

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ROLES OF TOUR GUIDES, THEIR SERVICE QUALITY, AND TOURISTS' BEHAVIOR IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract

An important role played by tour guides on group tours is to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip; however, research focusing on their role in the field of tourism is still limited. Among tourists' behavioural intentions and satisfaction with tour guides, this study demonstrates the new role of tour guiding service quality. The data were obtained from 317 Vietnamese tourists who participated in domestic package tours. A positive correlation has been found between the tour guide's performance and the level of tourist satisfaction, as well as between tourist travel intentions and the quality of the tour guide's service. There is a substantial correlation between tourist satisfaction and tour guide performance, with service quality as an effective mediator in this relationship. The results provide insight into practical implications for tour guides to improve their capabilities and show how important tour guides are in group package tours. Tour operators need to enhance tour guide services and performance to maximize tourist satisfaction and optimistic tourist behaviour intention.

Keywords: Service Quality, Tour Guide Performance, Tourist Behaviour Intention, Tourist Satisfaction, Vietnam Tourism

Introduction

The quality of tour services is demonstrated in part by the quality of tour guides during tours. Tour guides are not only critical characters in the progress of package tours of travel agencies (Chan et al., 2015), but they are also an essential representative of the tourism business as well as their services are primarily dependent on their performance and technical expertise (Chen et al., 2011; Hwang & Lee, 2019). Tour guides' professional skills are crucial to tourists' travel services (Lin et al., 2017). Their roles and professional knowledge are also important to tourists' experience at the destination (Huang et al., 2010). Therefore, the tour guide service becomes the key component of the numerous tourism services provided by travel companies when the tour guides present high-quality service to visitors, which is not only important to the economic growth of travel companies and connected to, but also vital to the reputation of the attraction they serve (Huang et al., 2010).

Several studies have been conducted to discover the links between tourist satisfaction, tour guide performance, and behaviour intention (Chen et al., 2011; Hwang & Lee, 2019). Providing excellent customer service and consulting on tours are influenced by two layers of guide satisfaction, namely satisfaction with the tour experience and satisfaction with the service facilities, as illustrated by Huang et al. (2010). Additionally, Hwang and Lee (2019) established that professional tour guide competencies are essential to improve three variables: satisfaction with the journey, satisfaction with the guide service, and word-of-mouth. Furthermore, they serve as mediators between visitors, travel agents, and tourist attractions in the vicinity, as reported by Chang (2014).

Based on the difference between what visitors perceive of the service and what they feel, tour guides can measure the service they provide. Previous research noted that the tour guide's service quality has a key contribution to the tourism industry (Chan et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2017). For example, Žabkar et al. (2010) pointed out that the high level of service and the resultant loyalty contribute to reassuring voice and referrals, as well as return visits - eventually influencing the success of travel agencies, tourism operations, and tourism businesses. As Alazaizeh et al. (2019) pointed out, there is still a lack of the standard of tour guide service in the correlation between tourist satisfaction, tour guide performance, and behaviour intention. In Chang (2014), the correlation between tourist fulfilment, tour guide performance, and shopping behaviour was also described as mediated by perceived confidence and benevolence of trust and tourists' happiness and shopping behaviours. However, the tour guide's service quality is still missing in Chang's (2014) report.

This research attempted to assess the impact of service quality on tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and behaviour intention. The goal of this study is to improve knowledge of visitor behaviour and to make recommendations for human resources and management of customer relationship strategies in the tourism market. On the other hand, Huang et al. (2010) suggested that potential researchers examine the role of tour guide performance in various contexts. Therefore, Vietnamese domestic tourists were considered the study's source. Furthermore, Vietnam, a country with over 3000 km of coastline, is attracting tourists from all over the world and domestic tourists. Specifically, many Vietnamese tourists visit beach destinations and scenic locations to rediscover the local charm of the country. Moreover, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Vietnam's tourism relies only on domestic tourists to gradually recover. However, the study of Vietnamese tour guides on the connection between Vietnamese domestic tourists and local travel agencies is still limited to the field of tourism research, without considering the economic and social benefits resulting from the role of a tour guide. Therefore, this research responds to the important part of Vietnamese tour guides' current recovery of Vietnam's tourism. To assess whether tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and tourist behaviour intention are connected, including the value of tour guide service quality, a purposive sample strategy was used to gather quantitative data from Vietnamese domestic tourists.

Literature Review

Tour Guide Performance

According to Ap and Wong (2001), a thorough understanding of the environment and service in a well-described cultural, geographical, and linguistic field are essential to a tour guide's job. Cohen (1985) argues that the current guide is descended from the tutor and the pathfinder. The two lines of origin were drawn from the leadership and mediation of the role of tour guides. Regarding Cohen (1985), tour guide roles consist of four key components: a tool that provides guidance, access, and control; a social component including conflict resolution, integration, morality, and animation; a third part providing representation and organization; and a fourth element giving communication.

Tourist satisfaction is positively influenced by tour guide performance, according to studies (Lin et al., 2017). To understand the culture of the tourism host, the tour guide serves as a cultural interface between tourists and hosts (Huang et al., 2010). Furthermore, tour guide performance also significantly influences the satisfaction of visitors (Chan et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2017). Moreover, a substantial study has been undertaken to determine how the tour guide affects tourist satisfaction (Weiler & Black, 2015). Previous studies suggested that perception

influences the satisfaction of tourists (Kuo et al., 2018; Zhang & Chow, 2004). The hypothesis is then framed like this:

Hypothesis 1: Tour guide performance will positively impact tourist satisfaction.

Research has shown that tour guides significantly impact tourist behaviour (Hwang & Lee, 2019; Mak et al., 2011). Tour guides are one of the most significant factors in boosting sustainable tourism growth in Macau in reviewing the quality of services for tourist guides (Mak et al., 2011). In the analysis of 325 older Korean travellers, Hwang and Lee (2019) suggested that the experienced tour guide's perception affects the participant's word in the mediation relationship with the guided tour. The performance of tour guides is critical for affecting visitor satisfaction with visited cultural heritage sites and improving tourists' sustainable behaviour (Alazaizeh et al., 2019). Teng and Tsai (2020) studied the guide who, during the tour package, undertook the dual roles of a tour guide and a tour guide, positively influenced tourism behaviours in the context of Taiwanese tourists. Earlier research has shown the value of tourist guides in shaping the behaviour of tourists. This study then suggested the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Tour guide performance will positively impact tourist behaviour intention.

Service Quality Of Tour Guiding

As a result of service quality, customers' expectations differ from their service experiences (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Heung (2008) said three essential frameworks measure a tour guide's perceived efficiency, customer orientation, central service delivery, and communication efficacy. Tour guides' service level includes service, friendliness, productivity, and memorable encounters with visitors (Chand, 2010; Chen et al., 2016). The service standard of tour guides is one of the most significant reasons for the tourism business's success (Mak et al., 2011). Practical guides can direct visitors to the local site and customs landscape (Cho & Wang, 2011; Žabkar et al., 2010). Tour guides boost tourism skills, calm physical, emotional, and spiritual states, and keep visitors in good memories. The consistency of tour guides can be recognized not only by tourists but also by tourist agency images overall (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). Participants are most motivated to take part in tours for the support and guidance they will receive (Chan et al., 2015; Zhang & Chow, 2004). It is more likely that customers will be satisfied with both tour services and tour experience (Chan et al., 2015) as long as the perceived needs of customers are met by these services (Chan et al., 2015). Zhang and Chow (2004) used a significance and performance analysis to analyse tour guides in Hong Kong viewed by Chinese continental tourists. Findings show that tour guides in Hong Kong perform well, thus increasing their ability to solve problems, technical capabilities, reliability, and language skills. According to Lin et al. (2017), a tour guide's efficiency strongly impacts the quality of tour guidance service provided to group tour participants. The findings showed that the professional attributes of tour guides, including experience, skills, and behaviours, influenced tourists' expectations of the level of tourist service. The hypothesis is then framed:

Hypothesis 3: Tour guide performance will positively impact the service quality of tour guiding.

Tourist Satisfaction

The more satisfied your customers are, the more money you'll make, the more word-of-mouth you'll develop, and the more likely you'll get repurchases (Alegre & Garau, 2010). The consumer's satisfaction is determined by the difference between their expectations and their

awareness of the product's effectiveness, according to Kotler (1997). In other words, satisfaction is related to the responsive appraisal and feeling of the customer (Song et al., 2011; Hanqun Song & Cheung, 2010). Customer satisfaction refers to a state of thinking or actual reality and behavior or image, emotions, and effect determined by external factors such as the authentic environment of individuals and locations, social conditions, group activity, and psychological state (Albayrak et al., 2010). Since it is essential to meet potential behavioral intentions (Han et al., 2017; Hwang & Lee, 2019), the capability of tour operators to improve customer travel satisfaction has become crucial in the competitive market.

The correlation between tourist satisfaction and travel intention has been established (Alazaizeh et al., 2019; Chang, 2014). Murray and Howat (2002) recognized customer loyalty as one of the primary factors contributing to customers' future behaviour with 218 sports and leisure center customers. Chinese tourists to Taiwan who are shopping for package tours are most satisfied with their tour guides, according to Chang (2014). Furthermore, Chan et al. (2015) revealed that tourist satisfaction and tourism experience have significantly impacted client conduct in the sense of Hong Kong Chinese visitors. Moreover, Alazaizeh et al. (2019), in a study of sustainable tourism in Petra Archaeological Park in Jordan, indicated that visitor satisfaction significantly influences sustainable behaviour intention. The hypothesis is then suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Tourist satisfaction will positively impact tourist behaviour intention.

The quality of tour guiding and tourist satisfaction have been associated in previous studies (Kang et al., 2004; Lin et al., 2017). In order to determine customer satisfaction with the standard of service, one must examine the amount of difference between expectations and awareness and the level of the actual performance that is delivered. Regarding customer satisfaction, there is a slight gap between expectations and perceptions regarding high-quality services (Parasuraman, 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1985). The standard of service was recently widely recognized as a determinant of the pleasure of visitors (Kang et al., 2004; Lin et al., 2017). Customers' satisfaction with service quality was examined in Kang et al. (2004)'s study of Japanese hotels and ryokans (traditional Japanese inns). They found that customer satisfaction was impacted by creativeness, physical aspect, encounter performance, and unexpected service. In the sense of package tours in Shanghai, Huang et al. (2010) analysed the satisfaction of services satisfaction. The findings revealed that tourist satisfaction with tourism guidance services (including domestic and international tourists) influenced their satisfaction with tourist products and the overall tourist experience. The hypothesis is then suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 5: Service quality of tour guiding will positively impact tourist satisfaction.

Tourist Behaviour Intention

Several ways and contexts have been used to define and measure tourist behaviour intention (Chan et al., 2015; Zeithaml et al., 1996). The conceptualization of behavioural motives as a two-dimensional system that requires fidelity and readiness to pay more is based on Zeithaml et al. (1996) study. Baker and Crompton (2000) took advantage of Zeithaml et al. (1996)'s level of behavioural intention to demonstrate that an improved festival experience of tourism could improve the happiness of festival visitors and retention and desire to pay more. Lee et al. (2011) found that loyalty relates to tourist satisfaction with tourist facilities. Chan et al. (2015) study on Chinese tourists who visited and had many tour services in Hong Kong found that tour guide service directly affected Chinese tourist behaviour intention, and their satisfaction also affected their behavioural intention, which increased Chinese tourist loyalty and

willingness to pay for the next trip. According to Alazaizeh et al. (2019), the tour guides' performance at Petra Archaeological Museum positively impacts tourist satisfaction and the intention to engage in sustainable behaviour of tourists.

The SERVQUAL paradigm (Zeithaml et al., 1996) suggests that consumers who receive high levels of service quality have more favourable behavioural intentions. Therefore, when senior tourists are pleased and delighted with the tour guide, they will recommend the tourist agency to more people. Previous studies also backed this finding in figuring out the satisfaction of the guide service through word of mouth (Chan et al., 2015; Heung, 2008). Heung (2008) analysed that data collected from 431 visitors showed that visitors are likelier to have strong word-of-mouth intent when pleased with the guide service. Furthermore, Chan et al. (2015) documented a direct correlation between tour guide services and behavioural intentions. It is more likely that visitors will follow the same tour operator on another tour when they are satisfied with the support and commitment of the tourist guide. The hypothesis is then suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 6: Tour guide service quality will positively impact tourist behaviour intention.

In this study, the quality of tour guiding is thought that impact the correlation between tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and travel intention. Specifically, the tour guide's expertise influences the association between services and tourist satisfaction, which benefits higher service quality and satisfaction (Alazaizeh et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2017). Thus, the level of service of tour guides is likely to mediate between tourist guides and tourist satisfaction. On the other hand, tour guides often influence the standard of services and the purpose of visitor behaviour (Hwang & Lee, 2019; Zhang & Chow, 2004). Moreover, the standard of tour services directs the decided sense of tourist activity (Chan et al., 2015; Mak et al., 2011). As a result, the quality of service offered by tour guides can also act as a mediator between the intention of tourists and tour guides' performance. The hypothesis is then suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 7: The service quality of tour guiding mediates the relationships between tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction.

Hypothesis 8: The service quality of tour guiding mediates the relationships between tour guide performance and tourist behaviour intention.

According to the study's hypotheses, the conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

Methodology

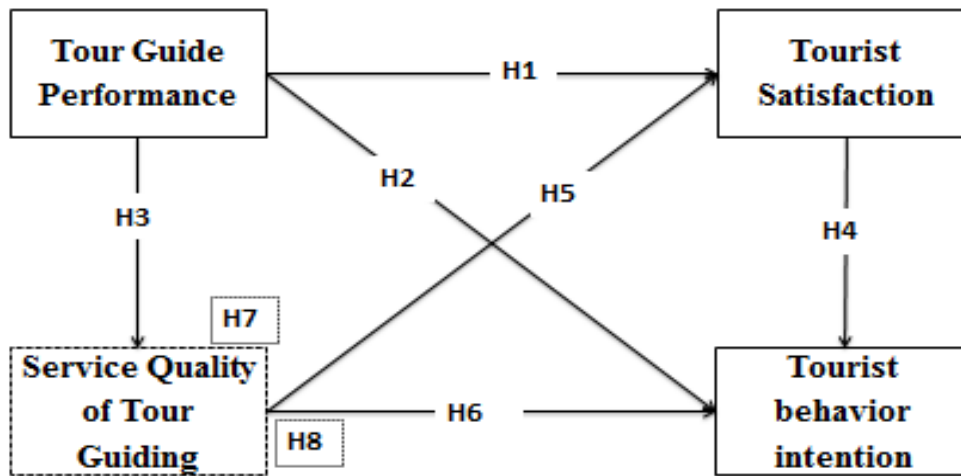


Figure 2. Research of Tour Guide Performance, Tourist Satisfaction, Service Quality of Tour Guiding, and Tourist Behavior Intention

Measurement

For empirical testing of structures within the proposed model, measured objects were developed on different scales and validated from previous studies. A survey containing five parts was prepared by a quantitative analysis method. Gender, marital status, age, education, jobs, monthly incomes, and travel experiences were the demographic questions in this survey's first segment. After evaluating multiple previous studies like Chang (2014); Mak et al. (2011), the decision was taken to include these questions. Part two, the level of tour guide performance scales, was adapted with 19 items from Alazaizeh et al. (2019); Hwang and Lee (2019). Part three, the service quality of tour guiding, was measured using five items cited from Cho and Wang (2011); Lin et al. (2017). Part four, tourist satisfaction, was calculated with four items employed by Chi and Qu (2008); Lin et al. (2017). In Part five, behaviour intention was measured with four items under two subdimension, including loyalty and willingness to pay, cited by Chan et al. (2015). And finally, based on the above calculating elements, the questionnaire was prepared using a Likert-type scale of seven points.

Pilot Test

The content validity for all survey questions has been assessed by two academic experts familiar with the theoretical subject matter of the study. As a result, one item in the tour guide's performance was deflected because of overlapping meaning and replaced by another. And because of the duplication of other sections, one thing in the tour guide standard service was removed. Survey questionnaires were first translated into English, then blinded translation-back-translation was used to translate them into Vietnamese. And then, a pre-test was conducted on 20 Vietnamese students who have taken part in tour programs with tour guides. Participants were encouraged to fill in the survey and present their contact details in explaining the questions. Specifically, specific and significant problems were defined for the study's purpose, but only a minor review was carried out of the topic of monthly income based on the information gained.

Data Collection

The data collection method adopted in this research was a purposive sampling approach. The survey was distributed at three attractions in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (Independence Palace, Immaculate Conception Cathedral, and Nguyen Thuan Walking Street, the three most popular tourist spots in Vietnam). Only people who participated in tour programs were selected, so those with travel experience took part in the survey. First, respondents answered whether they took part in tours after deciding to participate in the survey. After verifying that they engaged in tour programs, the questionnaire was offered to them. The first selection question was: "Have you previously taken a domestic package tour with a tour guide performance before?" If the response was no, the survey was closed. The respondents clarified the purpose of the research before beginning the questionnaire.

Furthermore, if the participants did not understand, they were explained everything in the interview. A total of 450 questionnaires, 378 of which were compiled, have been circulated. Of these, 61 answers were removed because they were incomplete and not consistent with the research requirements. Therefore, the final review used a total of 317 replies.

Data Analysis

This paper included confirmatory factor analysis, descriptive analysis, structural equation modelling, and the Sobel test. In the first place, tour guide performance, quality of service provided by tour guides, tourist satisfaction, and travel intention were measured as the mean and standard deviation. Confirmatory factor analysis was analysed using statistical software analyses SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 23.0 to check the validity of the calculating tool. Finally, validating the hypotheses in the study relied on structural equation modelling and Sobel tests.

Results

Demographic Description

To explain sample results, sample structure analyses were conducted using 317 relevant questionnaires. Among the eligible questionnaires, 167 (52.7%) were completed by males and 150 (47.3%) by females. Unmarried individuals accounted for 269 (84.9%), and 209 (65.9%) were college students. In terms of age, the group aged 20–30 years was the highest (79.5%). The income levels of respondents vary, but nearly half (48.9%) reported having a monthly income of less than 10 million VND. Most respondents have participated in more than two group tours (81.1%).

Measurement Properties

The connections between tour guide performance, tour guide service, tourist satisfaction, and behaviour intention were investigated in this study. According to the reliability measurements for each scale (Table 1), the composite reliability (CR) of all variables varied from 0.93 to 0.97, above 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). These findings demonstrated the satisfactory reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 12: Confirmatory Factor Study Findings Results

Constructs	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Tour guide performance		0.97	0.63
Tour guides are familiar with the culture of the destination	0.80		
Tour guides know about tourist attractions	0.80		
Tour guides are familiar with the local way of life	0.77		
Tour guides are hilarious	0.73		
Tour guides look after the needs of their clients	0.74		
Tour guides are excellent at providing comments	0.80		
Tour guides are helpful for the contact between individuals	0.80		
Tour guides can cope adequately with consumer demands	0.84		
In terms of presentation and treatment, tour guides are neat and professional	0.70		
Tour guides can collaborate with various service employees	0.77		
Tour guides are helpful for handling time	0.83		
Tour guides can plan events related to the tour.	0.82		
The tour guides' health is fine	0.72		
Tour guides should fulfill the psychological needs of consumers	0.81		
In some instances, tour guides show good judgment	0.90		
Tour guides are serious about their jobs	0.79		
Tour guides can overcome challenges and disputes with tour arrangements	0.85		
Tour guides are familiar with the past of the destination	0.78		
Service quality of tour guiding		0.93	0.76
Tour guides can give a friendly and unique service	0.86		
Tour guides can be very clearly explained	0.89		
Tour guides can answer tourists' needs immediately	0.83		
Tour guides can provide detailed and well-organized descriptions.	0.89		
Tourist Satisfaction		0.97	0.89
It is prudent to join the Travel Agency's GPT.	0.93		
It is out of my belief that I will take part in the GPT	0.95		
I'm still happy whether I engage in the GPT again	0.95		
Next time, I can participate again in this GPT	0.94		
Behavior intentions		0.95	0.83
I'm trying to spread the positive word about the operator.	0.90		
I'm trying to invite friends and family to join tour operators	0.93		
I'll continue to follow this operator's tour while the prices grow marginally	0.91		
In this operator, I will join higher-priced tours.	0.90		

Note: CR: Composite Reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted

The confirmatory analysis was presented to evaluate the model's fit and ensure that each scale measured the structure correctly. This study's structural equation model employed the maximum likelihood estimate probability to find the links between tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and travel intention. The fit indices for modelling the study data shows the validity of the structural model ($\chi^2 = 327.52$, $df = 104$, $\chi^2/df = 3.15$, $AGFI = 0.91$, $GFI =$

0.92, CFI = 0.92, IFI = 0.92, NFI = 0.93, RMR = 0.045, and RMSEA = 0.085). Hair et al. (2010) showed that the fit indices of each model ($\chi^2/df < 5$, AGFI ≥ 0.90 , GFI ≥ 0.90 , CFI ≥ 0.90 , IFI ≥ 0.90 , NFI ≥ 0.90 , RMR ≤ 0.05 , and RMSEA ≤ 0.08). In addition, all the variables' average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.63 to 0.83 (>0.5), suggesting that the measured variables were of strong convergence validity in the sample (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The correlation coefficient between pairs of structures was less than the square root of each structure's AVE, indicating that the scales had acceptable discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, according to Kline (2005), the chosen measurements were valid and internally consistent.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis discovered a significant positive link between tour guide performance and tour guide service quality ($r = 0.84$; $p < 0.01$). Tour guide performance also had a substantial positive correlation with tourist satisfaction ($r = 0.74$; $p < 0.01$) and tourist behaviour intentions ($r = 0.61$; $p < 0.01$). In addition, there was a substantial positive correlation with tour guide's service quality in terms of tourist satisfaction ($r = 0.78$; $p < 0.01$) and in tourist behaviour intentions ($r = 0.60$; $p < 0.01$). Moreover, tourist satisfaction has positive correlation with tourist behaviour intentions ($r = 0.65$; $p < 0.01$). The correlation results offered an initial interpretation of the correlations between the research variables on which further research was based.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 13. The Model Of Structural Equations Was Developed And Tested

Path relationships	β	t-value	Conclusions
H1: Tour guide performance \square Tourist satisfaction	.46**	4.38	Accepted
H2: Tour guide performance \square Tourist behaviour intentions	.33**	4.11	Accepted
H3: Tour guide performance \square Service quality of tour guiding	.83**	29.76	Accepted
H4: Tourist satisfaction \square Tourist behaviour intentions	.45**	5.74	Accepted
H5: Service quality of tour guiding \square Tourist satisfaction	.32*	3.13	Accepted
H6: Service quality of tour guiding \square Tourist behaviour intentions	-0.28	0.38	Not accepted

**p < 0.01

*p < 0.05

The standardized route coefficients of the pathways connecting tour guide performance to tourist satisfaction indicated significant positive connections ($\beta = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$), tour guide performance to tourist behaviour intentions ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$), tourist satisfaction to tourist behaviour intentions ($\beta = 0.81$, $p < 0.01$), and service quality of tour guiding to tourist satisfaction ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.05$), Therefore, all the hypotheses were supported except hypothesis 6.

Table 14. Indirect Effects Of Service Quality Of Tour Guiding

Path	The test statistic (z)	Std. Error	p-value
H7: Tour guide performance \square Service quality of tour guiding \square Tourist satisfaction	3.10**	0.039	0.000
H8: Tour guide performance \square Service quality of tour guiding \square Tourist behaviour intentions	1.46	0.032	0.714

Note: **p < 0.01

In the Sobel test, the quality of service was found to mediate the correlation between tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and behaviour intention (Preacher et al., 2007). Based on Table 3, tour guides' performance and tourist satisfaction are highly mediated by the service quality of tour guiding ($z = 3.10 > 1.96$, $p < 0.01$). Nevertheless, the relationship between behavioural intention and tour guide performance was not significantly influenced by the service quality of tour guiding ($z = 1.46 < 1.96$, $p > 0.05$). In order to contribute to tourism satisfaction, H7 has been supported, which proposes that tour guide service quality mediates the correlation between tourist satisfaction and tour guide performance. And H8 had not been helped.

Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

The performance of tour guides may be used to assess service quality and build the future direction of the field's research in both conceptual and operational areas, as provided by Huang et al. (2010). Huang et al. (2010) also suggested that future research needs to analyse the

factors that affect tourism and hospitality, especially the impact on tourist satisfaction and behaviour. Considering the above suggestions, the study found that tour guides significantly impact tourist satisfaction and behaviour intentions. In addition, a positive correlation was found between the quality of service provided by the tour guide and their performance. The tourism decision-making theory can be understood better by exploring the relationship between tour guide performance, tour guide service quality, tourist satisfaction, and tourist behaviour intention in Ajzen (1991).

According to the study, tourist satisfaction was initially positively influenced by tour guide performance. At the stage where tour guides direct visitors during tour programs, they should have exhibited their expertise to meet the demands of different kinds. This result supports the tourist satisfaction context (Petrick, 2003) and is related to the previous studies (Chan et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2017). Regarding tour programs, this study established efficiency as a critical antecedent variable influencing tourist satisfaction.

Secondly, this research also illustrated that the tour guides' performance influenced the tourists' intentions. More specifically, the performance tour guide can increase tourists' satisfaction and engage tour programs to increase tourists' willingness to do future acts. Thus, its performance can significantly positively affect tourist intention behaviours (Alazaizeh et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2015). The finding is consistent with tourist decision-making theory (Ajzen, 1991).

Thirdly, the findings demonstrate that the quality of tour guide services is positively impacted by tour guide performance. Tour guide performance is a psychological function, affecting both external behaviour and tour service performance. This corresponds to the previous research (Lin et al., 2017). The research maintains that the tour guides' performance is essential for establishing a norm for tour guide services. In other words, tourist satisfaction positively affects tourists' intentions. Satisfaction contributes to customer trust growth (Murray & Howat, 2002). When tourists are delighted with their trips, they willingly engage in loyalty and willingness to pay for the next trip. This research agreed with the tourist decision-making theory (Ajzen, 1991). And this research also had similar findings to previous studies (Alazaizeh et al., 2019). The study found that tourists' satisfaction was positively influenced by tour guides' service quality. More specifically, the higher tourist satisfaction is, the higher service quality is. Moreover, this finding agrees with the satisfaction theory (Oliver, 1980) and is similar to the previous study (Hwang & Lee, 2019). The study suggests that the quality of service provided by tour guides contributes significantly to tourist satisfaction (Kang et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2011). On the other hand, there is no reasonable correlation between the quality of the tour guide service and the tourist's behavioural intention. Tourist intention behaviour can be affected by many variations, such as hotel service, restaurant, attraction, food, etc. Besides that, the service quality of tour guiding could not be a critical effect on tourist behaviour intention. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with earlier studies (Chan et al., 2015; Hwang & Lee, 2019). The relationship between tour guide service quality and word of mouth was not significant, according to Hwang and Lee (2019). Chan et al. (2015) also had not seen the importance between tour guiding service and behaviour intention.

Finally, the study found that tour guides' performance is associated with tourists' satisfaction, which is mediated by their service quality. Tour guides are required to present service quality to tourists in order to establish a strong connection with them. Providing high-quality service to tourists actively contributes to their satisfaction and performance as tour guides. The findings of this study confirm the satisfaction theory (Oliver, 1980) and expand the results of Huang et al. (2010); Kang et al. (2004).

Conclusions

The study's purpose was to look at the link between tour guide performance, tourist satisfaction, and tourist behaviour intentions, as well as the role of the service provided by tour guide as a mediator. The participants were assessed in Ho Chi Minh city. According to a statistical study, the performance of tour guides has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction, behavioural intentions, and the quality of tour guide service. Tourist satisfaction is positively correlated with tourist behaviour intentions. It is also critical for tourists to be happy with the level of service provided by tour guides. Furthermore, the level of service provided by tour guides mediates the correlations between tourist satisfaction and tour guide performance.

Theoretical Implications

As a result of this study, contributions will be made to the literature on the tourism industry. First, this study responded to Huang et al. (2010) suggested that researchers should investigate the role of tour guide performance in different contexts and the service quality of tour guiding. The study analysed tourist behaviour intention and tour guide service quality in addition to generating quantitative data on tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction. In addition to tour guide performance, the quality of service provided by the tour guide also significantly affected tourist satisfaction. As a result, how tourists behave, and the quality of their service also influence their intentions.

Secondly, Chan et al. (2015) determined that tourists' behaviour intention predicts the quality of tours based on their satisfying experiences with tour guides. However, the study neglected to consider how to tour guiding affects tourist intention directly. The findings revealed that the quality of tour guiding services has a significant positive impact on tourist satisfaction; however, it does not correspond with tourist behaviour intention. The results of this study are compatible with those of Hwang and Lee (2019); Chan et al. (2015).

Third, the studies of Hwang and Lee (2019); Lin et al. (2017) were missing testing the role of service quality of tour guiding. As a result, this study added to the existing body of knowledge by identifying the significant mediating role of tour guide quality in the relationship between tourist satisfaction and tour guide performance.

Practical Implications

The study's findings provide some guidelines for management strategies. This study initially showed that the tour guide needs to do well on tours. Travel managers should also note that tour guide performance influences tourist satisfaction and behaviour intention. This study reported that tour guides had affected tourist satisfaction during the tour and post-tour program as tourist intention behaviours. Vietnam's tour managers and tour operators can continue to provide their tour guides with specific instructions. The training program can focus on expanding tour guides' understanding of the location, encouraging job ethics and conduct, and improving social communication, organization, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities.

Furthermore, the service quality of tour guiding plays a mediator variable in the correlation between tour guides' performance and the tourists' satisfaction. Vietnamese tour operators and agents can train tour guides to demonstrate their services professionally. The training content should focus on emulator situations to increase tour guides' experiences about providing

specific and friendly service, explaining to the tourists, and realizing tourists' needs before they ask for help, such as how to respond immediately and provide clear and organized explanations. Once travel companies recruit or hire tour guides, they are always concerned about the quality of tour guides with the best expertise and skills. An optimistic attitude and a good tour guide service can cross the differences between visitors, tour guides, and travel agencies. This is why some tour guides perform well, and professional service in guiding often has a full schedule for the whole year.

In addition, travel managers should consider the dynamic phenomena of visitor satisfaction. Various determinants of tourist satisfaction in different contexts also make a difference in the power of variety. During the tour program, tour guide performance is the main factor affecting tourist satisfaction because tour guides are representatives of tour operators or travel agencies. Moreover, the service of tour guiding can largely determine tourist satisfaction.

Tour operators and travel agencies also understand that tourist behaviour intention is the most complex phenomenon. In the decision-making process, tourist behaviour intention is influenced by many factors. In the tour program, tourist behaviour intention could be determined mainly by the tour guides' performance and the tourists' satisfaction. In some cases, the service quality of tour guiding was not directly determined by tourist behaviour intention. In addition, tourism behaviour intentions are heavily influenced by tourists' satisfaction with tour guiding, and tourist satisfaction is significantly affected by the tour guiding's quality.

Limitations and Future Research

As a result of this study, many theoretical and practical implications have been drawn, but there are also the following limitations. Firstly, this research is based only on domestic Vietnamese visitors, so the study's findings should be cautiously extended to other countries. Prospective studies should develop the model presented in this study to other studies can investigate the tour guide's performance in populations in different fields to address the limitations described above. Secondly, future studies can examine the tour guide's performance in a different context and verify the findings of this analysis simultaneously. In tour programs, the performance and service of tour guides are essential for tourist satisfaction with the tour. Nevertheless, tourists are also affected by various factors, such as transportation services, accommodation services, food, cultural elements, and weather. Prospective research on tourist satisfaction and behaviour intentions can investigate changes in more determinants other than the performance of tour guides.

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