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 INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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NHÀ XUẤT BẢN ĐẠI HỌC THÁI NGUYÊN

Demand for responsible tourism in thua thien hue, vietnam

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Abstract: In the context of current trends in global tourism development, Vietnam's tourism industry is well aware that sustainable development is an inevitable trend. In addition, it shares a common vision of sustainable tourism. Responsible tourism is concerned with the impacts of tourism on people, ecology and communities, and seeks to ameliorate these impacts by providing tourism services that benefit local populations, improving working conditions, opening access to the tourism industry, promoting cultural heritage and protecting the environment. This article studies and assesses the need for tourists to engage in responsible tourism. The data was collected using convenience samples and coded and analyzed using 200 samples. The methods used in the study are descriptive statistics, reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and ANOVA analysis. The research results have provided information about trip information, tourist responsibility practices, the tourism activities selected for the responsible tourism program, and the importance level in choosing the criteria. Accordingly, the authors propose solutions for developing responsible tourism programs for tourists.

Keywords: responsible tourism, demand, responsible tourism practices.

1. Introduction

The international community has become aware of the negative effects of mass tourism since the 1980s. There are three main types of impacts (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental). Therefore, sustainable tourism has been introduced as an alternative to mass tourism. In order to develop sustainable tourism, it is critical to preserve the traditions and the sociocultural identity of the local community [2]. As part of sustainable tourism development, local communities must preserve their traditions and socio-cultural identity [2] for the sake of protecting the environment, generating revenue and labor for host destinations [21],[23], and involving the local community in tourism industry decision-making processes [21]. In addition, the concept of responsible tourism emerged at the same time as sustainable tourism. In addition to promoting cultural and biological diversity, responsible tourism promotes the conservation of environmental and natural resources, at home and while traveling (Responsible Travel Handbook).

A responsible tourism approach entails considering the consequences of all parties involved in tourism, including the businesses involved in tourism, the local communities, the destination management organizations (DMO) and the tourists themselves [17],[20]. Thus, responsible tourism can be viewed from a supply-side or a demand-side perspective [12],[26]. Over the past decades, several studies have examined responsible tourism from a demand-side and supply-side perspective, analyzing the concept, its underlying dimensions, and factors that influence it. In spite of this, only limited research has examined whether tourists are willing to adopt more sustainable behaviors [22] and which barriers prevent them from making responsible choices [4],[7],[16]. All that said, further research is still needed to better understand what motivates a tourist to be ethical, how responsibility is translated into specific practices, and how these practices are measured [29].

Several studies indicate that consumers are becoming more interested in responsible tourism. Based on a study conducted by the UNWTO in 2012, sustainable concerns have become increasingly influential on tourists' choices [31], whereas, according to Bricker [5], "sustainable tourism is becoming more widely accepted – so much so that within a decade the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) believes it will turn from 'alternate' to 'mainstream' tourism".

Numerous surveys and statistics indicate a shift towards responsible tourism among consumers and organizations in the recent past. Based on a survey conducted by Blue and Green Tomorrow (2014), 43% of respondents to a survey on sustainable tourism were extremely concerned about the impact of their holiday on society and the environment, whereas 10% expressed partial concerns about the impact of their holiday on the environment and society of the tourism destination [3]. Furthermore, Bricker conducted a wire survey in 2012 and found 66% of consumers around the world were more likely to buy products and services from companies with sustainable practices that are concerned with donating to the community [5].

Except for the research mentioned above, responsible tourism in Vietnam is little studied, and few researchers have taken a comprehensive look at this topic. Moreover, there are only a few academic papers that examine responsible tourism from the perspective of tourists [25]. The purpose of this study is to investigate responsible tourism practices and the demand for responsible tourism tours through a quantitative approach. The study was based on tourist self-reports about economic, socio-cultural, and environmental responsibility during their current trip. Results of research contribute to the scientific debate about responsible tourism practices adopted by tourists and their demand. Finally, we encourage governments and tour operators to promote responsible tourism.

2. Study Methodology

An empirical study was conducted among tourists. It is critical to consider the different debates regarding measurement methods when choosing data collection, samples, and different measurement scales [1][13].

2.1. Data collection

In terms of practicality, finances, and deadlines, our sampling method is convenient. Participants in the study were selected only from those who volunteered to participate and answer the questionnaire. This study aims to assess the tourist's responsibility in terms of economic responsibility, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility. A pilot study with 20 tourists was conducted before the main data collection. Each respondent had to fill out the questionnaire. After removing invalid responses caused by duplication, empty fields, incomplete evaluations, and overly ambitious evaluations, the final data set was determined. This resulted in 200 valid responses out of 220. A descriptive analysis and an ANOVA were carried out using SPSS software.

2.2. The measurement of the variables

To make them fit the context of our study, minor modifications were made. In addition to a semi-directive interview with 20 tourists, a review and recommendation survey was conducted with tourism-specialized university teachers. As a result of the interviews and the implementation of the recommendations, the wording of the items has been clarified, and the existing measuring scale has been enhanced. As soon as we had completed the questionnaire, we conducted a pre-test through debriefing, which allowed us to exchange points of view, interpretations, and information. Consequently, certain questions have been reformulated. The constructs were measured on a Likert scale with five echelons from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree".

According to the previous research, tourists refer to local customs and traditions with respect, seek cultural information, learn basic phrases in the local language,

communicate with locals, and avoid unethical behavior as part of their social responsibility [11],[14],[27]. When tourists eat at local restaurants, stay in local hotels, and use local tour operators' services, they express their economic responsibility to support the local economy [8],[14]. Environmental responsibility involves tourists reducing greenhouse gas emissions by walking or cycling; throwing trash in trash containers; eliminating disposable packaging; consuming electricity and water efficiently. Tourists should follow the rules of protected areas and consider entering an area with unique natural beauty before entering [8],[14],[16],[19],[27].

3. Research Results

3.1. Sample data

The survey results indicate that women participated in the survey in greater numbers (55.0%) than men (45.0%). A majority of respondents (66.5%) were between the ages of 18-30. Other groups included persons under the age of 18 (8.5%) and people over the age of 50 (4.5%). The survey was conducted between April and June 2022, when the COVID-19 pandemic had just been controlled and tourism was reopened. The tourists' ages between 18-30 and 31-50, and over 50, differed significantly because older tourists are more cautious in making a trip at this time, as well as participating in our survey. Tourists with bachelor's degrees represent 59.0%, high school graduates account for 27.5% and master's degrees account for 10.5%.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

	Criteria	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Female	110	55.0
	Male	90	45.0
Age (years)	Under 18	17	8.5
	18 - 30	133	66.5
	31- 50	41	20.5
	Over 50	9	4.5
Education level	First degree/undergraduate	55	27.5
	Diploma/bachelor	118	59.0
	Master's/Postgraduate	21	10.5
	Others	6	3.0
Occupation	Business	64	32.0
	Employed	37	18.5
	Civil servant	47	23.5
	Student	34	17.0
	Retired	10	5.0
	Others	8	4.0
Sample size (n)		200	100

Source: Authors' field data from *Thùa Thiên Huế, Vietnam* (April to June 2022)

3.2. Assess the scale's reliability with Cronbach's Alpha

Tests of reliability and inner consistency of each extracted factor are performed using reliability analysis

Table 3. The scale's reliability with Cronbach's Alpha

Dimension	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Minimum total variable correlation coefficient
Socio-cultural responsibility	5	0.865	0.641
Economic responsibility	4	0.861	0.643
Environmental responsibility	6	0.870	0.610

(Source: analyzed by SPSS 22.0)

The results of this study show that the scales have high reliability because Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is higher than 0.8. In addition, all items have variable-sum correlation coefficients greater than 0.3, so these criteria can be used for analysis.

3.3. Responsible tourism practices by tourist

Table 3. Tourists' responsibility in terms of socio-cultural issues

Socio-cultural responsibility	Percent (%)					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I refer to the local customs and traditions with respect	1.0	1.5	19.5	48.0	30.0	4.05
2. I am looking for community's cultural information	0.0	5.0	28.5	36.5	30.0	3.92
3. I learn basic phrases in the language of the visited country / region	1.0	4.0	23.5	38.5	33.0	3.99
4. During my travels, I communicate with permanent residents.	0.0	1.5	16.5	43.5	38.5	4.19
5. While traveling, unethical behaviors (e.g., prostitution, child labor, sweatshop labor) should not be conducted and do not infringe customs	1.0	3.0	19.5	43.5	33.0	4.05

Source: Authors' field data from *Thao Thien Hue, Vietnam* (April to June 2022)

The table shows that percentages of tourists take responsibility for socio-cultural fields. It is clear that the largest proportion of tourists is willing to take responsibility for their behavior and preserve local culture. In this survey, 48% of tourists agreed, and 30% strongly agreed, to respect the region's customs and traditions. Consequently, 43.5% of tourists agreed and 33.0% strongly agreed to avoid unethical behaviors. While most tourists respected local cultures, there were fewer who looked for community cultural information or learned basic phrases in the local language. Tourists should seek information about their destination before they travel. They should also learn a few words in the local language to have a more meaningful experience with the locals and to preserve the local culture.

Table 4. Tourists' economic responsibility

Economic responsibility	Percent (%)					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. While traveling, eating at local restaurants contributes to the local economy.	1.5	5.0	20.5	48.5	24.5	3.90
2. While traveling, buying local products economically helps the local people.	0.5	4.5	18.5	49.5	27.0	3.98
3. While traveling, staying in local accommodations contributes to the regional economy	1.5	4.5	22.0	45.0	27.0	3.92
4. I use the services of local tour operators to support the local economy.	0.5	4.0	25.0	39.0	31.5	3.97

Source: Authors' field data from Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam (April to June 2022)

According to the definition of economic responsibility, tourists are not only aware of economic responsibility, but also take action regarding it. There was 73% of tourists used the local restaurants and 76.5% of tourists bought regional products which helped the community's people and the economy as well. Additionally, 74% of tourists stayed in local accommodation and 70.5% of tourists used the services of regional travel agencies and local tour guides. Generally, tourists have a positive attitude toward economic responsibility, contributing to the prosperity and development of their community.

Table 5. The responsibility of tourists towards the environment

Environment responsibility	Percent (%)					Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. While traveling, walking or cycling to reduce CO ₂ emission helps to protect the environment.	3.5	17.5	49.5	29.5	4.05	3.50
2. If possible, I sort waste before throwing it into containers	0.5	3.5	19.0	44.0	33.0	4.06
3. I avoid the use of disposable packaging, especially plastic waste	1.0	2.0	22.0	42.5	32.5	4.04
4. I follow the rules of the protected areas	2.0	1.5	19.5	48.0	29.0	4.01
5. I economically consume water and electricity	1.0	4.0	29.5	38.0	27.5	3.87

Source: Authors' field data from Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam (April to June 2022)

Table 5. gives data on the environmental responsibility of tourists. According to the statistics, most people support the environment by following the rules of protected areas and throwing trash into containers (77.0%). On the other hand, 74.5% of tourists

avoided using disposable packaging. There were 65.5% fewer tourists using water and electricity. Hence, tour operators should inform tourists to conserve energy during their trip and in their routine as well. It is noted that nearly 50% of tourists have not changed their choice of transportation vehicles to reduce CO₂ emissions. There are only a few tourists who walk or cycle to protect the environment. It is necessary to raise tourist awareness about the importance of choosing the right transportation vehicle to reduce CO₂ emissions.

3.4. Demand for responsible tourism tour

Table 6. Tourist demand for responsible tourism tour

Criteria	Frequency	Percent (%)	Criteria	Frequency	Percent (%)
Length of stay			Around 21 to 30 people	47	23.5
A Half day	40	20.0	More than 30 people	13	6.5
One day	82	41.0	Accommodations		
Two days	55	27.5	Homestay	89	44.5
More than two days	23	11.5	Hotel	76	38.0
Transportation on a tour			Resort	101	50.5
Bicycle	47	23.5	Tourist Villa, apartment	55	27.5
Car	113	56.5	Tourist campsite	58	29.0
Electric bicycle/ motorbike	34	17.0	Others	8	4.0
Boat	25	12.5	Budget for RT tours		
Motorbike	75	37.5	Under one million dong	78	39.0
Others	2	1.0	From one million to three million dong	74	37.0
Number tourist of a group			Over 3 million to 5 million dong	39	19.5
Under ten people	77	38.5	More than 5 million dong	9	4.5
Around 10 to 20 people	63	31.5	Totals	200	100

Source: Authors' field data from *Thau Thien Huu, Vietnam (April to June 2022)*

According to the findings, 41.0% of tourists would be interested in participating in one-day RT tours, 27.5% want a two-day tour, and 20% thought about a half-day tour. Over half of tourists want to use cars while over a third want to drive motorcycles. The percentage of people who would like to use bicycles is 23.5%. Therefore, it makes sense for responsible tourism tours to combine these vehicles. This will help to cater to tourist demands and reduce CO₂ emissions.

It does not seem that tourists have such different options when it comes to the number of tourists on a responsible tourism tour. 38.5% plan on traveling in a small group (less than ten people); 31.5% prefer a small group of ten to twenty people. It is fine for tour operators to accept groups under 20 people. More than half of tourists prefer staying in a resort, while nearly half prefer staying at a homestay. Their average budget for responsible tourism tours is under three million dong. To meet both their demands and budgets, homestay is the most suitable option.

Table 7. Tourists' demand for responsible activities

Activities of responsible tourism tour	Independent Sample T-Test	One-way ANOVA TEST			Average
	Gender	Age	Education	Career	
1. Visit Thua Thien Hue's responsible tourist attractions	0.178	0.514	0.649	0.437	4.14
2. Visiting responsible food establishments (exchanging information about safe, nutritious food)	0.567	0.663	0.566	0.032	4.17
3. Stay at an eco-friendly accommodation	0.587	0.612	0.487	0.129	4.11
4. Experience local cultures (craft villages; cooking classes, cultural exchanges, etc.)	0.725	0.679	0.621	0.135	4.09
5. Participate in activities that improve the environment	0.198	0.639	0.530	0.448	4.24
6. Taking part in charity and volunteering activities in Thua Thien Hue	0.055	0.313	0.162	0.275	4.04
7. Shopping for souvenirs or local specialties at Thua Thien Hue	0.768	0.156	0.491	0.168	4.00

Source: Authors' field data from Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam (April to June 2022)

An independent sample T-test was used to test the discriminant between males and females. Sig.>0.05 means it does not discriminate between male and female opinions. In contrast, one-way ANOVA was used to test discriminant analysis between groups of tourists by age, education, and career. All sigs were over 0.05, which indicated that there were no differences in opinions between the groups.

It is obvious that responsible tourism activities play a significant role in the engagement of tourists. Therefore, responsible tourism involves a number of activities that improve the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental status of destinations. Tourists have a wide range of demands regarding responsible tourist attractions; responsible or green restaurants; and eco-friendly accommodations. Creating a

responsible tourism tour with these activities will make responsible tourism unique from other tourism tours.

Tourists are the most interested in activities that improve the environment with 82.5%. In addition, 80.5% of tourists are interested in charity and volunteering in Thua Thien Hue because the activities contribute to spreading the human side of life to the local community. In responsible tourism tours, souvenir shopping and local specialties are unmissable activities with 44.0 percent agreeing and 31.5 percent strongly agreeing.

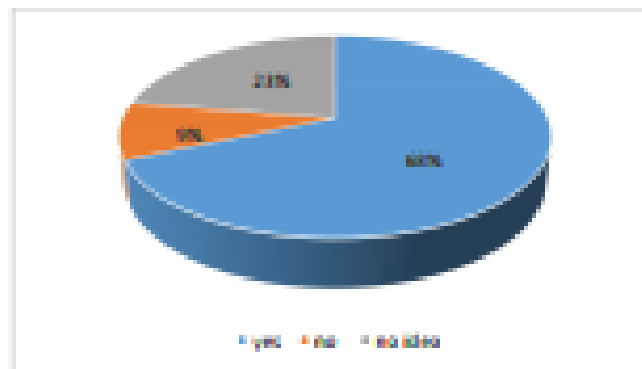


Fig 1. Responsible tourism tour participants

Source: Authors' field data from Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam (April to June 2022)

The majority of tourists took responsibility during their trip, as we mentioned previously. It is a reason why 68% of tourists would like to enjoy a Responsible Tourism Tour. The increase in tourist demand provides a big opportunity for travel agencies and tour operators to promote responsible travel packages.

4. Discussion

Responsible consumption of tourist products and services continues to rely heavily on tourism research. Travel behavior can indicate varying levels of responsibility in tourists, some of which are responsible, some of which are not [9],[29]. The study found that tourists visiting Thua Thien Hue were responsible for their actions during the trip. There are a variety of activities that can be undertaken, as highlighted by previous research [24],[30]. It is clear that responsible tourism is a philosophy that contributes to and enhances local communities, cultures, environments, and economics, while also reducing negative impacts on them [15]. Therefore, three dimensions of responsible tourism behavior have been considered: economic responsibility, socio-cultural responsibility, and environmental responsibility. Quantitative studies were conducted using convenience samples to collect the data. We conducted a survey with 220 tourists at a tourist attraction in Thua Thien Hue province, Vietnam. The 20 samples that were not completed were discarded, and the 200 samples were used for coding and analysis.

According to previous research, responsible tourists reduce garbage production and limit resource use [22]. Further, responsible tourists seem to prefer more environmentally-friendly services [6] and transportation (Dolnicar, 2004) [9] and are willing to pay more for them [18]. The study's findings are similar to the previous one, which found that tourists are willing to participate in responsible tourism tours during their trip. In other studies, Duminduhewa, C. et al (2020) findings that demand for

responsible tourism at Yala Wildlife Destination is extremely high with international tourists willing to pay more to visit the destination if the tourism industry invests in protecting local communities, culture, fauna and flora, religions practices and beliefs, and a destination's natural resources [10]. Additionally, Dumindubewa, C. et al (2020) indicated that conditions in the destination market are the main factors influencing demand for responsible tourism in the Yala Wildlife Destination, followed by price-related factors, concern for the local environment, and demographic factors [10].

Therefore, the local government and tour operators should consider these factors to develop responsible tourism in Thua Thien Hue. The conclusions of this study have significant implications for local governments, tour operators, and researchers. In one sense, they provide further insight into the scientific debate on responsible tourism practices and responsible tourism demand. In this regard, it is vital for private and public operators to design and promote responsible tourism tours that are able to meet the needs of responsible tourists.

5. Conclusion

The research aimed to provide a deep understanding of responsible tourism from the perspective of demand-side quantitative methods. The majority of tourists are keen to be involved in environmental improvement. Further, the research found that tourists respect the local culture, which is a positive behavior. However, the proportion of tourists walking or cycling to reduce CO₂ emissions is less than other responsible actions. Therefore, we need to encourage tourists to switch to alternative eco-transportations in order to improve the environment.

The analysis of tourist demand for responsible tourism shows that the majority of tourists prefer tours lasting one to two days. Almost a third of tourists wish to use bicycles instead of cars. By combining different modes of transportation, we can meet tourist demands and reduce CO₂ emissions at the same time. Generally, most tourists are looking for a small group of tourists (under twenty). More than half of tourists prefer to stay at a resort while nearly half prefer to stay at a homestay. In spite of this, most of them have a budget of fewer than three million dong for their responsible tourism tours. A homestay is the most suitable option for meeting their budget and demand.

There is no significant difference in opinion between the different groups of tourists based on gender, age, education, or career in the Independent sample T-Test and One-Way ANOVA. Tourism generally involves a wide range of demands related to responsible tourism, including green tourist attractions, environmentally friendly restaurants, and eco-friendly accommodations. It is great if tour operators create responsible tourism tours that include these activities, allowing responsible tourism to stand out from the rest.

Tour operators and travel agents do not inspire or encourage tourists. The tour program does not include any activities related to sustainable development. This is one of the limitations of the current tour in Thua Thien Hue. Additionally, 68% of tourists are interested in Responsible Tourism Tours, creating a big opportunity for tour operators and travel agencies. In order to enhance tourists' responsibility, tour guides of responsible tourism tours play an instrumental role in raising tourists' awareness. Tour guides should have a wide range of knowledge about the local culture and guide tourists on how to respect the local culture and protect the environment. Moreover, a tour guide will be the person who inspires and encourages tourists to take responsibility during the trip. Tour operators and travel agencies must train employees better.

On the one hand, this study provides further insights into the scientific aspect of responsible tourism. On the other hand, we suggest solutions to improve the quality of responsible tourism in Thua Thien Hue. It is imperative for both tourists and travel companies to take their responsibility for sustainable tourism seriously.

The research was limited to the following: First of all, the sample size was small in comparison to Vietnamese subscribers. The tourists are quite busy because they have to follow the tour guide so they are not willing to fill in our questionnaire. Tourists refused to fill out the questionnaire. That is why the interview partners were not present. Second, due to the limited time, we cannot look deeper and wider into this issue. We simply ask tourists about the practices of responsible tourism and see what they want. Thirdly, tourists evaluate their own practices subjectively. Although the research has limitations, it is a foundation to develop responsible tourism in Thua Thien Hue in the future. If a future study takes a mixed approach from a supply and demand perspective, it would be worth considering. Furthermore, further studies might examine how the behavior of tourists is related to their responsibility.

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Nhu cầu về Du lịch có trách nhiệm tại Thừa Thiên Huế, Việt Nam

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Tóm tắt: Trong bối cảnh xu thế phát triển du lịch toàn cầu hiện nay, ngành du lịch Việt Nam nhận thức rõ rằng phát triển bền vững là ưu thế số yếu. Ngoài ra, nó chứa sẽ một tầm nhìn chung về du lịch bền vững. Du lịch có trách nhiệm quan tâm đến các tác động của du lịch đối với con người, môi trường và cộng đồng địa phương, đồng thời tìm cách cải thiện những tác động này bằng cách cung cấp các dịch vụ du lịch có lợi cho người dân địa phương, cải thiện điều kiện làm việc, mở rộng khả năng tiếp cận với ngành du lịch, quảng bá di sản văn hóa và bảo vệ môi trường. Bài báo nghiên cứu và đánh giá nhu cầu của khách du lịch tham gia vào hoạt động du lịch có trách nhiệm. Dữ liệu được thu thập bằng cách sử dụng các mẫu tiện lợi và được mã hóa và phân tích bằng 200 mẫu. Các phương pháp được sử dụng trong nghiên cứu là thống kê mô tả, kiểm định độ tin cậy bằng hệ số Cronbach's Alpha và phân tích ANOVA. Kết quả nghiên cứu đã cung cấp thông tin về thông tin chuyên đi, thực hành trách nhiệm của khách du lịch, các hoạt động du lịch được lựa chọn cho chương trình du lịch có trách nhiệm và mức độ quan trọng trong việc lựa chọn các tiêu chí. Theo đó, nhóm tác giả đề xuất các giải pháp phát triển chương trình du lịch có trách nhiệm với du khách.

Từ khóa: du lịch có trách nhiệm, nhu cầu, thực hành du lịch có trách nhiệm