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CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY TOWARDS TOURIST COMPANIES IN HOCHIMINH CITY

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ABBREVIATION

HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
CPV	Customer Perceived Value
CL	Customer Loyalty
EXP	Customer Experience (Customer Knowledge)
FUN	Functional Clues
MCN	Mechanic Clues
HMN	Humanic Clues

ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to identify the customer experience and customer loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC. Besides that, it also illustrates the relationship between customer experience and customer loyalty of domestic tourism in Vietnam. As a result, the empirical information found in this dissertation provides a general view about assessment of customers about service quality and customer experience in order to make appropriate adjustments and effective improvement for running a long-term route. A review of the literature indicates a general consensus that quality, perceived value and experience are major determinants of customer loyalty. However, while much is known about the relationship between the aforementioned variables and customer loyalty, these variables do not fully explain how customer loyalty is affected. Therefore, this research study seeks to identify and examine one new factor that influence on customer loyalty in choosing tourist companies, which is customer experience clues. They are defined as comprising three main components: functional clues, humanic clues and mechanic clues.

Based on the results of the path analysis, this study argues that in order to achieve high customer appeal, domestic travel and tourism of Vietnam should approach high top level of customers' loyalty and better quality of service. Due to the lack of research in this area, this study not only contributes substantially to extant academic knowledge, but also makes a significant contribution to tourism practice. Ultimately it bridges the knowledge gap by conceptualizing customer loyalty through identifying a number of key items.

In conclusion, from the knowledge in process of conducting study, it points out limitations of this study and provides valuable recommendations for further dissertation. According to the findings, this study gives some recommendations to domestic travel and tourism of Vietnam in order to take adjustment and improve the level of service quality and customers' loyalty.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one presents nearby overview of research field and reasons that study needs conducting, and its objectives. This chapter consists of the following sections: background, problem statements, research objectives, research methodology, research questions and hypotheses, implications and limitations.

1.1. Background of Research

This dissertation indicates customer experience and customers loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC. Cordially, this topic is now known as one of the highlights in Vietnam and really need more researches to analyze the issues and figure out a right route in the future.

WTO (1993) and UNSTAT (1994) define tourism as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. Indeed, people now have many purposes for travelling. These purposes can be separated into three types which are leisure tourism, visiting friends and relatives, business tourism. In terms of leisure type, people use their travel in holidays, health and fitness, sport, religion, education and culture. In case of business, they frequently spend on conferences and training events, business meetings, exhibitions and trade fairs. Significantly, the driving force in doing business is to satisfy the customers and ensure that they are loyal.

Customer loyalty in tourism industry is the state of mind that customers have about an establishment when expectations have been met or exceeded over the

life time of the product or service. Thus, customers often react strongly to service failures so that the organization recovery efforts to be equally strong and effective (Smith, Bolton & Wagner, 1999). Obviously, customer loyalty has a direct impact on the primary source of future revenue streams, for most tourist companies it is expected to be an important complement to traditional measures of economic performance, providing useful information not only to the firms themselves, but also to shareholders and investors, government regulators and buyers.

1.1.1 Tourism overview

Located on the East of the Indochinese peninsula, Vietnam, shaped like the letter “S”, borders China to the north, Laos and Cambodia to the west, and the East Sea to the east. Known as one of the most delightful places in South-East Asia, Vietnam is a land of idyllic beaches, tranquil bays, coral islands, spectacular mountains, valleys and primal forests, and is home to a warm-hearted and hospitable people. The striking and varied landscapes, from high rolling hills to undeveloped beaches, are a traveler's paradise and cover a wide range of climates.

Founded in 1960 and through the innovation and development growth, tourism becomes the critical industry to the economy of Vietnam. Although domestic enterprises operating in tourism industry are increasing significantly, the barrier of market is not really large. The enterprises operate their business under a variety of types of services such as tourism agencies, resort, restaurant and entertainment services. Tourism has been identified as one of the most popular tendency worldwide and become the most developing and largest industry, contributing in the development and wealthy of most of countries, especially in developing nations.

Vietnam is one of the most attracting destinations in the Asia-Pacific area and during recent years, Vietnam tourism industry tends to increasing powerfully. According to Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, the number of international arrivals to Vietnam in 2012 have reached 6.8 million, exceeded 0.3 million than scheduled plan and increased absolutely 14 per cent comparing to 2011.

Besides, domestic tourists approached 32.5 million, increased 8.3 per cent than 2011. Thus, the total profit from tourism activities in 2012 gained 160,000 billion Dong, increased 23 per cent comparing to previous year. In terms of vision in 2013, the aim of tourism industry is to attract 7 million of international arrivals and 35 million of domestic ones.

Moreover, according to Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Vietnam has to build up a tourism enterprise association in order to become the key point economy with top profit nationwide and labor force from 2 to 3 million as well as contributing 8-10 per cent GDP of Vietnam. With annual average growth rate, tourism plays a crucial role in the development of national economy. Tourism brings about many economic benefits with regard to the purchase of customers to tourism products. Besides that, the increasing development of tourism leads to the development of other industries, because tourism products have interrelationships with other fields in the market. On a general level, tourism activities effect on the change of balance of revenues and expenditures of the country. Another benefit that tourism can take is to solve the employment issues because service industry relating to tourism always needs the large amount of labors. Indeed, tourism creates big earnings for employees and solves social problems.

Recently, many tourist companies have been increasing in both quality and quantity of the services. The most popular tourist enterprises are Saigontourist, Vietravel, TST tourist and Fiditour. These brands confirm an important role in the tourism industry because of their reputation, their high quality of services, good staff performances and many other premiums. In terms of marketplace, these four tourist companies have accounted the most in the market and attracted large amount of arrivals in both international and domestic. In terms of recent comprehensive international integration, tourism industry in general and tourist companies in particular have to promote tourism potentials, strengths, development opportunities and overcome the shortcomings, limitations, obstacles and challenges in order to develop tourism industry as the key economic force in Vietnam.

In short, Vietnamese culture may be still mysterious and unknown to most people outside the country, even with Vietnamese.

1.1.2 Introduction to tourism market in HCMC

After the country completely unified, Vietnam also started to focus on recovery and development in all aspects. Tourism period was also seen as step away from zero, everything must start from here. However, within a short term, tourism in HCMC has had strong breakthrough.

According to HCMC Department of Culture, in 2012, international visitors to the city was estimated at 3.8 million, up 8.5% compared to 2011 and accounted for 56% of international visitors to Vietnam (6.8 million), revenue was estimated to 68,000 billion, up 20% compared to 2011, contributing about 11% of the GDP of the whole city.

In addition, under the leadership and direction of the HCMC Party Committee, People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, Saigon Tourist Company (Saigontourist) was established, with the main task was to welcome and serve the Party and State city. The appearance of Saigontourist at that time was considered as a milestone to tourism of HCMC, and created the original foundation of the city's tourism industry, which lasted from 1975 to 1985.

Besides the task of politics, HCMC then gradually tried to reach international markets. In 1979, Saigontourist were allowed to contract directly serving customers in some markets such as India, France, Japan, Italy, Canada, and Australia.

Accordingly, there are many activities to upgrade and expand existing facilities, opening overseas tours to Vietnam, made contracts with foreign companies, to join the Tourism Organization International. In particular, HCMC Tourism Year event was first held in 1990, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh, introducing image to a new destination with international friends marked a new maturity.

During development, the face of the city tourism also has had new features with a series of tourist companies, tour operators and tourist services: Vietravel, Ben Thanh Tourist, TST tourist, Fiditour, Peace and so on. These brand names have been contributing significantly to the success of the tourism industry today. Besides the birth and growth of the tourism business organizations, infrastructure for tourism has been increasingly better such as bridges, ports, roads, waterways and railways. This has met the necessary and sufficient factors for the development of tourism.

1.2 Problem Statement

Vietnam is a great destination for Vietnamese nationwide. In terms of strengths, travel and tourism of Vietnam has many strong points from natural landscapes to interesting and flourishing culture as well as long, varied and heroic history.

There are now many determinants that influence the decision of customers. When they want to buy a tour, they have to choose a suitable travel agency. Thus, the decision in choosing the best agency is the most important and it leans on many different issues. The customers have to depend on their interest, their income and their purposes for tourism.

On the other hand, domestic travel and tourism of Vietnam is still dramatically now facing with many difficulties with the problem statement is decreasing quality of services and the customers' loyalty towards tourist companies. It has warnings about high service prices, degraded infrastructure and bad services that draw out poor quality in tourists' eyes. Customers' loyalty is the crucial factor to increase the outcome and profit of the company. Hence, to survive and develop, all companies have to attract and keep track with more and more customers. Furthermore, travel companies are now facing many controversy and competitions with their rivals.

Therefore, this thesis mainly discusses the topic **“Customer experience and customers loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC.”**

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

This research is conducted to give answers to the question: **What are the key factors affecting customer loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC?**

Therefore, this study aims to determine main determinants that lead to the selection of customers to tourist companies in HCMC. In this respect, the study objectives that emanated from the literature review are:

- To clarify main factors of customer experience in the context of tourist companies in HCMC.
- To analyze the impact of these factors on customer loyalty.
- To give recommendations to travel companies in order to enhance customer loyalty.

1.4 Research Methodology

In this section, the triangulation research methodologies are explored and discussed. Primary research has two broad approaches including qualitative and quantitative. Indeed, this method employs more than one type of research approach and produces separate results which reinforce each other (Bryman, 2004). Triangulation is also referred to as the “multi-method approach” or the “mixed-method approach” because it involves data being collected, using more than technique at a different point in time; thus increasing reliability and subjectivity.

To collect data, I would design the questionnaire and release them to the customers who have used any tourism service of any tourist company in HCMC. Likewise, in order to analyze the data and select more reliable findings, I consider taking in-depth interviews with the aim to clarify main reasons that affect the loyalty. The interviewees are the customers that have been using the tourist services frequently and they understand plainly about this realm.

With regard to findings, the software called SPSS is operated to analyze the data and then give the conclusion. In some extend, I would apply the reliability statistics and factor analysis to test whether the variables in the questionnaire are relevant or not. Besides, I also focus on multiple regression technique in order to demonstrate the theoretical soundness of all factors and variables.

1.5 Research scope

There are a set of limitations to the methodological approach of this dissertation relating to the general time constraints of the research project itself, specifically in relation to administering the questionnaire. The study will be finished within four months from January 24th to May 27th 2013. Significantly, the dissertation just concentrates on the residents in HCMC.

Almost every study has some limitations and so as in this dissertation. One of the limitations is time limit. Four months to hand-out a deep research is not quite long time to achieve the best accomplishment. Another limitation is the research results cannot represent for all Vietnamese people in HCMC. Partially, a questionnaire will be conducted in about 200 Vietnamese tourists and in-depth interviews from customer of TST Tourist and Vietravel in HCMC.

1.6 Implications of the study

Recently, the demand of people in tourism is increasing promptly. In order to adapt the customers' needs, domestic tourism of Vietnam as well as of HCMC has to figure out significances and research findings analysis from the study to adjust and improve the matters occurring in service quality and maybe apply advertising methods to build up one good image in customers' mind. Chiefly, tourist companies must improve their quality and mainly focus on core factors that play a crucial role for the loyalty of customers in choosing an agency for their tours. Thus, the agencies are suggested to analyze clearly these variables, determine their own strengths and reinforce systems to have best implementations.

Therefore, this study will benefit for domestic tourism industry of HCMC in finding recent determinants that influence on the decision of customers in selecting their favorite tourist company.

1.7 Organization of the dissertation

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

Chapter one presents nearby overview of research field and reasons that study needs conducting, and its objectives. This chapter consists of the following sections: background, problem statements, research objectives, research methodology, research questions and hypotheses, implications and limitations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter two relates to the literature review of the dependent and independent variables. This chapter describes deeply main parts: valued affecting factors, customer experience clues, customer loyalty and conceptualizations.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter three illustrates statistical techniques the research applied. It exposes an overview of the methodology including various sections: research design, target population and sample size, operational definitions and measurements, questionnaire instruments, data collection methods, data and factor analysis.

Chapter 4: Research Findings and Discussion

Chapter four brings out the outcomes of the dissertation. This chapter embraces main sections: the demographic characteristics of tourists and unvaried descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables; factor analysis and multiple regression analysis; customer experience and customer loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter five debates the findings of the study and answers questions of this research raised in Chapter One. In addition, it also puts forth recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter relates to the literature review of the dependent and independent variables. This chapter describes deeply main parts: valued affecting factors, customer experience clues, customer loyalty and conceptualizations.

2.1 Tourism Sector Review

2.1.1 Definition

Since this study is based in the tourism it is necessary to first define the term “tourism”. In general, tourism has been acknowledged as the world’s largest industry (Keynote, 2005; Lashley and Morrison, 2000) and definitions of tourism necessarily make reference to some degree of movement away from the customer’s ordinary place of residence and/or work with the purpose and the distance being the deciding factors (O’Connor et al., 2007:1).

2.1.2 Characteristics

Tourism has 3 diverse categories; they are domestic tourism, inbound tourism and outbound tourism. In domestic tourism, tourists are residents of a country traveling within their own country. In terms of inbound tourism, tourists are non-residents traveling in the given country. On the other hand, outbound tourism reflects residents of a country traveling in another country. The demand definition is that tourism comprises of the activities of persons travelling to and staying places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes (Holloway, 2002; Cooper et al., 1998, World Tourism Organization (WTO), 1993), whereas the supply definition is that the tourism industry consists of

all those firms, organizations and facilities that are intended to serve the specific needs and wants of tourists (Leiper, 1979:400, cited from Cooper et al., 1998).

2.2 Customer Loyalty Concept

2.2.1 Definition

Customer loyalty is the tendency of the customer to maintain in business with a particular supplier and buy the products regularly. This is usually seen when a customer is fully satisfied by the supplier and re-visits the organization for business deals, or when he is tended towards re-purchasing a particular product or brand over times by that supplier.

2.2.2 Conceptualization

Initially, the conceptualization and measurement of the loyalty concept has become more and more complex (Jones and Taylor, 2007). The vast majority of market researchers view loyalty as a multi-dimensional concept. A further perspective of customer loyalty is that of Chitty, Ward and Chua (2007) who argue that loyalty can be conceptualized by two dimensions, which is behavioral loyalty, indicated by repeat-purchase behavior and attitudinal behavior, referring to the inherent affective and cognitive facets of loyalty.

Customer loyalty is all about attracting the right customer, getting them to buy, buy often, buy in higher quantities and bring tourism agencies even more customers. Every agency wants to create and retain a loyal customer who engages in continued profitable business with. Additionally, customer loyalty is the measure of success of the supplier in retaining a long term relationship with the customer. Thus customer loyalty is when a supplier receives the ultimate reward of his efforts in interacting with its customer. Customer loyalty tends the customer to voluntarily choose a particular product against another for his need. The loyalty may be product specific or it may be company specific. When a loyal customer has repetitive

requirement of the same product, such customers may be described as being brand loyal.

In terms of customer loyalty, the most important aspect an organization should focus on is customer experience. Hence, customer loyalty is an influencing aspect of customer relations management and measuring customer loyalty and developing a retention strategy are of great importance to an organization's success.

The attitudinal approach points out both the emotional and psychological aspects inherent in loyalty. The attitudinal perspective reflects a sense of loyalty, engagement and allegiance. For instance, a customer may have a favorable attitude towards a tourist company and may even recommend it to others, but he will not choose that company because of its high price. Positive attitudes towards the service or business must be considered and developed over a longer period of time (Kumar and Shah, 2004).

Attitudinal loyalty falls under an alternative measure for loyalty, namely cognitive loyalty. The cognitive approach entails an individual fully reforming what he/ she believes about the relationship with the service provider. The cognitive measures include top of mind, first choice, price tolerance, exclusive consideration, identification with the service provider and willingness to pay more. Consequently, the psychology literature which is considered the pro-relationship maintenance suggests that loyalty is a two-dimensional (behavioral and combined cognitive/ attitudinal) concept, whereas the marketing literature indicates that loyalty is a tri-dimensional (behavioral, attitudinal and cognitive) construct (Jones and Taylor, 2007) and in the interpersonal relationships literature, loyalty is two-dimensional with behavioral and cognitive measures.

Table 1: Loyalty Dimensions

Dimensions	Loyalty Outcome	Related Definition	Related Studies
Behavioral	Repurchase Intentions	Customer's aim to maintain a relationship with a particular service provider and make his or her next purchase in the category from this provider.	Jones et al. (2000); Zeithaml et al. (1996)
	Switching Intentions	Customer's aim to terminate a relationship with a particular service provider and turn to another in the same category.	Bansal and Taylor (1999); Dabholkar and Walls (1999)
	Exclusive Intentions	Customer's aim to dedicate all of his or her purchases in a category to a particular service provider.	Reynolds and Arnold (2000); Reynolds and Beatty (1999)
Attitudinal	Relative Attitude	The appraisal of the service, including the strength of that appraisal and the degree of differentiation from alternatives.	Dick and Basu (1994); Mattila (2001); Pritchard et al. (1999)
	Willingness to Recommend	Customer's willingness to recommend a service provider to other customers.	Butcher et al. (2001); Zeithaml et al. (1996)
	Altruism	Customer's willingness to assist the service provider or other service customers in the effective delivery of the service.	Price et al. (1995)
Cognitive	Willingness to Pay More	Customer's indifference to price differences between that of his or her current service provider and others in the same category.	Anderson (1996); Ruyter et al. (1998)
	Exclusive Consideration	The extent to which the customers consider the service provider as his or her only choice when purchasing this type of service.	Dwyer et al. (1987); Ostrowski et al. (1993)
	Identification	The sense of ownership over the service affiliation with the service	Butcher et al. (2001)

		provider, or congruence values that exists between service provider and the customers.	
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Source: Adapted from Jones and Taylor (2007)

2.3 Customer Value Concept

In the academic literature, the term “value” has appeared in several different contexts from management strategy to economics, finance, information systems, marketing, consumer behavior and pricing. Customer value is a strategic weapon in drawing and retaining more customers and has become one of the most significant factors in the success of both businesses and service companies (Woodruff, 1997; Parasuraman, 1997; Gale, 1994). Due to customers now becoming more and more demanding, many companies have placed emphasis on creating and delivering superior customer perceived value.

In particular, customer value is defined as the difference between what a customer gets from a service, and what he or she has to give in order to get it. It helps people and companies unlock their inner creative power and achieve amazing results. Relative performance identifies how the product or service gives customer value relative to what competitors offer. In order to generate more thought about customer value, and to reach out to a customer base, a business might promote a customer value proposition. The customer value proposition is basically a promise of benefits from a vendor to customers.

2.3.1 The Role of Customer Value in Customer Loyalty

Loyalty demeanor such as relationship continuance, increased market share and recommendations result from customers’ beliefs that the quantity of value received from one supplier is greater than that available from other suppliers (Hallowell, 1996). Indeed, many marketing strategists and industrial organizational economists have realized that the creation of customer value is one of the crucial

variables involved in determining customer loyalty and ultimately ensuring a company's success (Higgins, 1998).

2.4 Customer experience

2.4.1 Customer experience definition

In this research, customer experience is the general knowledge of customers towards tourist companies in HCMC. Customer experience is the sum of all experiences and understanding a customer has with provider of goods and services, over the duration of their relationship with that provider. This kind of knowledge could be initial expressions about the tourist companies, or experienced understanding about the services, the employees, system of these companies. In view of loyal customers, they would have a deep view about their choice, their favorite tourist companies. This section might include some items relating to general perspectives of customers toward tourist companies such as understanding clearly about companies, differentiating that company to others and experiencing some characteristics of tours, services and operational systems of that tourist provider.

In general, this customer experience is quite different from the customer experience clues in the next section.

2.5 Customer experience clues about service

Customers often rely on clues in determining whether they choose the service because these clues often subconsciously send signals that influence the customers' decisions. There are three types of clues: the way the product works or the technical performance of the service (functional clues), the sensory presentation associated with the service (mechanic clues), and behavior and appearance of service providers (humanic clues). These clues play a different role in consumer experience; they affect various calculative and emotional perceptions in a distinctive fashion and create customers' service experiences.

Originally, the experience clues comprise of three categories – functional clues, mechanic clues and humanic clues. Each of these clues carries a message signifying something to the customer, and it is the culmination of all these clues that create the experience and influence customer's feelings. In selecting, consuming and evaluating services, customers tend to process and organize the experience clues into a set of impressions that evoke emotions and feelings of customers towards the service (Berry and Seltman, 2007). Moreover, Berry and Bendapudi (2003) stated that functional, mechanic and humanic clues that influence the customers' rational and emotional perceptions of the service quality and create the actual service experience. Because of the intangibility and complexity, services, such as tourism, tend to be harder to evaluate than goods. As a result, customers logically find the clues to assist them to gauge the service functionality. All three sets of clues play specific roles in creating customers' service experiences. In reality, functional clues impact customers' rational perceptions of the experience, whereas the mechanic and humanic clues indicate emotional facets.

2.5.1 Functional Clues

Customers choose any services depending on the quality of service's functionality and reliability in delivering the service as promised. Obviously, service quality is described as the comparison customers make among their expectations about a service and their perceptions of the actual service performance. Hence, the aim of functional clues is to enhance a customer's confidence in the reliability of service performance. Following Berry et al. (2006), functional clues are concerned with the technical quality of the service offering, specifically the reliability and competence of the actual service. Indeed, functional clues focus mainly on the "what" of the service experience, whereas the mechanic and humanic clues glance at the "how". A service can be functional and has to combine with the mechanic and humanic clues to make it greater.

2.5.2 Mechanic Clues

Mechanic clues are referred to service quality and service infrastructure. According to Wall and Berry (2007:62), these clues are especially influential in affecting quality perceptions for services in which customers experience the facilities for an extended time. Hence, the mechanic clues are regarded as the first impact on customer's experience and have ability to influence customers before either the functional or mechanic clues. Therefore, mechanic clues play an important role in creating a good first impression. Because customers generally experience mechanic clues to some extent before considering both the functional and humanic clues, mechanic clues obviously influence customers' choice of services as well as having an impact on expectations. Customers with no previous experience with a particular service, such as tourists travelling to somewhere who need to select a tourist company, often base their choice on the appearance of the facilities and the reputation of the companies. Subsequently, the mechanic clues provoke emotional responses which lead customers to either choose to continue or discontinue with a certain service provider (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003; Hoffman and Turley, 2002; Lovelock, 2001).

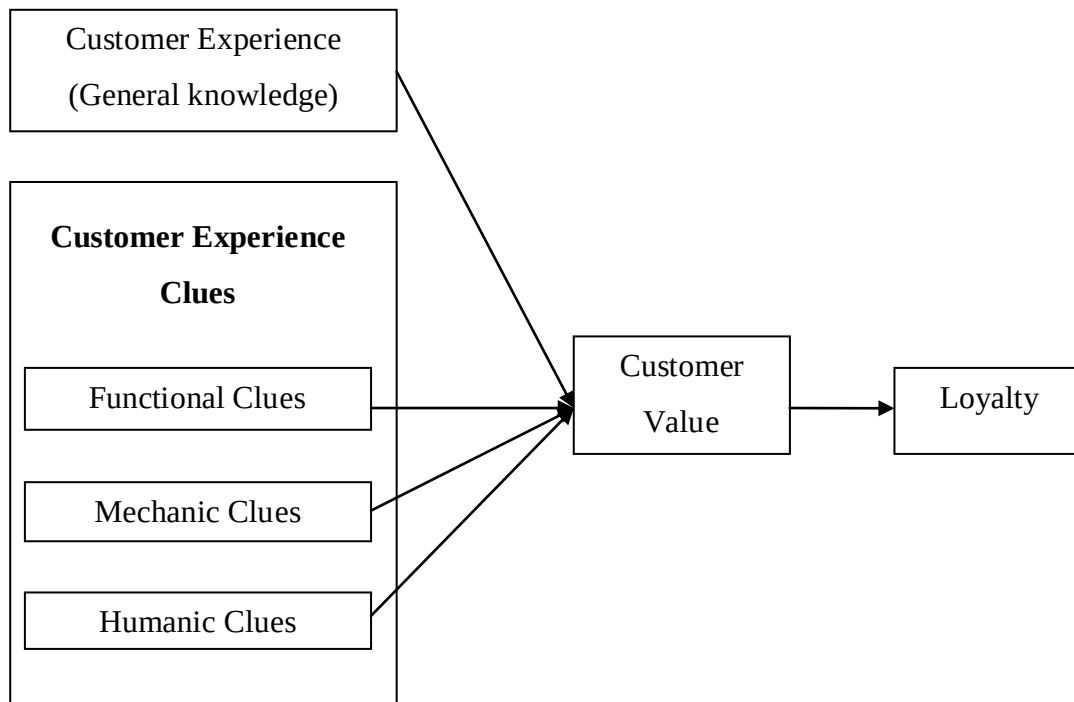
2.5.3 *Humanic Clues*

Humanic clues denote the behavior and performance of service providers in order to meet and exceed customers' expectations. In addition, credibility has been identified as a further critical employee behavior. Credibility is described as the degree to which an individual is perceived to hold the necessary expertise and can be trusted to provide the expected service. The last humanic clue behavior which has been identified is the competence which is considered as "the expertise of service staff derived from knowledge of the subject" (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Subsequently, employee performance is an essential clue in the humanic clue set (Berry et al., 2006).

2.6 Analysis of Conceptual Loyalty Model and Hypotheses

Following the extensive review of the literature, the study demonstrates a new loyalty model and its related hypotheses that will be examined in the methodological stage of this dissertation.

Table 2: Conceptual Loyalty Model



Adapted by Martina D. (2009)

According to the figure, the following **hypotheses** are presented:

- H₁: There is a positive relationship between customer experience and customer value.
- H₂: There is a positive relationship between functional clues and customer value.
- H₃: There is a positive relationship between mechanic clues and customer value.
- H₄: There is a positive relationship between functional clues and customer value.
- H₅: Customer value has a positive relationship with loyalty.

In conclusion, this model will be applied in this thesis in order to clarify the relationships between key variables affecting customers' loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC and make some recommendations to those organizations to attract more customers and improve their performance in comparison with other rival competitors.

CHAPTER III

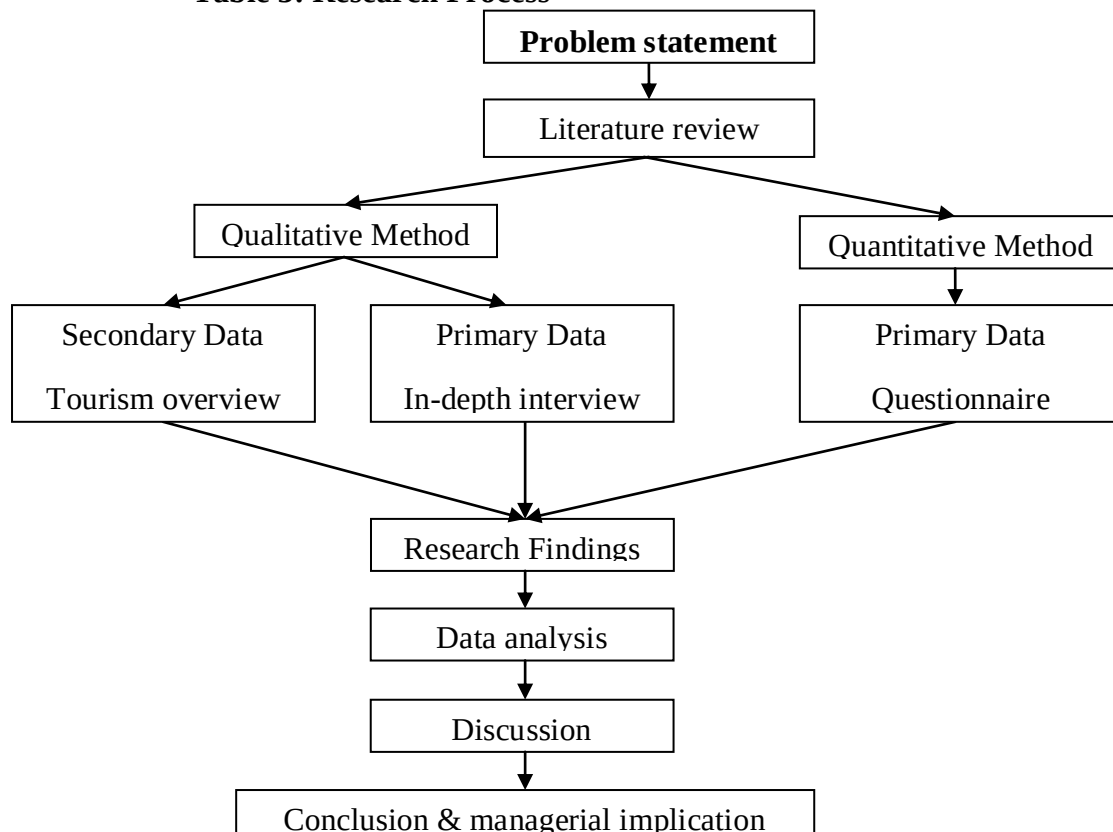
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter three illustrates statistical techniques the research applied. It exposes an overview of the methodology including various sections: research design, target population and sample size, operational definitions and measurements, questionnaire instruments, data collection methods, data and factor analysis.

3.1 Research design

This dissertation will apply triangulation method. It means a combination of quantitative and qualitative method. The qualitative method will determine in deep the research topic about the customer experience and loyalty of customers towards tourist companies in HCMC.

Table 3: Research Process



This method can make clear about its definitions before moving to the next steps. Then, the quantitative method will be applied to answer the question of the research.

3.2 Qualitative method

This stage is conducted to interpret deeply meaning of customers loyalty. Furthermore, I will research about the models that previous researches applied for customers' loyalty evaluation.

3.2.1 *Primary data*

The proficiency to collect the primary data in this study is to conduct in-depth interviews. Following Macionas and Plummer (2002, "an interview is a series of questions a researcher addresses personally to respondents." There are three main types of interviewing: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. According to Denscombe (2003), a structured interview is a tight control over format of the questions and answers, the respondents just follow to fill out. In another, the researchers have a semi-structured to be more flexible in that the questions and their order may differ in order to achieve same data from different people (Mc Donald, 2006). At last, researchers use unstructured ones to gain some further in-depth and qualitative data. The interview process is a qualitative research method and involves an individual interview (Bryman, 2004). In order to increase the validity of the interview, it depends on the skills of the interviewer and the design (Krueger, 1994) and limited standardization can raise the reliability of the findings (Maylor and Blackburn, 2005). This study conducts the in-depth interviews because it helps me to probe into my topic and the face-to-face interview also reveals the attitudes and emotions of the respondents which are essential to clarifying the customer experience in relation to customer loyalty (Domegan and Fleming, 2007).

Hence, I decide to conduct the structured interviews with people in a variety of demography and in different profiles to figure out their needs and comments on tourism and main variables that affect them in picking out a tourist

company. Due to varied limitations, I just interviewed one loyal customer. As a result, I can conclude the information and make some recommendations to the tourist companies in charming more customers.

3.3 Quantitative method

According to Given (2008, p. 463), “quantitative research refers to the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. The objective of quantitative research was to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and/or hypotheses pertaining to phenomena”. Specifically, in this study, questionnaire is one of the cheapest and fastest means in getting primary data; therefore I could save time and efforts but still accomplish a large amount of precise information from the respondents.

3.3.1 Questionnaire design

Questionnaire research is defined as the “systematic gathering of specific information about particular persons or entities” (Brannick, 2000). Likewise, Balnaves and Caputi (2006) argued a questionnaire as a method of collecting data from people about who they are (education, finances, etc.), how they think (motivations, beliefs, etc.) and what they do (behavior).” The questionnaire considers to measure customers’ attitudes towards, opinions about and perceptions of the tourist companies and its quality of service (Koljonen and Reid, 2000).

Dillman (2000) suggested that survey design should be considered to gain two essence objectives, to reduce non-response and reduce measurement error. Likewise, Sekeran (2000) also outlined some guidelines that should be considered while designing the questionnaire:

- The wording of the questionnaire in terms of type and sequencing of questions; the content and purpose of questionnaire and the language used in the questionnaire.

- The principles of measurement, reliability and validity, coding and questionnaire scales.
- The appearance of the questionnaire in terms of length and instructions to respondents.

Additionally, Gill and Johnson (1997) listed four main issues to be reappraised during the questionnaire design process which also shaped the design of the dissertation:

- Decision upon the format of the questionnaire in terms of presentation and sequencing of questions.
- Fieldwork issues and sampling.
- Analysis of returned data.
- Writing up findings.

The structure of the questionnaire is very authoritative for unsupervised questionnaires and it is critical to carefully plan the following with the target sample in mind: wording of the questionnaire, aesthetics such as length, size, shape and color; and the cover letter attached to encourage the recipient to answer (Jobber and O'Reilly, 1998).

The questionnaire is designed with the total questions no more than 30 questions in order to save time and meet the comfort of respondents. The first section focuses on details about customer awareness and their suggestion about general service quality, types of tourism, their experience and loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC. Wuensch (2005, p. 524) defined Likert scale as “a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaires. It is the most widely used approach to rating responses in survey research”. In other words, Likert scale will be mainly applied for this study's objectives as rating the priorities of the difficulties. In the questionnaire, the scales range from (1) strongly disagrees, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. The advantage of using Likert scaling is that it enables attitudinal responses to be summated and

facilitates the researcher to examine trends in the responses to particular responses (Bryman, 2004). The second section is about the demographic information of the respondents. This part is placed at the end of the questionnaire in order to attain the objectivity of the respondents while answering the first section.

3.3.2 Measurement Scales

According to Gill and Johnson (1997), there are four types of measurement scales that can be utilized in questionnaires: nominal scales, ordinal scales, interval scales and ratio scales.

The following variables are measured using the items listed:

Section one: Customer Experience Clues

Functional Clues Variables:

Reliability Items

- The reservation system (e.g. telephone/ website) is easy to use.
- The company is successful in providing the service.

Accessibility Items

- The company is conveniently located.
- The employees are easily accessible when needed

Humanic Clue Variables:

Responsiveness Items

- The employees are courteous.
- The employees give us special attention.

Knowledge Items

- Employees' knowledge of tourism made us feel comfortable.

Service Recovery Items

- The employees are empowered to provide compensations for inaccurate service.

- The employees quickly apologize when service mistakes are made.
- Alternative tours/ arrangements are provided to accommodate error in tour booking.

Customer Orientation

- The employees understand your needs.
- The employees show a commitment to satisfy your needs.

Credibility

- You feel secure in your dealings with the service staff.
- The service staff has a positive attitude.
- You do not feel deceived by the service staff (*such as with pricing, tour booking, special deals*)

Physical Appearance Items

- The employees are attractive.
- The employees look elegant and classy.
- The employees have neat dress and nice appearance.

Mechanic Clues Variables:

- The interior and exterior of the company are attractive.
- The infrastructure of the company is modern.
- The company's facilities are up to date.

Section two: Customer Value

Overall Value Items

- Overall, the value of this tourist company's service to the customer is...
- Compared to other tourist companies in HCMC that the customer has chosen, the overall ability of this company to satisfy his needs is...

Monetary Value Items

- The tourist company offer is reasonably priced.
- The quality of service is worth to the amount of money the customers pay.
- The service and tours offering of this company are economical.

Section three: Customer Loyalty

- The customer will recommend choosing the service offered by this tourist company to others.
- The customer will say positive things about this tourist company.
- The customer will choose this tourist company as his/her first choice in HCMC.
- The customer will do more business with this tourist company again in the future.
- The customer will introduce his/ her acquaintances about the service of the company.

3.4 Data collection and Sample size

Data collection conducted by distributing roughly 200 questionnaires surrounding for that have been using tourist services already. This study relates to tourist companies; so that the questionnaire should be released at these companies in order to make sure that they will reach most of loyal customers. This way can increase the reliability of data collection. In addition, I considered sharing the questionnaire online to quickly approach the respondents. The respondents would be chosen with different demographic and living circumstances. It can take 10 to 15 minutes to finish around 30 questions in the list. This data was termed as primary data.

According to Nguyen Dinh Tho (2011), the minimum size for one item is five responses (ratio 5:1). This research model has 28 items; hence the minimum necessary sample size is around 150 replies. Moreover, HCMC is one of the largest cities in Vietnam with the population up to 9 million. Thence, sample size with 200 respondents is a reasonable number because it meets the sample size standard and reflects partially the customers in HCMC.

Besides, literature review in chapter II was comprised to collect and illustrate the secondary data. These data strongly support for the entire dissertation.

3.5 Data analysis

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software is crucially used to analyze the data. The study has to apply many types of statistical analysis to measure validity, reliability and correspondence among different variables. Likewise, I can investigate the significance level and coefficients of the variables to conclude that whether they are statistically significant in this study or not.

Before the actual data analysis, the data must be prepared accordingly (Hair et al. 2006). Prior to data collection, a general codebook for the questionnaire was developed containing coding instructions and necessary information about all variables in the data set. A numerical code was assigned for each specific response to a specific question. Each questionnaire's set of responses was then entered into an SPSS datasheet. The entered questionnaires were screened in order to identify illegible, incomplete, inconsistent or ambiguous responses.

Initially, this research had to use pilot test with a small sample size to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. After careful tested, descriptive statistics including percentage, frequency and descriptive were used to illustrate the demography of the respondents.

Then, reliability analysis was used to determine the overall consistency of the questionnaire in general, the validity and internal consistency of the items of variables in particular. In this test, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was considered. According to Pallant (2005), this coefficient of a scale has many different ranges and should be up to 0.7 because of its ideal. If this coefficient is less than 0.6, hence the questionnaire should be revised to achieve better consistency. Therefore, in order to guarantee the reliability and validity of this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficients must be equal to or greater than 0.7.

Significantly, this study conducted factor analysis to identify underlying constructs in the data (common factor analysis) and to reduce the large number of variables to a smaller set of manageable items (principal component analysis). Indeed, factor analysis is different from many of the other techniques. It is not designed to

test hypotheses or to tell the researchers whether one group is significantly different from another. It is included in the SPSS package as a “data reduction” technique. It takes a large set of variables and looks for a way that the data may be ‘reduced’ or summarized using a smaller set of factors or components. In order for preparation of this analysis, the step of computing variables and checking Rotated Factor Matrix to group those items effectively.

Multiple Regressions is not just one technique but a family of techniques that can be used to explore the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and a number of independent variables or predictors.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter started by describing the various philosophical assumptions and the philosophical stance adopted by the researcher, which in turn determined the research’s methodological approach. In term of the researcher’s philosophical stance and research objectives, the merits of implementing a mixed method approach were examined and the rationale for this study’s mixed method approach was explained. The various methods of data collection were explored, with combining structured interview in order to collect data from loyal customers. The next chapter describes the research findings and discussion.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter four brings out the outcomes of the dissertation. This chapter embraces main sections: the demographic characteristics of tourists and unvaried descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables; factor analysis and multiple regression analysis; customer experience and customer loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC.

4.1 Simple Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Sample demography

4.1.1.1 Gender

Most of questionnaires comprise demographic questions with the aim at representing in profile of respondents into specific groups as long as identify potential customers for tourist companies in HCMC. For further effects, this analysis also conduces to a result in making comparison among groups in some respects.

We collected 287 answer sheets (257 ones were online released and 30 ones were directly delivered). However there are only 200 questionnaires are valid and they have enough reliability for our research, the rests were not qualified with filter questions at the beginning of the questionnaire. These filter ones' purposes were to test general loyalty and understanding of the respondents in corresponding to tourism context.

This following pie chart describes the percentage of gender of customers who already used tourism services of tourist companies in HCMC.

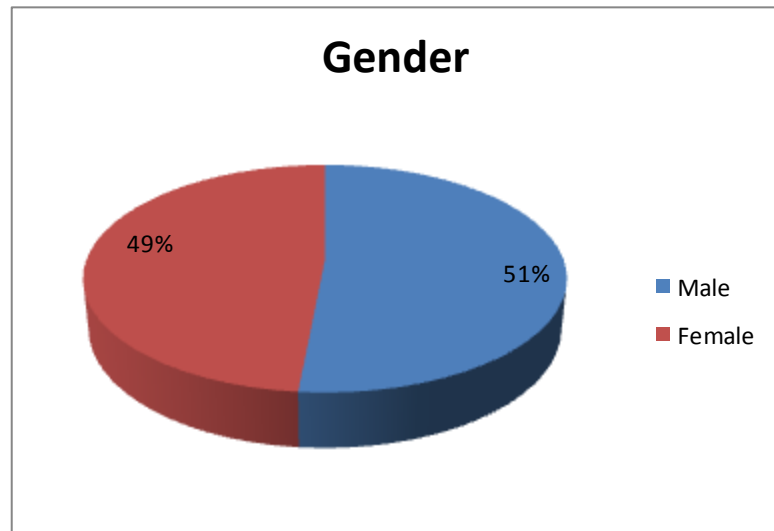


Figure 1: Customers by Gender

This pie chart exemplifies the differences between two genders. Following the consequences, there is no any spreads between male and female. In objective view, we can infer from this figure some issues by the balance of customers in using tourist services. Gender does not reflect strongly the decision of customers because both male and female have demand on tourism. Hence there was no any gap between these two gender categories. Details, male accounted for 51 per cent, rather than female with 49 per cent.

4.1.1.2 Age

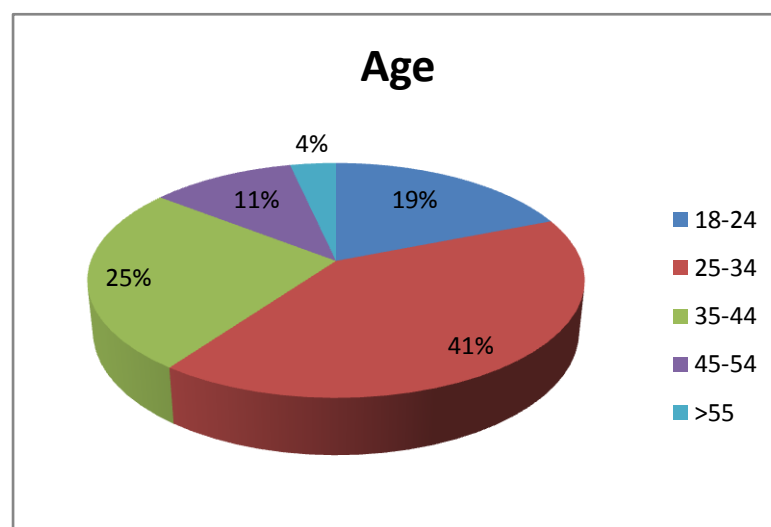


Figure 2: Customers by Age

This graph shows the percentage of customers by age. The range of age was split into five parts which are from 18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54 and over 55. Based on the results, we can conclude that the young generation accounts for the majority such as the age from 25 to 34 for 41 per cent and moderate generation such as the age of 35 to 44 for 25 per cent. These outcomes can be explicated by the way that the young generation recently prefers to travel around and court new things, pleasant experience when they are in different destinations rather than old generation. In addition, customers in the range from 25 to 44 years old have a stable occupation and relatively income than the younger generation (18 to 24) because this younger contemporary is almost students and their lives depend on their family.

4.1.1.3 Occupation

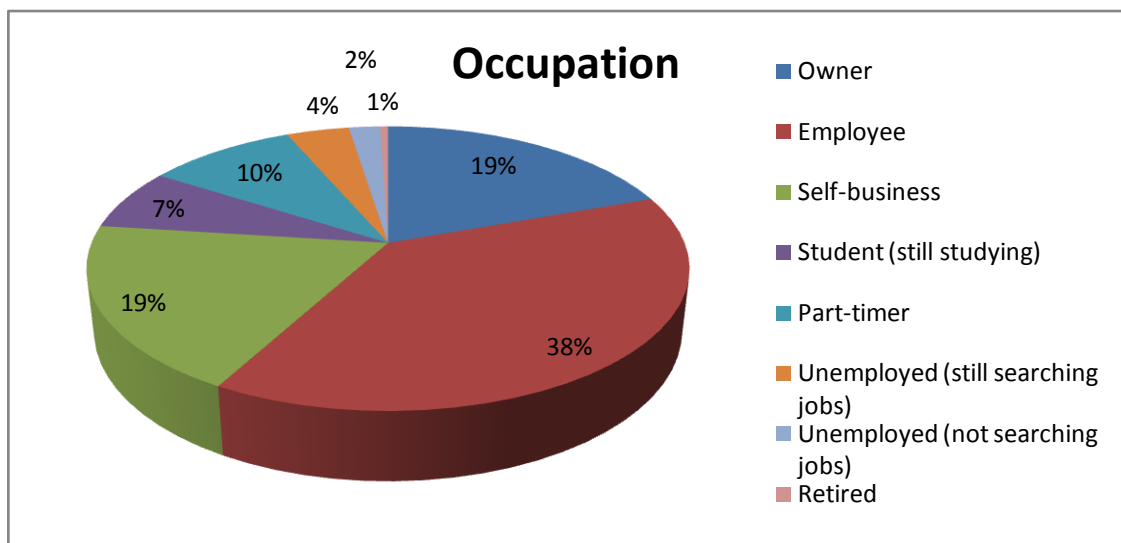


Figure 3: Customers by Occupation

This chart shows the occupation of respondents which are divided into eight groups. Based on the Social Occupation Figure, there are the following groups: owners, employees, self-business, students, part-timer, unemployed (still searching jobs and not searching jobs) and retired. Following the figures, it describes that the employees accounts for the majority with 38 per cent because there are now many companies and offices so that the customers often come from these enterprises. Moreover, tourism is the field that takes much money; hence the customers should

have a stable occupation and acceptable income to pay off. Hence, the groups of owners and self-business are in high figure.

4.1.1.4 Income

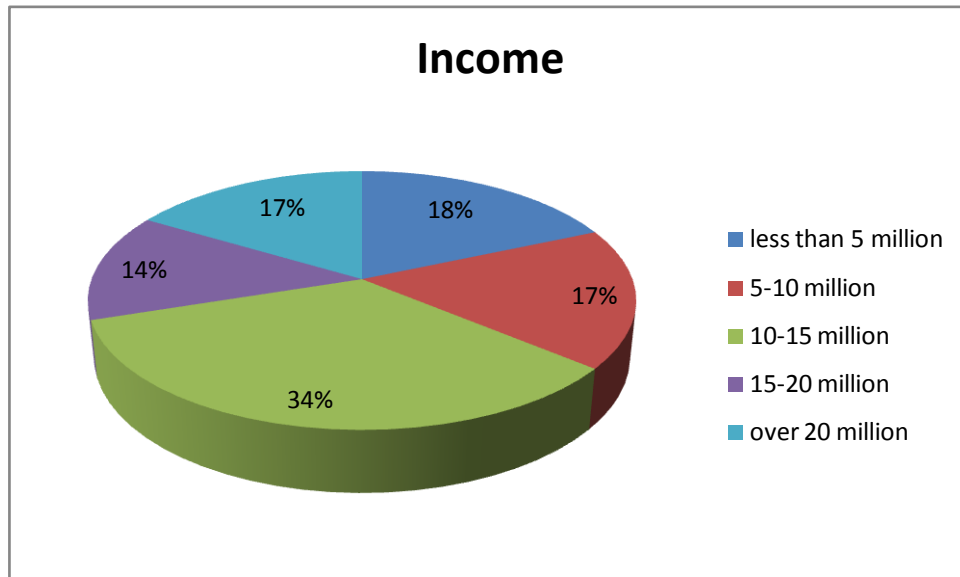


Figure 4: Customers by Income

Based on the Social Classification Figure, the income has divided into 5 scales which are “less than 5 million”, “5 to 10 million”, “10 to 15 million”, “15 to 20 million” and “over 20 million”. These ranges are suitable for recent society. The results pointed out that customers largely gain from 10 to 15 million per month. This range is so common for employees recently. Then, many people have salaries less than 5 million and from 5 to 10 million. This income is a moderate number. Besides, customers also have income with over 20 million per month. This range is mostly from managerial levels so they have many budgets to travel and use tourist services a lot.

In conclusion, the purpose of this demographic analysis is step by step to provide a common view as well as general picture of respondents that the author will take into descriptive analysis to see their perception about tourism sector. The results from these demographic figures can somehow explain some issues rising within process of descriptive analysis.

4.1.2 Other findings about tourist companies and tourism market

4.1.2.1 Customers' decision to tourist companies in HCMC

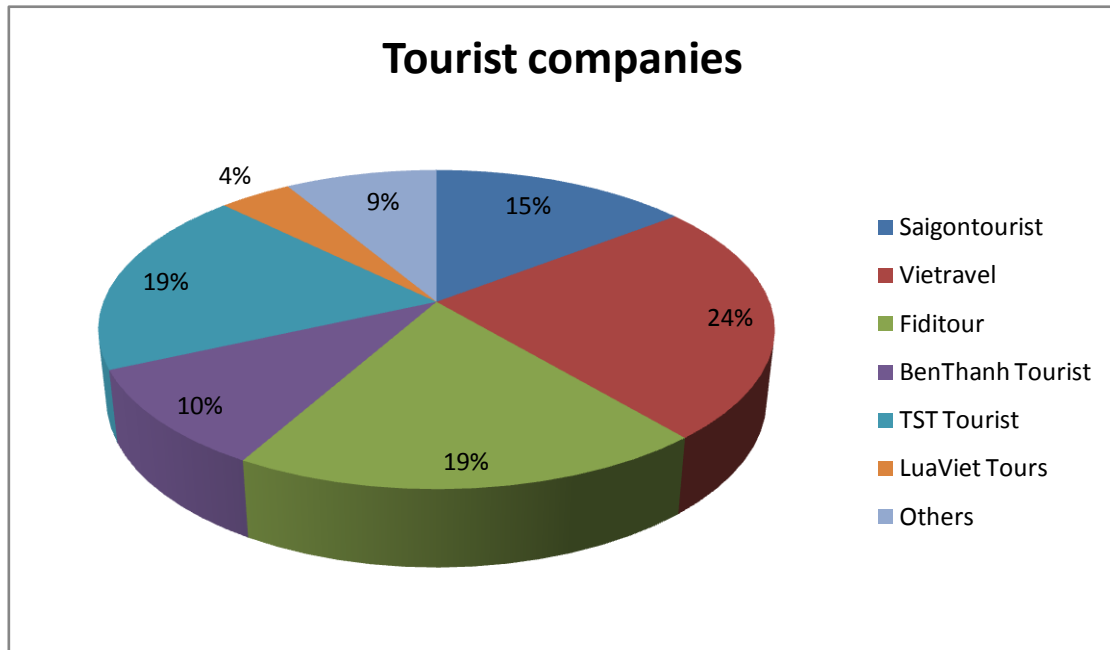


Figure 5: Percentage of customers by Tourist companies

This figure exemplifies the decisions of respondents towards tourist companies in HCMC. According to the results, the research exposed the four popular brands which are Vietravel, Saigontourist, Fiditour and TST Tourist. In reality, these four have been selected most by tourists because of their reputation, reliability and variety.

Firstly, Saigontourist is a famous company in tourism market because of their long history as well as high-class services. Hence, the price is also high and exceeds the standard income of normal citizens. This has led to the differentiation among society and customers choose it less than others because of its high price.

Likewise, Vietravel is also a valuable decision for a number of customers. This company accounted for 24 per cent because it is a common brand for tourists.

Moreover, Vietravel provides high quality of services with acceptable price. Thus, it could attract high quantity of loyal tourists.

On the other hand, TST Tourist and Fiditour are developing powerfully. These two tourist companies recently have provided good service quality with moderate fee. Besides, TST Tourist and Fiditour serve many types of tours which travel to many countries around the world and provide some promotions monthly to grateful thank their customers.

Lastly, there are still many other competitors that account for quite large market share such as Peace Tours, Lua Viet, L.Y.S, Dulich Viet and YTC and so on.

4.1.2.2 Frequency of customers in travelling in HCMC

Recently, the demand for travelling is increasing significantly. Besides working and studying, they prefer to go around and gain more new experience in other places. They are also willing to pay more time and money for their relaxing vacation. Thus, tourist companies have to pay attention to the frequency of travelling of customers in order to design suitable tours in different periods of time. In conclusion, this attention might be quite important at all.

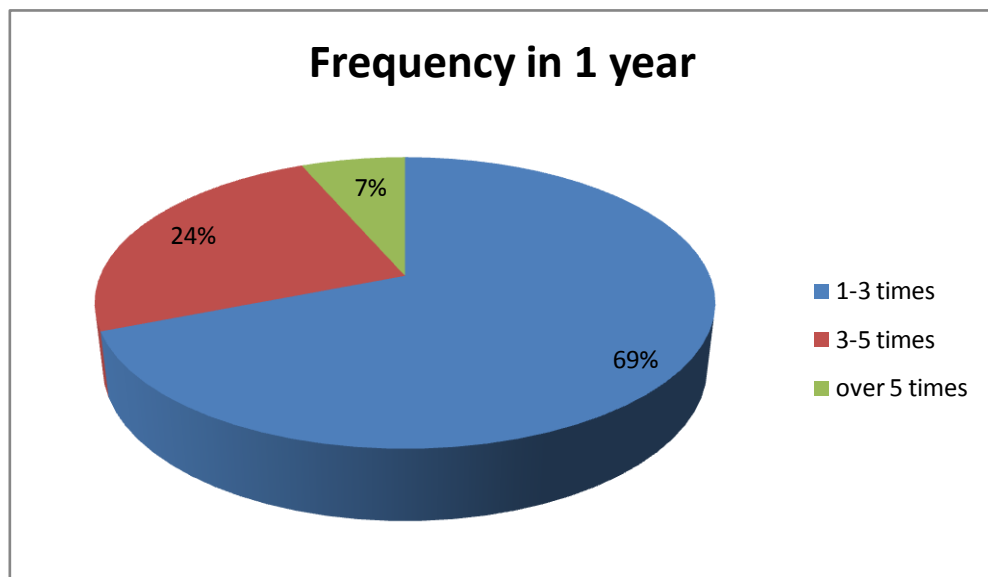


Figure 6: Frequency of travelling of customers per year

This graph shows the frequency of travelling in one year of tourists that were asked in HCMC. The results told that customers often leave 1-3 times per year which assumed 69 per cent. This figure can be explained by that people are so busy and they do not have much time to spend for travel. Hence, they just use their vacation during a year to go around. This can be seen by the figure of 3-5 times per year and over 5 times. Besides, many young customers prefer self-designing their own tour and enjoy it without using any tourist company.

4.1.3 Other factors affecting customers' decisions

Table 4: Other factors' Mean

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Price	200	1	5	3.670	0.72368
Variety of tours	200	2	5	4.120	0.76717
Package of promotion	200	1	5	2.835	0.95516
Knowledge of staffs	200	2	5	4.075	0.68683
Infrastructure	200	1	5	3.575	0.68316
Credibility of tourist company	200	1	5	4.045	0.84650
Valid N (listwise)	200				

This table shows the influence level of some factors that commonly affect tourists' decisions towards tourist companies in HCMC. In this case, the research focused on mean of each factor to clearly rank these determinants. Following the figure, there were six factors listed: price of tourist services, variety of tours, package of promotion, knowledge of staffs, infrastructure of tourist companies and their credibility. Table illustrated that "knowledge of staffs" had the largest mean (4.075). It means that this factor influenced decision of customers at most. Then, the fact that tourist companies provide a variety of tours is very important for the customers because they always demand more attractive destinations (mean = 4.120). Likewise, customers still appreciated credibility of the tourist companies that they choose (mean = 4.045). The two next factors are price of tours (mean = 3.670) and infrastructure

(mean = 3.575). These results showed that tourist providers should also pay attention to the price of their services and facilities as well. At least, package of promotion just influence slightly on customers' choice because this might reduce the quality of services. Hence tourists often highly appreciate the quality of services offered and quality of staffs as well as tour guides during the trip.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability test is to discover potential problems with the design as early as possible and, ultimately, provide confidence that the system meets its reliability requirements.

4.2.1 Customer Experience – Customer Knowledge

Table 5: Independent items of Customer Experience (EXP)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .797	N = 200
Customer Experience	EXP1	Knowledge about the tourist company	
	EXP2	Reliability of the tourist company	
	EXP3	Tours of the company are various	
	EXP4	Differentiation between this tourist company and others	

The reliability test of this variable showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .797. This value was high because it approximately reached 0.8, so it could be concluded that these items were internally consistent and supported for the same variable.

4.2.2 Functional Clues

Table 6: Independent items of Functional Clues (FUN)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .816	N = 200
Functional	FUN1	Website access	

Clues	FUN2	Hotline access
	FUN3	Service in-time
	FUN4	Other accesses (repairs, maintenances,...)

In this case, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was **.816**. This value was much higher because it exceeded 0.8 a lot. Thence, these four items were substantially supported for the functional clues variable.

4.2.3 Mechanic Clues

Table 7: Independent items of Mechanic Clues (MCN)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .817	N = 200
Mechanic Clues	MCN1	Hotels in destinations	
	MCN2	Restaurants in destinations	
	MCN3	Tourist buses	

Likewise, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the mechanic variable was **.817**. This value was also over .8. Thus, these items has strongly reinforced to the mechanic clues.

4.2.4 Humanic Clues

Table 8: Independent items of Humanic Clues (HMN)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .770	N = 200
Humanic Clues	HMN1	Safe transaction with staffs	
	HMN2	Positive attitude of employees	
	HMN3	Tourguide is knowledgable	
	HMN4	Tourguide quickly apologizes for customers	

In regard to humanic clues, Cronbach's alpha coefficient approached **.770**. In short, the four items has positive influenced this factor because its alpha was higher than .7.

4.2.5 Customer Perceived Value

Table 9: Independent items of Customer Perceived Value (CPV)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .770	N = 200
Customer Perceived Value	CPV1	Reasonable price	
	CPV2	Customers feel to be served	
	CPV3	Customers achieve useful experiences	

In regard to humanic clues, Cronbach's alpha coefficient approached **.770**. In short, the four items has positive influenced this factor because its alpha was higher than .7.

4.2.6 Customer Loyalty

Table 10: Independent items of Customer Loyalty (CL)

Variable	Code	Cronbach's alpha = .850	N = 200
Customer Loyalty	CL1	Positive thoughts to the tourist company	
	CL2	Considering this tourist company as the priority choice	
	CL3	Continuously choosing this tourist company	
	CL4	Introduce the tourist company to others	

In case of customer loyalty, Cronbach's alpha coefficient approached **.850**. This alpha number was extremely high and exceeded .8 so much. Consequently, these items exceedingly supported for the customer loyalty.

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is a data reduction technique used to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller set of underlying factors that summarize the essential information contained in the variables. Frequently, this technique is used as an exploratory technique when the researcher wishes to summarize the structure of a set of variables.

When the researcher's aim is to construct a reliable test, factor analysis is an additional means of determining whether items are tapping into the same construct.

4.3.1 Factor Analysis of Independent Variables

Specifically, factor analysis was enforced for the group of 4 independent variables including 22 items of Customer Experience (customer knowledge), Functional Clues, Mechanic Clues and Humanic Clues.

In details, method involves inspecting the correlation matrix for coefficients of .50 and above, and calculating the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

Table 11: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Independent Variables

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.800
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3370.582
	Df	378
	Sig.	0

According to KMO and Bartlett's Test the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is .800, to be significant, value has to be .6 or above) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value is significant at .000 level. Therefore, this factor analysis is considered appropriate.

4.3.2 Extracting items by Rotated Factor Matrix

Extracting items is processed by implementing Exploratory Factor Analysis. This analysis used the method of Varimax and kept the items that could satisfy simultaneously two criteria: factor loadings are larger than 0.5 and difference between maximum factor loading and minimum one is less than 0.3.

Table 12: Rotated Factor Matrix

Items	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
FUN2	0.819					
FUN3	0.717					
FUN4	0.604					
FUN1	0.551					
CL2		0.624				
CL3		0.618				
CL4		0.583				
CL1		0.518				
MCN3			0.742			
MCN1			0.702			
MCN2			0.694			
EXP3				0.77		
EXP2				0.689		
EXP1				0.656		
EXP4				0.538		
HMN2					0.717	
HMN1					0.711	
HMN3					0.615	
HMN4					0.536	
CPV1						0.731
CPV3						0.671
CPV2						0.573
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.						

Firstly, the results showed the items which were extracted. In Mechanic clues factor, there were two items be exposed, they are MCN4 and MCN5. MCN4 stands for “Convenient location of the tourist company” and MCN5 stands for “Interior and exterior of the tourist company”. We can explain these extractions that those mechanic clues refer to infrastructure of tourist companies. Hence, these items did not affect mostly customers’ decision. They often pay attention to infrastructure in destinations and means of transportation as well as restaurants, hotels and tourist buses that influence directly on their vacation.

Secondly, in humanic clues factor, the results have extracted three items HMN5, HMN6 and HMN7. HMN5 foreshortens “Politeness of employees”, HMN6 for “Staffs understand needs of customers” while HMN7 abbreviates for “Problem solving of tour guides”. In theory, these items are very important and affect positively decisions of tourists. However, through the research, respondents did not require highly these items in humanic clues factor. This can be explained by that customers did not appreciate these effect a lot and they have had other concerns.

Lastly, in Customer perceived value, we extracted “worthwhile of services that brings to customers”. This item seems to be general term so that respondents did not pay attention so much on these variables.

4.3.3 Variables’ names and characteristics

In this part, the study tells fully codes and explanation names of all variables in every factor. The table below illustrates this purpose:

Table 13: Variables’ names and characteristics after extraction

CODE	EXPLANATION
FACTOR 1: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (KNOWLEDGE) (EXP)	
EXP1	Customers’ knowledge about tourist companies.
EXP2	Reliability of tourist company that customers choose.
EXP3	Tours of tourist company are various.
EXP4	Differentiation between tourist company that customers choose and

	others.
FACTOR 2: HUMANIC CLUES (HMN)	
HMN1	Safe transaction with staffs of tourist company.
HMN2	Positive attitude of staffs of tourist company.
HMN3	Tour guide of tourist company is knowledgeable.
HMN4	Tour guide quickly apologizes for customers when troubles occur.
FACTOR 3: FUNCTIONAL CLUES (FUN)	
FUN1	Website access
FUN2	Hotline access
FUN3	Service in-time
FUN4	Other accesses (repairs, maintenance,...)
FACTOR 4: MECHANIC CLUES (MCN)	
MCN1	Hotels in destinations are comfortable.
MCN2	Restaurants in destinations serve thoughtful.
MCN3	Buses are comfortable.
FACTOR 5: CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE (CPV)	
CPV1	Services have reasonable price
CPV2	Customers feel to be served.
CPV3	Customers achieved useful experiences after travel.
FACTOR 6: CUSTOMER LOYALTY (CL)	
CL1	Customers have positive talk to tourist company.
CL2	Customers consider this company as their priority choice.
CL3	Customers continue to use this tourist company.
CL4	Customers will introduce this tourist company to others.

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regressions are an extension of bivariate correlation. Multiple regressions are a group of techniques that can be used to explore the relationship between a number of independent variables and one dependent variable.

4.4.1 Factors influence Customer Perceived Value

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics and Variables' Correlations of CPV

	CPV	FUN	EXP	MCN	HMN
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

CPV	1.000				
FUN	0.343**	1.000			
EXP	0.316**	0.300**	1.000		
MCN	0.355**	0.351**	0.381**	1.000	
HMN	0.397**	0.305**	0.314**	0.420**	1.000

Note: ** Significant level at $p < .1$

Table describes that there were significant relationships between the dependent variable, CPV, and the independent variables: FUN, EXP, MCN and HMN. In these significant relationships, two variables of MCN and HMN were dramatically correlated with CPV ($r=.355$, $p<.1$) and ($r=.397$, $p<.1$), respectively. This means that customers take care a lot for the performance and attitude of tourist providers to them. In addition, there were a slightly positive correlations between FUN and CPV ($r=.343$, $p<0.1$) and between EXP and CPV ($r=.316$, $p<0.1$). This means that better function of system and better knowledge about tourist companies could steer to a higher customer perceived value.

4.5 Path Analysis of Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

Table 15: Coefficients of Customer Perceived Value

<i>Model</i>		<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Collinearity Statistics</i>	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.949	1.035		3.816	0.000		
	FUN	0.132	0.050	0.181	2.644	0.009	0.824	1.214
	EXP	0.105	0.054	0.134	1.930	0.055	0.804	1.243
	MCN	0.143	0.075	0.139	1.906	0.058	0.722	1.384
	HMN	0.181	0.053	0.242	3.432	0.001	0.777	1.288

H₁: There is a positive relationship between customer experience and customer value.

According to the table, it showed that beta of EXP (customer knowledge) was 0.105 and significant level was 0.055. In this study, the significant level was acquired less than 0.1. It means that this scale is just 90 per cent of precise and

considered as one limitation of this research. Comparing to this criteria, the significant level in this case is acceptable. In other words, this hypothesis was admitted and customer experience – general knowledge of customers towards tourist companies dramatically influence customer perceived value.

H₂: There is a positive relationship between functional clues and customer value.

In this relationship, FUN had the beta of 0.132 and significant level at 0.009. This case showed that the number of significant was low. Hence H₂ was acceptable and told that functional clues significantly impact on customer perceived value.

H₃: There is a positive relationship between mechanic clues and customer value.

Table described that MCN had B at 0.143 and significant at 0.058. In this study, the significant level was acquired less than 0.1. It means that this scale is just 90 per cent of precise and considered as one limitation of this research. Comparing to this criteria, the significant level in this case is acceptable. In other words, this hypothesis was admitted and mechanic clues slightly influence customer perceived value.

H₄: There is a positive relationship between humanic clues and customer value.

In reality, this factor is considered as the most important issue that loyal customers pay attention to. So as in this research, HMN got B at 0.181 and significant level at 0.001, very small and approximately approached 0.000. It means that this hypothesis was strongly accepted and there was a firm correspondence between humanic clues and customer value.

Table 16: Coefficients of Customer Loyalty

<i>Model</i>		<i>Unstandardized Coefficients</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Collinearity Statistics</i>	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF

1	(Constant)	4.434	1.016		4.366	0.000		
	CPV	0.873	0.083	0.598	10.485	0.000	1	1

H₅: Customer perceived value has a positive relationship with customer loyalty.

This table pointed out the figure of relationship between customer perceived value and customer loyalty. In this case, the value of B was 0.873 and significant level reached 0.000, it led to the strongly significant between both factors. It means that this hypothesis was accepted.

4.6 Table Summary of Accepted Hypotheses

Table 17: Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses		Sig.	Status
H ₁	There is a positive relationship between customer experience and customer value.	0.055	Accepted
H ₂	There is a positive relationship between functional clues and customer value.	0.009	Accepted
H ₃	There is a positive relationship between mechanic clues and customer value.	0.058	Accepted
H ₄	There is a positive relationship between humanic clues and customer value.	0.001	Accepted
H ₅	Customer perceived value has a positive relationship with customer loyalty.	0.000	Accepted

This table summarized all hypotheses that were analyzed in the conceptual model. In this summary, there are five hypotheses in order to discuss the relationship between different variables.

Initially, the relationship between customer experience and customer value was tested. Following the result, this relationship has a slight significant with 0.055. Hence, this hypothesis was accepted with a precise percentage of 90 per cent. Likewise, hypothesis H₂ that analyzed the relationship among functional clues and customer value was also accepted when it achieved strong significant level (0.009).

Secondly, the research illustrated that H_3 was accepted with a moderate significant level (0.058). This hypothesis was the same as H_1 when it had a precise percentage of 90 per cent only. Lastly, H_4 and H_5 were both the strongest hypotheses since they overcame the significant level of 0.001 and 0.000 simultaneously. It means that there is a strong positive relationship between humanic clues and customer value; as well as positive correspondence between customer value and customer loyalty. Besides, all VIF figures from these tables above were less than 10. Hence, there was no any multicollinearity among variables.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter debates the findings of the study and answers questions of this research raised in Chapter I. In addition, it also puts forth recommendations for further study.

5.1 Findings Conclusion

This section condensed to hash out and answer questions of this research which were raised in Chapter I in order to interpret the relationship between the four independent variables (Customer Experience, Functional Clues, Mechanic Clues and Humanic Clues) and the dependent variables (including Customer Perceived Value and Customer Loyalty), and the encroachments of those factors on Customer Loyalty.

5.2 Limitations and Recommendations

5.2.1 Limitations

In assessing the findings of this thesis, it should be borne in mind that there are some pieces of limitations to the study.

Initially, knowledge of the researcher is mentioned. It relates to literature review of all variables. The definition of these factors maybe led to misunderstanding of respondents and made the results of this study not highly precise.

Lastly, target population is the prominent limitation. The delivery of questionnaire could not represent for all customers in HCMC because of the restriction of sample size.

5.2.2 *Recommendations for further study*

The importance of making the customer experience clues has been widely considered in businesses, partially throughout the tourism context towards customer loyalty. Thus, this part prescribes the path tendency for further research.

A number of proposed hypotheses in this dissertation were unable to be probed due to the omission of satisfaction because of the problem with multi-collinearity. As the literature strongly indicates that satisfaction is a major determinant of loyalty, this indicates the importance of incorporating satisfaction into the Customer Loyalty model. Hence, a further path for study would be incorporating the satisfaction to examine the original Customer Loyalty model presented in this dissertation in different circumstances.

5.2.3 *Recommendations for tourist companies in HCMC*

In this section, it concludes some recommendations of customers to tourist companies in HCMC. These suggestions were extracted from customers' responses in questionnaire. Besides, one loyal customer has answered in the in-depth interview. For qualitative method, this customer has used some tourist companies such as TST Tourist and Vietravel. Specifically, she has traveled 3-4 times per year and is a loyal tourist of TST Tourist Company. Hence, she has a lot of experience as well as knowledge about tourism and some of these are listed in the recommendations.

5.2.3.1 *Enhancing experience and knowledge for customers*

Customer experience is referred as the general knowledge of customers towards a tourist company. This section tells the tourist companies customers' knowledge that affects their decision.

The results revealed that the tourist companies should increase their quality of tours generally. It means that those tours should be versatile because it provides many kinds of choice for the potential tourists. Besides, tourist companies in HCMC should be unique and have a steady stand in the market. This can make the

customers differentiate these tourist companies to the others. Lastly, tourist companies have to develop advertisement system surrounding to promote their images and create different tours of contents. In short, specific impressions might affect tourists' decision positively.

5.2.3.2 Upgrading functional system of tourist companies

Functional segment is one of the foremost factors towards a tourist company. In this category, tourist organizers have to upgrade their accession of website as well as hotline. These roads are the easy and instant way for tourists to update and search more things about tourism. If these accessions are user-friendly and keep much useful information as archives corresponding to that company and to tourism services, the customers would be pleased to get access and choose this organizer for their vacation.

In addition, the tourist companies have to ensure their service provided in-time. This action would gain the increment of reliability.

5.2.3.3 Developing mechanic infrastructure

Mechanic clues are referred mostly to infrastructure of both tourist companies and their partners. This factor is also important because it reflects images of those companies in customers' eyes.

Following the responses in questionnaire and interview, loyal tourists thought that beside the quality of hotels, restaurants as well as buses, these customers released many ideas about the food of restaurants, the plane and security in destinations. They said that tourist companies and their partners are to ameliorate the quality of food, choose restaurants that have delicious menu and better services. Likewise, the quality of flights also affects dramatically the pleasant of customers. Of course this is an objective item.

5.2.3.4 Enhancing the performance of employees

Humanic stands for the performance of tourist providers. In this case, the study mentioned about the attitude and experiences of staffs and tour guides in tourist companies. They should have to understand intelligibly wants and needs of customers, serve them in the best class with much priorities. Besides, tour guides must have inscrutable knowledge about culture, characteristics of people and destinations. Moreover, they have to behave well to their customers.

Lastly, tourists always care about the security in destinations. They want the tourist companies, peculiarly tour guides to ensure their safety and instruct them how to behave and to cope with sudden risks.

5.2.3.5 Exalting value for customers

This part comprised all factors above. This value plays a crucial role in determining loyalty level of customers. This can be explained that when they achieve high perceived value, they will be pleased to go along with this service.

Hence, tourist companies should set up reasonable price tours to attract more tourists. Besides, these providers need to tell some useful tips for entertainment and tourism. Partially, they were suggested to provide DVD that recorded the whole trip.

5.2.3.6 Other factors affecting customers' decisions

This section illustrated that “knowledge of staffs” had the largest mean (4.075). It means that this factor influenced decision of customers at most. Then, the fact that tourist companies provide a variety of tours is very important for the customers because they always demand more attractive destinations (mean = 4.120). Likewise, customers still appreciated credibility of the tourist companies that they choose (mean = 4.045). The two next factors are price of tours (mean = 3.670) and infrastructure (mean = 3.575). These results showed that tourist providers should also pay attention to the price of their services and facilities as well. At least, package of promotion just influence slightly on customers' choice because this might reduce the

quality of services. Hence tourists often highly appreciate the quality of services offered and quality of staffs as well as tour guides during the trip.

In conclusion, tourist providers have to concentrate on these six factors as well as their rankings in order to provide priority criteria for the customers.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

(VIETNAMESE VERSION)

BẢNG KHẢO SÁT CÂU HỎI VỀ

KINH NGHIỆM VÀ LÒNG TRUNG THÀNH CỦA KHÁCH HÀNG ĐỐI VỚI CÁC CÔNG TY DU LỊCH TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

Chào Anh/ Chị, em là sinh viên năm cuối tại Trường Đại học Quốc Tế - Đại học Quốc Gia Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.

Hiện nay, sự phát triển mạnh mẽ của ngành dịch vụ ở Việt Nam, đặc biệt trong ngành du lịch đã đóng góp một tỷ trọng khá lớn cho sự phát triển của nền kinh tế Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến kinh nghiệm và lòng trung thành của khách hàng đối với các công ty du lịch là cơ sở quan trọng để các nhà quản lý có thể chọn lựa những chiến lược phù hợp trong đầu tư và quản lý để nâng cao lòng trung thành của khách hàng.

Dựa vào trải nghiệm của Anh/ Chị khi lựa chọn các công ty du lịch tại TPHCM, hãy chọn một công ty mà Anh/ Chị lựa chọn nhiều nhất và vui lòng chia sẻ những ý kiến đánh giá của chính Anh/ Chị về công ty ấy, dựa trên những câu hỏi được đề cập trong bảng khảo sát này (dưới đây sẽ gọi công ty mà Anh/ Chị đã chọn là công ty X)

Kính mong Anh/ Chị dành chút thời gian trả lời tất cả các câu hỏi của bảng khảo sát này để việc nghiên cứu đạt được mức chính xác cao.

Xin chân thành cảm ơn !

CÂU HỎI CHỌN LỌC

1. Anh/ Chị đã bao giờ sử dụng dịch vụ du lịch của một công ty du lịch nào tại TPHCM chưa?

- ☐ Có (xin tiếp tục câu hỏi 2).
- ☐ Không (dừng khảo sát) . Xin cảm ơn Anh/ Chị !

2. Tên Công ty du lịch Anh/ Chị lựa chọn thường xuyên nhất?

- ☐ Saigontourist
- ☐ Vietravel
- ☐ Fiditour
- ☐ BenThanh Tourist
- ☐ TST tourist
- ☐ LuaViet Tours
- ☐ Khác:.....

3. Anh/ Chị tự chọn công ty hay người khác chọn thay?

- ☐ Tự chọn (xin tiếp tục câu 4)
- ☐ Người khác chọn thay (dừng khảo sát) . Xin cảm ơn Anh/ Chị !

4. Anh chị đã lựa chọn công ty du lịch đó bao nhiêu lần?

- ☐ Từ 1 đến 2 lần (dừng khảo sát). Xin cảm ơn Anh/ Chị !
- ☐ Từ 3 đến 5 lần
- ☐ Trên 5 lần

PHẦN 1: YẾU TỐ ĐÁNH GIÁ

Xin vui lòng đánh dấu các con số từ 1 đến 5 chỉ ra mức độ liên quan đến dịch vụ du lịch mà Anh/ Chị đã chọn lựa (Công ty X là công ty mà Anh/ Chị đã chọn dùng dịch vụ thường xuyên nhất):

Nhân tố	Câu hỏi liên quan	Đánh giá (1= Hoàn toàn không đồng ý, 2= không đồng ý, 3= Bình thường, 4=Đồng ý, 5= Hoàn toàn đồng ý)
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HIỂU BIẾT VỀ CÔNG TY X	1. Tôi hiểu biết nhiều về công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Công ty X có uy tín trong thị trường du lịch tại TPHCM.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Các tour du lịch tại công ty X rất đa dạng.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Đặc điểm dịch vụ du lịch của công ty X dễ dàng được phân biệt với các công ty khác.	1	2	3	4	5
VỀ NHÂN VIÊN CỦA CÔNG TY X	1. Nhân viên tại công ty X rất ân cần và lịch sự	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Nhân viên tại công ty X hiểu rõ về nhu cầu của tôi.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Tôi cảm thấy an tâm khi giao dịch với nhân viên tại công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Nhân viên tại công ty X có thái độ tích cực trong công việc.	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Hướng dẫn viên của công ty X có kiến thức đầy đủ về du lịch và các địa danh du lịch.	1	2	3	4	5
	6. Hướng dẫn viên của công ty X nhanh chóng xin lỗi tôi khi gặp sự cố.	1	2	3	4	5
	7. Hướng dẫn viên của công ty X xử lý tốt các tình huống xảy ra trong suốt chuyến du lịch.	1	2	3	4	5
NANG HỆ THỐNG G CỬA	1. Hệ thống website của công ty X dễ dàng truy cập và đầy đủ các thông tin cần thiết.	1	2	3	4	5

	2. Điện thoại, hotline của công ty X dễ dàng liên hệ khi cần thiết.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Công ty X cung cấp dịch vụ đúng thời gian (không bị trì hoãn).	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Tôi không gặp trở ngại trong khi liên hệ tại công ty X (tiếng ồn, sửa chữa trong công ty, nhân viên bạn nghe điện thoại,...)	1	2	3	4	5
VỀ CƠ SỞ VẬT CHẤT CỦA CÔNG TY X và BÊN PHÍA ĐỐI TÁC CỦA CÔNG TY X	1. Văn phòng công ty X có vị trí thuận lợi.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Nội thất và ngoại thất của công ty X bắt mắt.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Khách sạn tại các điểm du lịch do công ty X liên kết rất tiện nghi.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Nhà hàng tại các điểm du lịch do công ty X liên kết phục vụ chu đáo.	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Xe du lịch của công ty X và phía đối tác tiện nghi và hiện đại.	1	2	3	4	5
Các yếu tố về cơ sở vật chất khác theo Anh/ Chị là quan trọng? (không bắt buộc):.....						
VỀ GIÁ TRỊ MANG LẠI CHO KHÁCH HÀNG	1. Các dịch vụ du lịch tại công ty X xứng đáng với số tiền tôi đã bỏ ra.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Những dịch vụ du lịch tại công ty X có giá cả hợp lý.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Tôi cảm thấy được phục vụ tận tình trong suốt chuyến du lịch với công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5

	4. Tôi có thêm những trải nghiệm sâu sắc (về văn hóa, đặc điểm, lịch sử và nét đặc trưng tại các điểm du lịch) sau khi tham gia chuyến du lịch của công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
Các giá trị khác mà công ty X đã mang lại cho Anh/ Chị? (không bắt buộc):.....						
LÒNG TRUNG THÀNH	1. Tôi sẽ nói những điều tích cực về công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Tôi chọn công ty X như lựa chọn ưu tiên của mình tại TPHCM.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Tôi sẽ tiếp tục sử dụng dịch vụ du lịch tại công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Tôi sẽ giới thiệu cho những người khác (bạn bè, gia đình,...) về dịch vụ du lịch của công ty X.	1	2	3	4	5
Anh/ Chị sẵn sàng làm gì khác để thể hiện sự trung thành của mình đối với công ty X? (không bắt buộc):.....						

Yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến quyết định lựa chọn công ty du lịch của Anh/ Chị?

Chọn mức độ ảnh hưởng của mỗi yếu tố đối với quyết định của Anh/ Chị. Mức độ: 1= Ít ảnh hưởng nhất, 5= Ảnh hưởng nhiều nhất.

YẾU TỐ	1	2	3	4	5
Giá cả					
Các tour đa dạng và điểm đến lôi cuốn					
Các hình thức khuyến mãi					
Nhân viên và hướng dẫn viên nhiệt tình và thái độ khách hàng					
Cơ sở vật chất					
Uy tín của công ty trên thị trường du lịch					

Các yếu tố khác theo Anh/ Chị là ảnh hưởng lớn đến quyết định lựa chọn công ty du lịch?.....

PHẦN 2: THÔNG TIN CÁ NHÂN

Để phục vụ cho mục đích phân loại, dưới đây là một số thông tin chung, mong Anh/ Chị chọn những thông tin thích hợp.

1. Độ tuổi của Anh/ Chị là:

- ☐ 18 đến 24 tuổi
- ☐ 25 đến 34 tuổi
- ☐ 35 đến 44 tuổi
- ☐ 45 đến 54 tuổi
- ☐ Từ 55 tuổi trở lên

2. Công việc của Anh/ Chị là:

- ☐ Quản lý
- ☐ CNV/ Nhân viên VP
- ☐ Tự kinh doanh
- ☐ Sinh viên (đang đi học)
- ☐ Làm việc bán thời gian
- ☐ Hiện không làm việc (đang đi tìm việc)
- ☐ Hiện không làm việc (không có ý định tìm việc)
- ☐ Đã nghỉ hưu

3. Giới tính của Anh/ Chị:

- ☐ Nam
- ☐ Nữ

4. Thu nhập hàng tháng của Anh/ Chị trong định mức:

- ☐ Dưới 5 triệu VNĐ
- ☐ Từ 5 đến 10 triệu VNĐ
- ☐ Từ 10 đến 15 triệu VNĐ
- ☐ Từ 15 đến 20 triệu VNĐ
- ☐ Trên 20 triệu VNĐ

5. Số lần trung bình đi du lịch trong 1 năm của Anh/ Chị:

- ☐ Từ 1 đến 3 lần
- ☐ Từ 3 đến 5 lần
- ☐ Trên 5 lần

6. Xin hãy cho biết ý kiến đóng góp của Anh/ Chị giúp công ty X cải thiện để làm Anh/ Chị hài lòng hơn? (không bắt buộc)

.....

Chân thành cảm ơn sự hợp tác của Anh/ Chị !

APPENDIX B

(ENGLISH VERSION)

QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY TOWARDS TOURIST COMPANIES IN HCMC

Dear interviewee,

I am a senior at International University – Vietnam National University HCMC.

Currently, the strong development of the service sector in Vietnam, especially in the tourism sector has contributed a large proportion to the economic development of Vietnam. Looking at the factors that influence the customer experience and customer loyalty towards tourist companies is an important basis for the managers in order to choose the appropriate strategy for investment and management to improve customer loyalty.

Based on the experience of your choice when travelling, please choose a company that you choose frequently and share your own comments on that company, based on the questions addressed in this survey (below called the company that you has selected be the company X)

I wish you spending some time to answer all of the survey questions for this study to achieve high accuracy.

Thank you so much!

FILTER QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever used any tourist service in HCMC?

- ☐ Already (please continue to next question).
- ☐ Never (please stop the survey): Thank you very much.

2. Name of tourist company that you have chosen frequently:

- ☐ Saigontourist
☐ Vietravel
☐ Fiditour
☐ BenThanh Tourist
☐ TST tourist
☐ LuaViet Tours
☐ Other:.....

3. Was it your own decision or from another person?

- ☐ I myself decided. (please continue to question 4)
☐ Another person decided for me. (please stop the survey): Thank you very much.

4. How often do you choose this tourist company?

- ☐ From 1 to 2 times. (please stop the survey): Thank you very much.
☐ From 3 to 5 times
☐ More than 5 times

PART 1: CRITERIA

Please mark the numbers 1 to 5 to indicate the level of agreement about services related to tourism that you chose (Company X is the company you selected the most frequently)

Factors	Related items	Criteria (1= Totally disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Totally agree)				
		1	2	3	4	5
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	1. I have good knowledge about company X.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Company X is more reliable in the market.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Tours of company X are various.	1	2	3	4	5

	4. Clear differentiation between X and others.	1	2	3	4	5
HUMANICE CLUES	1. Employees of company X are officious and polite.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Employees of company X understand my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. I feel safe with all transactions at company X.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Employees of company X have positive attitude.	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Tour guides of company X are knowledgeable about destinations and tourism.	1	2	3	4	5
	6. Tour guides quickly apologize for me when troubles occurred.	1	2	3	4	5
	7. Tour guides have good problem solving skills.	1	2	3	4	5
FUNCTIONAL CLUES	1. Website is easily accessed with fully information.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Hotline is easily accessed when necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Company X offers services on time (not delayed).	1	2	3	4	5
	4. I do not have trouble with other repairs and maintenances.	1	2	3	4	5

MECHANIC CLUES	1. Company X's location is convenient.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Interior and exterior of company X are attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Hotels at destinations are comfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. Restaurants at destinations serve the best.	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Travel buses are comfortable and modern.	1	2	3	4	5
Other infrastructure items you consider as important? (not required):.....						
CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE	1. Services of company X worth my earnings.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Services of company X have reasonable price.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. I felt to be served well during the trip.	1	2	3	4	5
	4. I got useful experiences (cultures, features, people at destinations) after travel.	1	2	3	4	5
Other value that company X has brought to you? :.....						
CUSTOMER LOYALTY	1. I will comment positively about company X.	1	2	3	4	5
	2. I consider company X as my priority option.	1	2	3	4	5
	3. I will cooperate with company X again.	1	2	3	4	5

	4. I will introduce company X to others (friends, relatives,...)	1	2	3	4	5
Would you commit to do anything else for your loyalty to company X? (not required):.....						

Other factors affecting to the customers' decisions:

Consider the level of influence on your decision. Level: 1= Least influence, 5= Most influence.

FACTORS	1	2	3	4	5
Price					
The variety of tours and destinations					
Promotion package					
Employees and tour guides are enthusiastic and understand customers					
Facilities of company and partners					
Reliability and reputation of tourist company in the market					

Other factors you consider as most important influence on your decision:

.....

PART 2: PERSONAL INFORMATION

To cater for classification purposes, here is some general information. Please choose the appropriate information for your own.

1. Your age is:

- ☐ 18 to 24 years old
- ☐ 25 to 34 years old
- ☐ 35 to 44 years old
- ☐ 45 to 54 years old
- ☐ Over 55 years old

2. Your occupation is:

- ☐ Managerial positions
- ☐ Employees
- ☐ Self-business
- ☐ Student (still studying)
- ☐ Part-time employees
- ☐ Unemployed (searching jobs)
- ☐ Unemployed (not searching jobs)
- ☐ Retired

3. Your gender is:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

4. Your income per month:

- ☐ Less than 5 million Dong
- ☐ 5 to 10 million Dong
- ☐ 10 to 15 million Dong
- ☐ 15 to 20 million Dong
- ☐ Over 20 million Dong

5. Average number of travel per year:

- ☐ From 1 to 3 times
- ☐ From 3 to 5 times
- ☐ Over 5 times

6. Please write down your other feedback to company X to satisfy your requirements:

.....

Thank you for your cooperation!

APPENDIX C

BẢNG PHỎNG VẤN VỀ

KINH NGHIỆM VÀ LÒNG TRUNG THÀNH CỦA KHÁCH HÀNG ĐỐI VỚI CÁC CÔNG TY DU LỊCH TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

Chào Anh/ Chị. Em là Nghiêm Xuân Đạt, sinh viên năm 4 trường Đại học Quốc Tế Tp Hồ Chí Minh. Hiện tại em đang hoàn thành khóa luận tốt nghiệp với chủ đề : *“Nghiên cứu các nhân tố ảnh hưởng đến kinh nghiệm và lòng trung thành của khách hàng đối với các công ty du lịch tại TPHCM”*.

Cám ơn Anh/ Chị đã đồng ý tham gia phỏng vấn. Trong buổi phỏng vấn hôm nay, em muốn hỏi thăm về nhận thức, trải nghiệm và sự trung thành của anh chị đối với công ty du lịch Anh/ Chị đã lựa chọn. Mọi câu trả lời sẽ đóng góp rất lớn cho kết quả bài khóa luận của em.

Nếu thuận tiện, Anh/ Chị cho phép em thu âm cuộc nói chuyện ngày hôm nay để có thể ghi nhận mọi chi tiết từ câu trả lời. Thời gian phỏng vấn sẽ kéo dài khoảng 15 phút. Em cam đoan mọi thông tin từ câu trả lời của Anh/ Chị sẽ được giữ bí mật và chỉ sử dụng cho bài khóa luận của em. Xin chân thành cảm ơn.

Phỏng vấn viên: Sinh viên Nghiêm Xuân Đạt

Đáp viên:

Họ tên:

Tuổi:

Nghề nghiệp:

Ngày phỏng vấn:

NỘI DUNG PHỎNG VẤN:

1. Anh/ Chị đã bao giờ sử dụng dịch vụ du lịch của một công ty du lịch nào tại TPHCM chưa? Khi nào? Anh/ Chị đã lựa chọn công ty du lịch nào?
.....
.....
2. Anh/ Chị đã biết đến công ty du lịch đó bằng cách nào và lâu chưa? Anh/ Chị đã lựa chọn công ty đó bao nhiêu lần?
.....
.....
3. Anh/ Chị có hiểu biết gì về công ty này (về đặc điểm, nhân viên, hướng dẫn viên công ty, các tour do công ty cung cấp)?
.....
.....
4. Công ty Anh/ Chị lựa chọn với các công ty du lịch khác tại TPHCM có điểm khác biệt hay tương đồng gì?
.....
.....
5. Những giá trị và trải nghiệm Anh/ Chị nhận được sau khi sử dụng các dịch vụ du lịch tại công ty này?
.....
.....
6. Những yếu tố nào ảnh hưởng đến quyết định lựa chọn công ty du lịch của Anh/ Chị?
.....
.....
7. Anh/chị có chọn lựa công ty du lịch này trong tương lai? Anh/chị có giới thiệu người khác về các dịch vụ của công ty du lịch này không? Anh/ Chị sẽ nói gì về công ty du lịch này?

-
-
8. Trong tương lai, Anh/ Chị hy vọng công ty du lịch này sẽ có những cải thiện gì về mọi phương diện?

.....

.....

Các thông tin trao đổi khác:

.....

.....

.....

Nội dung phỏng vấn đến đây là kết thúc. Xin chân thành cảm ơn sự nhiệt tình của Anh/ Chị trong suốt quá trình phỏng vấn.

Chúc Anh/ Chị thành công trong cuộc sống.

Thân chào!

APPENDIX D

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW ABOUT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY TOWARDS TOURIST COMPANIES IN HCMC.

Dear interviewee, I am a senior at International University, Vietnam National University HCMC. Currently I am completing my dissertation titled "Customer experience and customer loyalty towards tourist companies in HCMC."

Thanks for your presence. Today, I would like to ask about your perspective, experience and loyalty to the company you have selected. All answers will contribute greatly to the results of the thesis at all.

Please allow me to record the conversation today in order to record every detail of the answer. This interview will last about 15 minutes. I assure all information from your answer will be kept confidential and only used to post my thesis.

Thank you very much.

Interviewer: Nghiem Xuan Dat

Interviewee:

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Date of interview:

CONTENTS OF INTERVIEW:

1. Have you ever use any tourist service of tourist companies in HCMC? When?
Which company did you choose?

.....
.....

2. How did you know that company and how long? How often have you chosen
that tourist company?

.....
.....

3. What do you experience about that company (features, employees, tour
guides, offered tours, etc.)?

.....
.....

4. How does your tourist company differentiate with others?

.....
.....

5. Which value and experiences did you receive after using the services that
company offered?

.....
.....

6. What were main factors that affect your consideration at most?

.....
.....

7. Will you decide to use that company in near future? Are you ready to
introduce that company to others? What would you comment about that
company?

.....
.....

8. In the future, what improvements that you want that tourist company pays attention to?

.....
.....

Other information:

.....
.....
.....

The interview comes to the end. Thank you for your enthusiasm during this conversation.

Wishing you a thrilling day!

Sincerely,

APPENDIX E

(VIETNAMESE VERSION)

BẢNG TRẢ LỜI PHÒNG VẤN VỀ

KINH NGHIỆM VÀ LÒNG TRUNG THÀNH CỦA KHÁCH HÀNG ĐỐI VỚI CÁC CÔNG TY DU LỊCH TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

Phòng vấn viên: Sinh viên Nghiêm Xuân Đạt

Đáp viên:

Họ tên: Vũ Ngọc Phương Giang

Tuổi: 28

Nghề nghiệp: Nhân viên văn phòng

Ngày phỏng vấn: 02/05/2013

NỘI DUNG PHÒNG VẤN:

1. Anh/ Chị đã bao giờ sử dụng dịch vụ du lịch của một công ty du lịch nào tại TPHCM chưa? Khi nào? Anh/ Chị đã lựa chọn công ty du lịch nào?
Rồi. Tôi đã sử dụng hơn 4 năm nay. Tôi đã lựa chọn công ty TST Tourist trên đường Điện Biên Phủ.
2. Anh/ Chị đã biết đến công ty du lịch đó bằng cách nào và lâu chưa? Anh/ Chị đã lựa chọn công ty đó bao nhiêu lần?
Tôi biết đến công ty TST Tourist qua các phương tiện truyền thông và lời giới thiệu của người quen. Hơn 4 năm. Tôi đã lựa chọn khá nhiều lần vì 1 năm tôi đi du lịch khoảng 3 đến 4 lần. Tôi đã đi tour ở Châu Âu như Pháp, Ý, Tây Ban Nha và đã đi các bang ở Mỹ.
3. Anh/ Chị có hiểu biết gì về công ty này (về đặc điểm, nhân viên, hướng dẫn viên công ty, các tour do công ty cung cấp?

Trước khi lựa chọn, tôi đã phải tìm hiểu các công ty du lịch trước. Công ty này có giá cả hợp lý nên phù hợp với trung lưu, mọi người ai cũng có thể lựa chọn. Loại hình du lịch phong phú đa dạng.

4. Công ty Anh/ Chị lựa chọn với các công ty du lịch khác tại TPHCM có điểm khác biệt hay tương đồng gì?

Theo tôi trải nghiệm được, hướng dẫn viên TST nhiệt tình, xử lý tình huống tốt, mình có thể tự thiết kế theo ý muốn của mình. Dịch vụ và liên kết nước ngoài của công ty cũng rất tốt.

5. Những giá trị và trải nghiệm Anh/ Chị nhận được sau khi sử dụng các dịch vụ du lịch tại công ty này?

Tôi nghĩ mỗi nước tôi biết đến văn hóa mỗi nước, học hỏi nhiều kiến thức và trải nghiệm thú vị.

6. Những yếu tố nào ảnh hưởng đến quyết định lựa chọn công ty du lịch của Anh/ Chị?

Yếu tố thì có nhiều yếu tố, do 1 số chương trình khuyến mãi hấp dẫn, giá cả hợp lý và tour phong phú.

7. Anh/chị có chọn lựa công ty du lịch này trong tương lai? Anh/chị có giới thiệu người khác về các dịch vụ của công ty du lịch này không? Anh/ Chị sẽ nói gì về công ty du lịch này?

Tôi vẫn tiếp tục sử dụng công ty này. Ngoài ra tôi sẽ giới thiệu TST cho bạn bè tôi. Tôi sẽ nói TST là công ty rất tốt, tour phong phú với các nước khác nhau. Ngoài ra TST tourist cũng đã mở thêm các tour mới đến các nước mới lạ hơn.

8. Trong tương lai, Anh/ Chị hy vọng công ty du lịch này sẽ có những cải thiện gì về mọi phương diện?

Công ty nên có nhiều chương trình khuyến mãi thu hút khách hàng hơn. Mở rộng ra 1 số địa điểm lạ mà ít người biết tới.

APPENDIX F

(ENGLISH VERSION)

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW ANSWER

Interviewer: Nghiem Xuan Dat

Interviewee:

Name: Vu Ngoc Phuong Giang

Age: 28

Occupation: Staff

Date of interview: May 2nd 2013

CONTENTS OF INTERVIEW:

1. Have you ever use any tourist service of tourist companies in HCMC? When?
Which company did you choose?
Already. I have travelled more than 4 years.. I have decided to travel with TST Tourist on Dien Bien Phu street.
2. How did you know that company and how long? How often have you chosen that tourist company?
I know this company through advertisements and introduction from acquaintances. During 4 years, I have traveled with TST a lot because I frequently travel, maybe 3 to 4 times per year. I have come to Europe such as France, Italia, Spain and some states in USA.
3. What do you experience about that company (features, employees, tour guides, offered tours, etc.)?
Before decision, I did search deeply about tourist companies in HCMC. This company has reasonable price so it could be acceptable for middle

class and many people can choose TST to buy services. Besides, TST offers many kinds of tours.

4. How does your tourist company differentiate with others?

As I experienced, tour guides of TST are very enthusiastic, good at problem solving. Moreover, we can design for our own tour. Besides, services and relationship with partners are quite good at all.

5. Which value and experiences did you receive after using the services that company offered?

I think that each destination can brings to me its culture, knowledge and interesting experience.

6. What were main factors that affect your consideration at most?

There are many key factors like that; it could be attractive promotion package, reasonable price tours and the variety of tours.

7. Will you decide to use that company in near future? Are you ready to introduce that company to others? What would you comment about that company?

I will still go along with TST. Furthermore, I will introduce TST to my friends. I would say that it is a qualified tourist company with the variety of tours to many countries. Besides, TST tourist has built up many rare destinations.

8. In the future, what improvements that you want that tourist company pays attention to?

The company should open more attractive promotion package, and enrich the quality of services with unique and interesting places.