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Factors Influencing Green Tourism Choices: A Case Study Of Hai Phong City

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Abstract: *This research aims to examine the factors influencing tourists' choice of green tourism in Hai Phong City. A questionnaire featuring a five-point Likert scale was used, and purposive sampling was employed to gather data. A total of 350 respondents were selected. The study identified four key factors affecting tourists' green tourism choices in Hai Phong City: (1) Personal attention, (2) Tourist loyalty and commitment, (3) Family choice, and (4) The need to learn about novelty. Among these, tourist loyalty and commitment has the greatest impact, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.426. Based on the results, the author proposes several solutions to improve tourist behavior and support the sustainable development of green tourism in Hai Phong City at this time.*

Keywords: *Green tourism, Tourist behavior, Hai Phong City*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourists' choice of eco-friendly destinations is vital for the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry, as well as for environmental protection and raising public awareness about conservation. By prioritizing green destinations, tourists encourage enterprises and accommodation providers to adopt eco-friendly practices, which drives the development of green tourism services. Traveler behavior can exert positive pressure on tourism providers, motivating them to implement more sustainable practices, which in turn supports the development of destinations and prompts changes in green tourism policies and regulations.

In the past, tourism mainly centered on visiting historical and cultural sites and exploring new areas to experience different cultures and cuisines. However, climate change and environmental pollution are becoming more complex, making it necessary to shift the focus of tourism (Zhou et al., 2019). The interest in eco-friendly tourism is now more urgent than ever (Wang, 2015). Tourism trends are gradually shifting to meet environmental protection needs, while also supporting tourists' health (Gössling et al., 2012). Green tourism is emerging as a solution to the desire for responsible tourism and environmental protection. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and floods caused by climate change, have disrupted tourism, leading travelers to prioritize destinations with preserved nature and a clean environment (Moore, 2010). Many tourists are willing to pay more for eco-friendly accommodation and services (Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014). Dodds and Joppe (2001) define green tourism through four main aspects: (i) Environmental responsibility – protecting and improving the natural environment to ensure sustainability, (ii) Local economic development – supporting local communities and businesses, (iii) Biodiversity – respecting and preserving indigenous cultural values, and (iv) Enriching the tourism experience – encouraging participation in nature and interaction with local residents. According to Font and Tribe (2001), linking green tourism to unpolluted, pristine areas such as rivers, parks, forests, and green spaces, this type of tourism is rapidly growing worldwide due to its environmental benefits, preservation of local biodiversity and culture, and health advantages. Green tourism is gaining popularity in today's travel market, emphasizing the protection of the environment, conservation of natural resources, and preservation of local culture. This form of tourism encourages visitors to minimize their negative impact on the environment, utilize sustainable transportation, and choose eco-friendly services, including eco-friendly accommodations, local cuisine, and sustainable tourism practices.

Hai Phong, with the advantage of being a major seaport city and an important gateway to the Northern Coast region, has a rich array of tourism resources such as Cat Ba Islands, Do Son Beach, and unique historical and cultural sites. In recent years, Hai Phong City has focused on developing green tourism to attract both domestic and international visitors, while also protecting the marine and island ecosystems and enhancing the role of the community in tourism growth. However, transitioning from traditional to

green tourism still faces many challenges, with one key issue being understanding the factors that influence tourists' decisions to choose green tourism.

Previous studies have shown that a tourist's decision to choose green travel can be influenced by various factors such as personal needs, loyalty and commitment to the destination, influence from family or reference groups, and a desire to experience something new (Lee et al., 2015; Oliver, 1999; Wang et al., 2006; Cohen, 1972). However, in Hai Phong, there has been limited in-depth research systematically analyzing these factors within the context of local green tourism development. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify and measure the factors influencing the choice of green tourism in Hai Phong city. The research questions will focus on three main issues:

RQ1. What factors of "tourism behavior" can influence the choice of "green tourism" in Hai Phong City?

RQ2. How do tourism behavioral factors affect green tourism choice in Hai Phong City?

RQ3. What management implications should be proposed based on the research results to enhance tourist behavior and support the sustainable development of green tourism in Hai Phong City at this time?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Tourist behavior

Solomon (1996) defines consumer behavior as activities related to decisions, ideas, or experiences aimed at satisfying the needs and desires of customers. Engel et al. (1995) expand on this definition by specifying that consumer behavior includes all activities involved in the gathering, consumption, and processing of services and products.

Wahab et al. (1976) were the first to create a model of travel behavior, which portrayed tourists as rational decision-makers who always attempt to maximize the benefits of purchasing a travel product or service. However, many tourists lack sufficient information about the destination when making decisions (Schomoll, 1977). Therefore, building brand awareness is essential, as tourists may overlook the appealing destination if they lack information and trust.

Tourism consumption behaviors refer to actions related to the process of engaging in tourism, which include searching for, purchasing, using, and evaluating tourism products and services to meet tourists' needs (Correia & Pimpao, 2008). The nature of consumer behavior is complex because it arises from internal psychological factors. Studying tourists' consumer behavior involves understanding how consumers decide to use their resources, such as money, time, and consumption of goods and services, to fulfill their individual needs (Kotler, 2000). The tourists' decision-making process involves a complex series of choices such as destination selection, places to visit, travel timing, memberships involved, and considerations of time and cost. In particular, the choice of destination is a key decision in the trip and is often based on geographic location to visit and travel (Byon et al., 2010).

2.2. Analytical framework

According to Swarbrooke and Horner (2007), tourist behavior is influenced by intrinsic factors such as destination knowledge, travel products, attitudes, perceptions, past trip experiences, family and work conditions, preferences, and lifestyles. External factors like friends, relatives, and travel marketing also affect it. Destination selection research is an important part of tourism studies. The process of choosing a destination is complex, especially when tourists evaluate whether many destinations are environmentally friendly and whether they align with environmental protection goals.

Um and Crompton (1990), Ankomah et al. (1996), Sirakaya and Woodside (2005) explain that to select a destination, tourists follow a funnel-shaped process, starting from a relatively large initial set of options and narrowing down through several stages. In the end, tourists choose the most promising destination. According to the timeline, from the initial theoretical study of the tourist destination selection process by Um and Crompton (1990), there have been many studies examining the factors involved in the tourist destination selection model.

Mayo and Jarvis (1981) explain that a customer's choice of green tourism depends on their goals and desires, as well as information from family and community. Mathieson and Wall (1982) describe the travel decision-making process as a series of stages, starting with the desire to travel, seeking and evaluating information, and ultimately making a decision. This process continues as guests prepare for the trip, experience the product or service, and evaluate the trip upon returning home. Wahab et al. (1976) studied

the pattern of personal motivation of travelers, including personal needs, desires, and expectations when choosing a travel destination.

According to Moutinho (1993), "the main factors influencing consumer behavior in tourism are social influences and tourism psychology." Dimanche and Havitz (1995) identified four key factors affecting travel behavior: (i) ego involvement, (ii) loyalty and commitment, (iii) family decision-making, and (iv) novelty seeking. Cheng et al. (2018) classified the factors influencing the choice of green tourism into two categories: internal and external factors. The author emphasizes that internal factors, such as self-awareness, attitude, and motivation, indirectly affect green tourism behavior through behavioral intent. External factors, including the availability of green tourism services in destinations, eco-friendly accommodations, and sustainable tourism programs offered by agencies, have a direct impact on tourists' decision to choose green tourism (Hunecke et al., 2001). The choice to engage in green tourism is motivated by a mix of environmental concerns and attitudes, along with tourists' understanding and awareness of environmental issues and how they form behaviors (Cheng et al., 2018). However, most behavioral theory research tends to focus on internal factors like personal attitudes and self-efficacy that influence decision-making (Hunecke et al., 2001). The demand for green tourism among domestic tourists is growing, fueled by external factors such as rising environmental pollution, increased awareness of environmental protection, and the negative health effects of pollution. As a result, domestic tourists are paying greater attention to eco-friendly tourism products. These products are crafted from environmentally friendly materials, providing safe solutions for both the environment and consumer health, while also reducing environmental impact during use.

Based on related literature, the author proposes a research model consisting of four main factors influencing tourists' green tourism choices: (1) personal attention, (2) loyalty and commitment, (3) family choice, and (4) the need to learn about novelty.

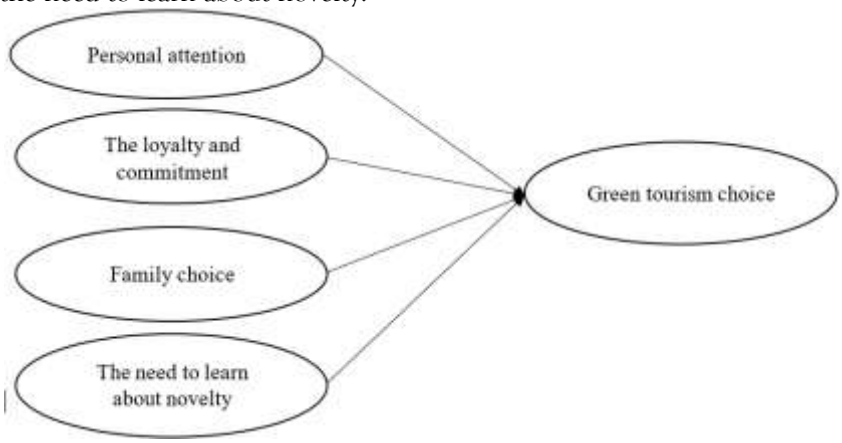

Figure 1: Research model

Source: Author's recommendation

2.3. Hypothesis development

Personal attention shows how much individuals feel that green tourism meets their specific needs and interests, such as health, experience, and personal satisfaction. Research by Lee et al. (2015) indicates that personal factors significantly influence sustainable tourism behavior. If people perceive green tourism as practically valuable, they are more likely to choose it. Based on these points, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Personal attention has a positive influence on tourists' green tourism choices in Hai Phong City.

The loyalty and commitment demonstrate tourists' belief in and long-term attachment to the destination or type of tourism. According to Oliver (1999), customer loyalty is a key factor in the decision to choose a service. In the context of green tourism, when tourists have a positive experience and develop a commitment to environmental protection, they are likely to continue choosing green tourism. Based on the above arguments, the research hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Tourist loyalty and commitment has a positive influence on tourists' green tourism choices in Hai Phong City.

According to Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, the family acts as a reference group that influences travel decisions. From a sociological perspective, the family often guides the travel behavior of its members (Wang et al., 2006). When families value sustainable tourism and prefer green destinations, it becomes easier for individuals within the family to make choices accordingly. Based on the above arguments, the proposed research hypothesis is as follows:
H3: Family choice has a positive influence on tourists' green tourism choices in Hai Phong City.
The need to learn about novelty shows tourists' motivation to explore and find new experiences. Green tourism is often linked to unique, nature-based, and indigenous cultural experiences, which easily attract motivated people seeking novelty (Cohen, 1972). Based on the above arguments, the proposed research hypothesis is as follows:
H4: The need to learn about novelty has a positive influence on tourists' green tourism choices in Hai Phong City.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a purposive sampling method to survey tourists' behavior toward green tourism in Hai Phong City. The respondents are tourists actively participating in green tourism activities. The study employed a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
After completing the questionnaire, it was sent to 10 scholars and 10 experts in the tourism industry to review the content. The selected professionals have expertise in the tourism industry, especially in green tourism. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire was edited to correct spelling mistakes, language issues, and to revise various questions. Once finalized, the questionnaire was distributed to 500 tourists to examine their choices regarding green tourism in Hai Phong City. The survey was conducted from May to July 2025. After removing and cleaning invalid responses, a total of 350 valid responses were collected. The data will be processed using SPSS 26 software, employing methods that include descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and regression analysis.
Of the 350 respondents, 61.43% of tourists were female and 38.57% were male. Regarding age, 74.29% of tourists were under 40 years old, and 100% had a university degree with an average income of 20 million VND per month, representing 57.14%.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Reliability testing

Table 2 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the variables range from 0.820 to 0.837, which are all above 0.7, indicating good reliability of the scales. Additionally, the total variable correlation coefficients range from 0.606 to 0.745, which are greater than 0.3, indicating a correlation between the variables (Hair et al., 2010). In conclusion, the variables meet the criteria for further implementation in exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

Table 1: Reliability testing

Scales	Sign	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
Personal attention (PA)	PA1	I regularly learn about the impact of tourism on the environment.	0.837	0.673
	PA2	I focus on selecting travel services that are dedicated to environmental protection.		0.700
	PA3	I personally feel responsible for reducing the environmental impact of travel.		0.689
	PA4	I frequently select travel destinations that are more eco-friendly.		0.738

Scales	Sign	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
	PA5	I am willing to pay more for eco-friendly and sustainable tourism services.		0.655
	PA6	I believe my travel choices can help protect the global environment.		0.658
Tourist loyalty and commitment (LC)	LC1	I often select travel and service companies that are dedicated to protecting the environment.	0.826	0.720
	LC2	I believe that choosing green travel can help make a positive difference for the environment.		0.617
	LC3	I am willing to encourage friends and relatives to choose eco-friendly travel if they plan to travel.		0.606
	LC4	I often prioritize destinations and travel activities that are certified as green and sustainable.		0.633
Family choice (FC)	FC1	My family members often encourage me to choose eco-friendly travel activities when visiting Hai Phong City.	0.835	0.660
	FC2	My family's travel choices are often influenced by concerns about environmental protection and sustainability.		0.702
	FC3	My family is interested in selecting green travel options for the overall benefit of the community and the environment.		0.728
	FC4	When selecting green travel options, everyone's agreement is an important factor.		0.687
The need to learn about novelty (NO)	NO1	I enjoy exploring new and undiscovered travel destinations.	0.820	0.635
	NO2	I often seek travel activities that are unique and outside the usual experiences.		0.622
	NO3	I appreciate eco-friendly travel destinations that offer unique and different experiences compared to traditional ones.		0.729
	NO4	I tend to choose green travel trips when they offer the chance to explore new and different things.		0.672
Green tourism choice (GTC)	GTC1	I decided to pursue green tourism in Hai Phong city.	0.833	0.629
	GTC2	I am pleased with the green experience in Hai Phong City.		0.745

Scales	Sign	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
	GTC3	I'm happy to recommend the destination to others.		0.727

Source: Extracted from SPSS 26

4.2. Exploratory factor analysis

Table 2 shows that the KMO coefficient is 0.760, which is greater than 0.5 for the independent variables, indicating that this EFA analysis is appropriate. Additionally, the Bartlett's test has a significance level of 0.000. Based on the matrix analysis, the observed variables have loadings greater than 0.5 and are ordered accordingly, so the model does not include any problematic variables.

Table 2: EFA of independent variables

KMO = 0.816		
Bartlett's Test	Approx. Chi-Squared	12374.393
	df	837
	Sig.	0.000

Items	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
PA1	0.898			
PA2	0.874			
PA3	0.867			
PA4	0.856			
PA5	0.848			
PA6	0.833			
LC1		0.873		
LC2		0.860		
LC3		0.847		
LC4		0.830		
FC1			0.899	
FC2			0.880	
FC3			0.875	
FC4			0.860	
NO1				0.872
NO2				0.866
NO3				0.850
NO4				0.843

Source: Extracted from SPSS 26

The EFA results show that the KMO coefficient equals 0.847, which is greater than 0.5, and Bartlett's test has a significance level of 0.000. Additionally, the scale has factor loadings greater than 0.5, indicating that all three variables meet the requirements for convergent and discriminant validity (Table 3).

Table 3: EFA of the dependent variable

KMO = 0.809		
Bartlett's Test	Approx. Chi-Squared	472.382
	df	3
	Sig.	0.000
Scale	No.	Loading
Green tourism choice	GTC1	0.835
	GTC2	0.820
	GTC3	0.817

% of Variance	78.382
Eigenvalue	2.302

Source: Extracted from SPSS 26

4.3. Correlation analysis

Table 4 presents the correlation coefficients between the independent and dependent variables, which exhibit a high degree of correlation, ranging from 0.392 to 0.514. Therefore, the dependent variable will be explained by the independent variables. Additionally, independent variables have a significance level of Sig. < 0.05, so the hypothesis should be accepted. The overall correlation coefficient is 0, indicating no variance in the model.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

	GTC	PA	LC	FC	NO
GTC	1				
PA	0.452***	1			
LC	0.514**	0.315**	1		
FC	0.392**	0.220**	0.167***	1	
NO	0.400**	0.273***	0.200**	0.176***	1
**significant at p < 0.05, **significant at p < 0.01, ***significant at p < 0.001*					

Source: Extracted from SPSS 26

4.4. Multivariate regression analysis

Table 5 shows an Adjusted R2 of 0.762, meaning that 76.2% of the direct influence on tourists' decision to choose green tourism in Hai Phong City is explained by the following factors: (1) Personal attention, (2) Tourist loyalty and commitment, (3) Family choice, and (4) The need to learn about novelty. Additionally, the F value has a very small Sig (Sig. = 0.000), indicating that the research model is suitable for the survey sample. The Tolerance ranges from 0.517 to 0.665 and the VIF factor is less than 5 (from 1.790 to 1.990), indicating there is no severe collinearity among the independent variables. A summary of the standardized model results is as follows:

GTC = 0.180 + 0.401*LC + 0.347*PA +0.341*NO + 0.301*FC

Table 5: Multivariate regression analysis

		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard deviation	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	0.180	0.021		2.523	0.001		
	PA	0.335	0.022	0.347	2.162	0.021	0.517	1.990
	LC	0.376	0.018	0.401	2.392	0.000	0.620	1.881
	FC	0.298	0.020	0.301	2.493	0.002	0.665	1.817
	NO	0.330	0.015	0.341	2.272	0.003	0.606	1.790
R^2 = 0.780. Adjusted R^2 = 0.762, Sig. = 0.000. Durbin – Watson = 1.820								

Source: Extracted from SPSS 26

5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

The testing results indicate that the theoretical model is appropriate, with four factors accepted. These factors' influence on tourists' behavior in choosing green tourism in Hai Phong City is ranked in descending order as follows: (1) Tourist loyalty and commitment, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.401, (2) Personal attention, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.347, (3) The need to learn about new things, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.341, and (4) Family choice, with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.301.

5.2. Implications

Firstly, enhancing tourists' loyalty and commitment to choosing green tourism in Hai Phong City is essential. To promote this loyalty and commitment, Hai Phong City needs to raise public awareness through communication campaigns that highlight the benefits of green tourism for the environment and

local communities. Collaborating with educational institutions and community organizations to organize workshops on sustainable tourism and environmental conservation is also important. Building a sense of community and fostering connections through online groups and events with environmental organizations can increase engagement. Partnering with local businesses to offer unique experiences can further boost the appeal of green tourism. By implementing these strategies, we can encourage tourist loyalty, promote green tourism, and support the sustainable development of Hai Phong City's tourism Industry.

Secondly, improve personal concerns by promoting sustainable green tourism destinations. Use various media channels, such as social media, newspapers, and television, to reach a wide audience. Introduce sustainability education programs in schools, community groups, and public events. Develop instructional materials and educational videos to clearly explain the benefits of green tourism. Create and maintain online platforms that provide detailed information on green tourism options in Hai Phong City. Share insights into eco-friendly destinations, services, and activities, including guidance and reviews from past travelers to help people make informed decisions about green tourism. Offer attractive incentives and discounts for those who choose green tourism. Establish a loyalty program to reward regular green travelers with exclusive benefits and rewards. Develop a distinctive green tourism experience that sets it apart from other travel options, such as eco-tours, volunteering for environmental projects, or exploring conservation areas.

Thirdly, promote the need for tourists to learn about new experiences. Creating unique green tours with activities like visiting protected areas, joining community projects, or engaging in special ecological activities will offer distinct value to visitors. Organizing innovative green tourism events such as workshops on making items from recycled materials, demonstrations of green technology in tourism, or environmental protection festivals is also essential. Additionally, leveraging technology to improve the experience is a smart approach. Developing a mobile app or online platform that provides information, guidance, and virtual reality experiences related to green tourism can enhance engagement. The app could feature maps of eco-friendly destinations, user reviews, and tips on sustainable practices. Using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology is also an effective way to deliver interactive experiences, allowing users to visualize and participate in remote activities and locations. Furthermore, creating compelling blog posts and videos about green tourism sites, environmental activities, and success stories in sustainable tourism will help raise awareness. Sharing this content widely on social media and travel websites can reach a broader audience. Implementing these strategies not only creates an exciting and innovative travel experience but also increases tourists' awareness and commitment in Hai Phong City to environmental protection.

Finally, improve family choices in finding sustainable green tourism destinations. Launch targeted communication campaigns aimed at families to highlight the benefits of green tourism. Clearly explain how green tourism has a positive impact on both families and local communities. Organize workshops specifically designed for families to explain the advantages of green tourism and provide information about eco-friendly travel options. Develop specialized green travel packages tailored to families, featuring eco-friendly activities and services suitable for both children and adults. Offer incentives and discounts for families who choose green travel, such as free packages for children or group discounts. Arrange fun green tourism activities for the whole family, such as eco-tours, craft classes using recycled materials, or eco-friendly outdoor adventures. Provide opportunities for families to engage with local culture and customs, fostering a deeper connection with the community. Ensure green tourism services prioritize environmental sustainability while maintaining high standards of quality and safety for families.

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