Vietnã, considerando dados de vários bancos de dados de pesquisa de referência e resultados de pesquisas.

Palavras-chave: qualidade de destino, imagem de destino, satisfação, atitude de lealdade, comportamento de lealdade, turistas, Vietnã.

1 INTRODUCTION

As human life becomes more prosperous, the tourism industry—a smoke-free sector—is thriving. Destinations and tourism services are expanding, both in quantity and quality, to attract and retain travelers. Among these, the quality and image of a destination have an impact on tourist loyalty, which is of significant importance for the sustainable development of the tourism sector.

The provinces on the North Central Coast of Vietnam possess immense tourism potential, boasting five world heritage sites and nearly 400 revolutionary historical relics. The region is adorned with breathtaking natural landscapes, including majestic mountain ranges of the Northern Truong Son range, diverse ecosystems associated with national



parks and wetland systems, captivating coastal and island scenes, international border gates, bustling markets, and numerous communities of various ethnic groups. These factors contribute to a rich and unique cultural diversity, catering to the diverse needs of various types of tourists. Tourism is not only a vital economic sector for the North Central Coast but also serves as a cultural bridge, connecting with other regions to effectively harness the inherent potential of each locality.

In the Master Plan for the overall development of tourism in the North Central Coast region and the Strategy and Master Plan for tourism development in Vietnam until 2020, with a vision towards 2030, the general viewpoint on the development of tourism in the North Central Coast region is to focus on developing tourism for sightseeing and research on world heritage and cultural history, as well as promoting internal, interregional, and international linkages and cooperation. After 5 years of implementing the Master Plan for tourism development in the North Central Coast region, the number of tourists visiting the region has experienced significant growth, averaging nearly 16% per year.

However, in fact, the tourism industry in the north-central region is not commensurate with the existing potential and advantages. Some tourism activities are still spontaneous, do not pay attention to service quality, and are not oriented toward sustainable development, so tourists often "never return." Therefore, the author chooses to study the influence of destination quality and image on tourist loyalty in order to find meaningful conclusions and suggestions for the development of tourism in various provinces in this region.

The research is aimed at: (i) determining the destination image and destination quality affecting the loyalty of tourists; (ii) analyzing the role of satisfaction in the relationship between destination quality, image, and both aspects of loyalty; and (iii) suggesting certain solutions that should be considered for application to tourist firms, tourists, and policymakers.

From the research gap and reality, the paper presents the following research questions:

RQ1: Does the destination image have a positive relationship with the loyalty of tourists?

RQ2: Does the quality of the destination have a positive relationship with the loyalty of tourists?



RQ3: Does tourist satisfaction have a positive impact on the loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 TOURIST DESTINATION QUALITY, IMAGE, AND LOYALTY

According to Rubies (2001), a tourist destination is a geographical area that includes tourist resources, attractions, infrastructure, equipment, service providers, other support departments, and management organizations that interact with, coordinate activities with, and provide travelers with the expected experience of their chosen destination. Bottom of the form.

According to UNWTO (2007), "a tourist destination is a space where tourists stay for at least one night, including tourism products, services provided, tourism resources that attract tourists, administrative boundaries of border management, and image identification markets that determine competitiveness." According to the Vietnam Tourism Law of 2017, a tourism destination is a place to invest and develop tourism resources to serve tourists.

Zainal et al. (2023) analyze the rationalities and strategies of developing mangrove forests as ecotourism and its impact on socio-economic transformation and confirm that two main rationalities were identified in developing protected mangrove ecotourism: economic potential and environmental conservation of mangroves. In addition, three strategies were carried out to transform protected mangroves into ecotourism: building community awareness, conducting good cooperation across sectors, and strengthening tourism development by making municipal regulations.

Tourists visiting destinations always carry expectations of positive emotions, the ability to enjoy services, or the ability to discover new things. Therefore, the image of the destination and the quality of services play a decisive role in shaping the attitude, behavior, satisfaction, and ability to return to the destination of tourists.

2.2 DESTINATION QUALITY

Destination quality can be understood as the overall experience that tourists obtain when using services at a destination. According to Chuang (2010), destination quality is the gap between customers' perceptions and expectations regarding specific tourism services provided by the travel company. Frochot (2004) points out that "the nature of



tourism destination services depends heavily on the level of alignment between the services provided by the service providers and the customers' needs, thereby enabling tourists to achieve their desires and increase their satisfaction with tourism services." Therefore, destination quality can be seen as the suitability of services provided by tourism service providers to meet the requirements of tourists at various tourist destinations. The quality of a tourism destination is also synonymous with the quality of the product chains offered to tourists and the coherence among these product chains, such as those supplying tourists' sightseeing, leisure, and exploration needs; those related to the destination's infrastructure; and those offering additional services at the destination.

Pinheiro et al. (2023) used a qualitative exploratory one based on the Critical Incident Theory and a quantitative descriptive character from the application of questionnaires to study the relationship between tourist events promoted by private and public organizations and social support networks for the elderly in the municipality of Venâncio Aires-RS, Brazil. The results show that the first moment brought the need for environments and attractions adapted to the elderly population and its importance; the second brought the way in which this population is or is not satisfied with the way tourism takes place in the municipality.

Destination quality and tourist loyalty are closely related. Specifically, destination quality can directly impact tourist loyalty, or it can influence tourist loyalty through an intermediary role, which is tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, destination quality can affect tourist loyalty both directly and indirectly through satisfaction.

2.3 DESTINATION IMAGE

Destination image According to Hunter (1971), destination image is understood as the impression of an individual or a group of people in a certain place, not their residence. Similar to Hunter (1971) is Malkin (1974), Lawson's concept.

Specifically, Markin (1974) argues that the image of a destination is a personally held understanding, a reception at a specific location. Lawson & Bond-Bovy (1977) affirm that the image of a destination is an expression of knowledge, impressions, or prejudices that each individual holds about a particular place, which is distinctive in their experiential journey. Crompton (1979) defines the image of a destination as the amalgamation of beliefs, opinions, and impressions that a person will select for themselves when choosing a destination.



Bigne and colleagues (2001) conducted a study on tourist destinations along the Valencia coast (Spain), in which they used only one single observation variable as the outcome of the destination image concept. According to their research, a comprehensive image is an overall perception considered without examining individual aspects of the destination under study.

Nguyen (2019) proposes the concept of destination image as the remaining impressions in the minds of tourists, constructed by their perceptions and emotions about the destination after experiencing tourist activities there. The destination image is formed from information sources, various types of images, and the combination of information sources, personal factors, and mental images. According to Phan and Dao (2017), the destination image comprises attractive attributes of the destination, such as natural conditions, infrastructure, tourist facilities, culture, and government support, which influence tourists' perceptions and behaviors.

2.4 LOYALTY OF TOURISTS

Customer loyalty is one of the most important drivers of business performance and success. According to Hawkins et al. (1989), Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981), loyalty is the expression of customers' attitudes and beliefs about the value received by customers, leading to the general attitude of customers towards a product or service, such as an intention to continue buying. Oliver, R.L. (1997) argues that loyalty is an organization's deep commitment to continue to purchase or continue to favor a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite the influence of circumstances and marketing efforts. ability to induce behavioral change. This concept represents two different aspects of loyalty based on loyalty behavior and attitude. According to Knox and Walter (2001), there are two types of loyalty: attitude loyalty and behavioral loyalty.

So as to understand and measure the loyalty of tourists through the repeated purchase behavior of customers, customer attitude, or a combination of customer behavior and attitude. The behavioral loyalty of tourists can be understood as a collection of their performance towards the destination, which can be observed by the number of times they return to the destination within a specified time. Attitude loyalty can be understood as the preference and intention of tourists to continue to return to their destination, which is measured by the following statements: will, intention, desire, ability,



and intention to introduce or tell others about the destination. Intention to return indicates a high degree of satisfaction, or a measure of loyalty to the behavior and attitude of the customer towards the destination. In this study, travelers' loyalty shows that they will return to their destination or reuse the last service and adopt a positive attitude to recommend others to use the same service products.

It is very important for the survival of any enterprise to determine which factors affect customer loyalty. Therefore, more and more studies are interested in the premise of loyalty, including the following components: destination satisfaction and perception of service provided by destination (Chen and Tsai, 2007); travelers' feelings about the value provided by their destinations (Sun et al., 2013); destination images (Castro et al., 2007; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008); and engines for promoting tourism (Yoon and Uysal, 2005).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The attractiveness of tourist destinations, as measured by local attributes or appealing images, varies significantly across different studies. This can be evaluated through various systems, such as physical infrastructure, services, culture (Martin et al., 2008), attributes related to local government support (Nguyen Dinh Tho, 2009), and many other factors. According to Vengesayi (2003), the elements comprising a destination's appeal, forming the image of the destination in the minds of tourists, are the resources of the destination (tourism resources) and the aggregation of tourist activities. These essential factors of a destination's appeal include nature, history, culture, events, and tourist activities and entertainment available at the destination.

Through studying many references about the attributes and attractiveness of tourist destinations on different scales, Beerli & Martin's study (2004) has provided a system of constitutive factors. considered general to create the image of a destination, including: (1) destination attractiveness; (2) recreation and entertainment; (3) natural environment; (4) general infrastructure; (5) culture, history, and art; (6) social environment; (7) tourism infrastructure; (8) political and economic factors; and (9) atmosphere of the destination.

According to Chi and Qu (2008), the image of a destination is formed by nine factors: Travel environment; natural attractions; entertainment and events (entertainment



and events); historic attractions; travel infrastructure; accessibility; relaxation; outdoor activities; and price and value Martin & Bosque (2008) believe that there are five different factors that form the image of a destination: Infrastructure system, climatic conditions, natural conditions, impression of the destination, and cultural environment.

Nguyen (2009) found that there are four main groups of attributes that constitute local attractiveness to investors in the study of local attributes that affect investor satisfaction in Qianjiang Province, Vietnam. Investment is (1) government support; (2) investment incentives; (3) skills training; and (4) habitat, which are important local attributes that are attractive to investors. This is an important study to assess the local attractiveness of clients, including tourists, businesses, and workers.

Castro et al. (2007) stated that destination image has a direct positive impact on the intention-to-return behavior of tourists. Loureiro & Gonzalez (2008) assert that the components of image, perceived quality, satisfaction, and honesty are correlated with each other and that destination image has a direct impact on visitors' loyalty. According to Lee (2009), destination image has a direct and indirect impact on future tourist behavior. Kozak & Rimmington (2000) asserted that tourist satisfaction is a prerequisite for forming the intention to return and recommend the destination to others. Returning visitors not only provide an ongoing source of revenue for the tourist destination but also increase market share, generate positive word of mouth, and reduce costs and marketing activities.

Research by Chi and Qu (2008) has provided the following loyalty model for destinations: (i) destination image directly affects the attributes of satisfaction; (ii) destination image and attributes of satisfaction affect overall satisfaction; (iii) overall satisfaction and attributes of satisfaction have a strong and positive impact on visitor loyalty. Perceived value includes seven factors: Accommodation (Lodging); Dining (Dining); Shopping (Shopping); Attractions (Actions); Activities and Events (Activities and Events); Environment and Accessibility. Destination loyalty is approached from two perspectives: revisit intention and referral intention.

Based on the research of existing works on the relationship between destination quality, destination image, and tourist satisfaction and loyalty, the group of authors proposes the following research model with the following hypotheses:

H1: Destination quality has a positive impact on the attitude and loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.



H2: Destination quality has a positive impact on the behavioral loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

H3: Destination image has a positive impact on the attitude and loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

H4: Destination image has a positive impact on the behavioral loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

H5: Destination quality has a positive impact on the satisfaction of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

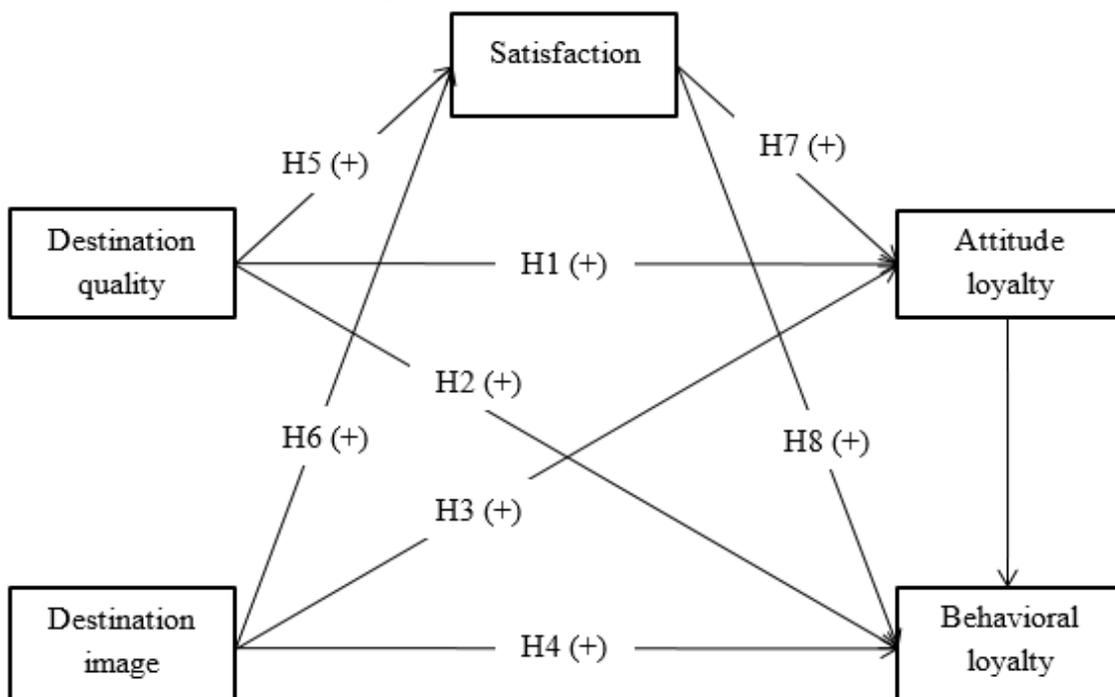
H6: Destination image has a positive impact on the satisfaction of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

H7: Tourist satisfaction has a positive impact on the attitude and loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

H8: Tourist satisfaction has a positive impact on the behavioral loyalty of tourists in the North Central Coast region of Vietnam.

3.2 RESEARCH MODELS

Figure 1: The proposed research model



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023)



3.3 RESEARCH VARIABLES

This article proposes a research model with five variables based on the theoretical background and relevant research works. There are two independent variables among them: destination quality and destination image. Tourist satisfaction is the mediating variable, while tourist loyalty, which involves both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty, is the dependent variable. A Likert scale with five levels (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) will be used as the measurement tool for this research. Based on past research studies, the measurement indicators for each variable will be suitably modified to fit the characteristics of the study sample.

Using the Aregre and Garau Scale (2010) and the Destination Quality Variable (DQ), Beerli and Martin (2004) and Chi and Qu (2008) included 10 observations. The Destination Image Group (DI) included 15 observations with 3 variables: natural and cultural conditions (NC) using the scale of Bigne et al. (2001); Prayag (2008) had seven observations; Use infrastructure (IN) on the scale of Nguyen (2009); Phan and Dao (2017) have four observations; and government support (GS) using the Nguyen (2009) scale; Phan and Dao (2017) have four observations. Tourist satisfaction (SA) was measured by Chen's scale (2008). Chen and Chen (2010), Chi and Qu (2008), and De Rojas and Camarero (2008) have eight observations. Attitude loyalty (AL) was measured by the Chen and Chen (2010) scale. Chi and Qu (2008); Yoon and Uysal (2005) had six observations; behavioral loyalty (BL) uses Chi and Qu (2008) scales. Yoon and Uysal (2005) have two observations.

3.4 SAMPLING METHOD

To enhance the representativeness of the study sample, the non-probability convenience sampling method was selected using a moderately stratified approach across provinces and localities in Vietnam's North Central Coast region. Tourists from Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and Quang Binh were identified as survey units in the research.

The sample size for the data collection is 583 samples. The data collection process was conducted in two ways: through direct paper-based surveys and online surveys. The number of online surveys distributed was 236, and the number of usable online surveys was 217. For direct surveys, 500 paper-based surveys were distributed, 382 were returned, and 366 of them were usable. There were 583 valid surveys used for the research. According to the recommendation of Hair et al. (1998), the minimum sample size should



be five times the total number of observed variables. The sample size of 583 ensures the analytic requirements in this study, which has 41 observed variables. The data was collected between May and July of 2020.

Table 1: The distribution of the survey sample in the research study

<i>TT</i>	<i>Survey location</i>	<i>Survey plan</i>	<i>Sample quantity</i>	<i>Ratio %</i>
1	Thanh Hoa	200	167	28.64
2	Nghe An	250	195	33.45
3	Ha Tinh	150	109	18.70
4	Quang Binh	136	112	19.21
Total		736	583	100

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

3.5 DATA PROCESSING

The research uses a quantitative method. The data is processed using SPSS and AMOS software after it has been collected and cleaned. First, the measuring scale's reliability is evaluated, with a requirement of Cronbach's alpha > 0.7 . Next, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is conducted to determine the "convergence value" and "discriminant value" of the measurement scale, with factor loadings > 0.5 , a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value ≥ 0.5 and ≤ 1 , a sig. value < 0.05 , and a percentage of extracted variance $> 50\%$. Then, the study employs AMOS software to assess the fit of the research model through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Finally, the research used structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RELIABILITY TESTING OF THE MEASUREMENT SCALE

Cronbach's alpha analysis results show that the measuring scale employed in the analysis is reliable since all variables have Cronbach's alpha coefficients > 0.7 . However, with Item Delete, item DQ2 has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.821, which is higher than the Cronbach's alpha of the variable DQ (0.806). As a result, this item was eliminated from the research to improve the applicability of the measuring scale.

Table 2: Evaluation of the Measurement Scale's Reliability Using Cronbach's Alpha

Coefficient No.	Variable	Abbreviation	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
1	Destination Quality	DQ	0.821
2	Natural and Cultural Conditions	NC	0.735
3	Infrastructure	IN	0.682
4	Government Support	GS	0.733
5	Satisfaction	SA	0.840



6	Attitude Loyalty	AL	0.900
7	Behavioral Loyalty	BL	0.837

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

4.1.1 exploratory factor analysis (efa)

After assessing the appropriateness of the measurement scale, the study proceeds with conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA) for both independent, intermediary, and dependent variables. The results indicate that the data meet the conditions for factor analysis, as evidenced by factor loadings > 0.5 and satisfying two criteria: "convergence" (observed variables converge on the same factor) and "discrimination" (the observed variables belonging to this factor are distinct from other factors).

Table 3: Results of EFA

<i>EFA analysis</i>	KMO Score	P-value	Explained Variance	Factor Loadings	Conclusion
Independent and Intermediate Variables	0.873	0.000	50.386	All > 0.5	Satisfies analysis requirements
Dependent Variables	0.846	0.000	71.963	All > 0.5	Satisfies analysis requirements

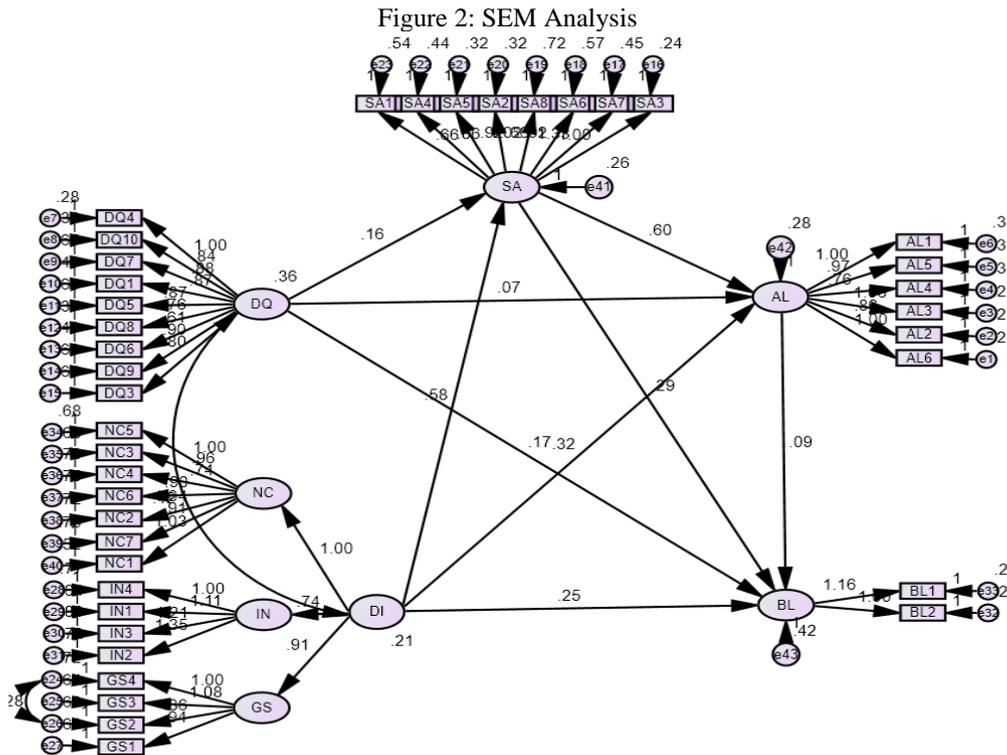
Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

4.1.2 confirmatory factor analysis (cfa)

The military analysis results show the applicability of the measurement model. The index chi-square=1772. 642, df=719, chi-square/df=2. 465 (< 5), P=0. 000, GFI=0. 867 (> 0.8), TLI=0. 862 (> 0.8), CFI=0. 873 (> 0.8), RMSEA=0. 05 (< 0.08).

4.1.3 Linear Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis

When conducting the SEM analysis for the research model, all the composite indices met the requirements. Specifically, Chi-square = 2244.042, df = 729, Chi-square/df = 3.078 (< 5), P = 0.000, GFI = 0.826 (> 0.8), TLI = 0.804 (> 0.8), CFI = 0.817 (> 0.8), and RMSEA = 0.06 (< 0.08).



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

The estimation results of the model's relationships show that the research model is appropriate. Except for hypotheses H1 and H9, all other hypotheses are accepted at a $P < 0.05$ significance level. Hypotheses H1 and H2 examine the relationships between destination quality and tourist loyalty in Vietnam's North Central Coast regions. As the significance threshold P is $0.169 (> 0.05)$, the data suggest that hypothesis H1 is rejected. This suggests that the quality of the place has no effect on tourist loyalty. On the other hand, hypothesis H2 is accepted with a regression weight P of $0.165 (> 0)$ and a significance level in the test of $P = 0.012 (< 0.05)$. This implies that there is a positive influence of destination quality on tourist loyalty behavior in the North Central Coast provinces of Vietnam.

For hypotheses H3 and H4, the relationships between destination image and tourist loyalty in the North Central Coast provinces of Vietnam are tested. With a significance threshold of $P 0.05$ and positive regression weights, the results show that both hypotheses are accepted. This indicates that destination image has a positive effect on both tourist loyalty attitude and tourist loyalty behavior in Vietnam's North Central Coast regions. These results are consistent with previous research by Castro et al (2007), Loureiro & Gonzalez (2008), Alegre, J., & Garau, J. (2010). Furthermore, the influence



of destination image on tourist loyalty attitude (0.252) is stronger in the test with a regression weight of 0.320.

The study investigates the link between quality, destination image, and tourist satisfaction under the assumptions of H5 and H6. The findings also suggest that both hypotheses are accepted, with positive regression weights and a $P < 0.05$ significance level in the test. As a result, it is possible to conclude that both quality and destination image have a positive impact on tourist satisfaction. These findings are congruent with prior research studies' conclusions. Furthermore, with a regression weight of 0.580, the destination image has a bigger effect on satisfaction than the destination quality (0.162).

Hypotheses H7 and H8 corroborate the relationship between tourist satisfaction and loyalty in North Central Vietnam provinces. With a significance level of $P < 0.05$, these hypotheses were accepted, and the regression coefficient was positive. This means that customer satisfaction positively influences both attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty of tourists. This finding aligns with the conclusions of earlier research studies by [insert researcher's name], in which customer satisfaction has a stronger influence on attitudinal loyalty (0.597) than behavioral loyalty (0.288).

As a result, the H1 hypothesis is rejected, and all hypotheses from H2 to H8 are accepted simultaneously. The two loyalty aspects of tourists' attitude loyalty and behavior loyalty may be seen in the central and northern regions of Vietnam, where satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between destination quality and image.

In terms of the direct relationship, the image of the destination has a positive impact on both loyal attitudes and loyal behaviors. Meanwhile, there is no direct impact of destination quality on loyal attitudes since this factor mainly influences tourists' loyal behaviors in the provinces of Vietnam's North Central Coast.

Furthermore, the results reveal that the H9 hypothesis is rejected since the P significance level is $0.173 > 0.05$. As a result, attitude loyalty has no influence on tourists' behavior loyalty in Vietnam's north-central regions.

Table 4: SEM Analysis Results for Relationships in the Model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	S.E.	C.R.	P	Conclusion
H1	AL <--- DQ	0.073	0.053	1.377	0.169	Rejected
H2	BL <--- DQ	0.165	0.066	2.520	0.012	Accepted
H3	AL <--- DI	0.320	0.085	3.779	***	Accepted
H4	BL <--- DI	0.252	0.103	2.437	0.015	Accepted
H5	SA <--- DQ	0.162	0.052	3.122	0.002	Accepted
H6	SA <--- DI	0.580	0.085	6.815	***	Accepted
H7	AL <--- SA	0.597	0.061	9.772	***	Accepted



H8	BL <--- SA	0.288	0.082	3.515	***	Accepted
H9	BL <--- AL	0.089	0.065	1.364	0.173	Rejected

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

Thus, we can clearly see the significance of destination quality and image in affecting the loyalty of tourists in the provinces of Vietnam's North Central Coast, as well as its intermediary role in relation to the element of satisfaction.

Furthermore, in order to connect the model to reality, the researchers did a descriptive analysis to identify the average values of each factor in the model. With an average score of 3.4267, government support is presently rated as the lowest of the factors in the model. This partly reflects the inefficiency of many tourism development support policies and highlights the urgent need for attention from relevant government authorities in the near future. The average value of the factor "loyalty behavior" is 3.7273, the highest rating. This demonstrates the considerable interest and favorable attitudes of both local and foreign tourists toward tourist spots in Vietnam's North Central Coast provinces. This presents a significant advantage for the tourism industry in this region.

Table 5: Results of statistical analysis describing the values of variables

<i>Code</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
DQ	583	2.00	5.00	3.6285	0.55463
NC	583	1.71	5.00	3.4964	0.58373
IN	583	1.25	5.00	3.6557	0.67581
GS	583	1.50	5.00	3.4267	0.68715
DI	583	2.15	5.00	3.5263	0.47610
SA	583	1.25	5.00	3.6750	0.60376
AL	583	1.17	5.00	3.6947	0.70194
BL	583	1.00	5.00	3.7273	0.86814

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SEM software

5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the overall analysis of relevant studies, the research conducted the construction of a model and verified the impact relationship of destination quality and destination image on tourist loyalty in the North Central Coast provinces of Vietnam. The research results demonstrate that the destination image has a positive direct impact on both loyal attitudes and loyal behaviors. However, there is no direct impact of destination quality on loyal attitudes; this factor only affects tourist loyal behaviors. The study also proves the mediating role of satisfaction in the impact relationship between both destination quality and destination image on both aspects of tourist loyalty: loyal attitudes and loyal behaviors. Building on the research findings, the authors propose several



recommendations to enhance tourist loyalty towards tourist destinations in the North Central Coast provinces of Vietnam.

First, to ensure the quality of the destination, there should be specific planning, including building many beautiful and attractive tourist spots. Developing the transportation system is necessary to ensure convenience in traveling between different locations within the tourist area. Organizing numerous cultural activities, festivals, and sports events is essential to attracting tourists. Improving the restaurant, hotel, and lodging systems is vital. Additionally, local authorities need to pay attention to ensuring the safety of tourists during their visits and travels. Building an open cultural environment and fostering friendly and hospitable attitudes among the local residents towards visitors are also important.

Second, we should create many beautiful and valuable cultural works with the image of a destination and combine traditional and modern styles to make contributions to beautifying the landscape and building our own cultural identity. Protect and develop the unique culture, history, and heritage of each region. All localities should also pay attention to improving the living environment. Establish a hotline and a tourist support service. There are exchange programs to raise the awareness of tourists and local residents.

Third, under the condition of tourists' satisfaction, we should create interesting and attractive experiences and leave a deep impression on tourists during their visits and tours. At the same time, there are policies to take care of tourists before, during, and after the end of tourism. Establish long-term contact with tourists and contribute to the promotion and development of local tourism.



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