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How Responsible Tourism Behavioral Intentions Influence Tour Choices: Effects of Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Environmental Responsibility

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine how economic, socio-cultural, and environmental responsibility affects tourists' responsible behavioral intentions in Thua Thien Hue province, Vietnam. Moreover, the relationship between responsible tourism intention and responsible tourism tour choice was examined. The structural equation modeling with SMARTPLS was used to test multiple hypotheses ($N = 200$). The findings represent a positive effect of the determinants studied on the tourist's responsibility and the choice of responsible tourism tours. It was highlighted that environmental responsibility factors play a crucial role in tourists' responsible behavior. Research findings provide a scientific basis for researchers, destination management organizations, and tour operators to promote responsible tourism.

Introduction

The international community has become aware of mass tourism's negative effects on business, people, biodiversity, and the environment for the last two decades. Mass tourism has caused serious governance issues, such as pollution, commodity price inflation, poor food and living provisions, littering, and accumulation of solid waste, sewage, etc (Jehan et al., 2022; Pratama, 2020). Sustainable tourism has been introduced as an alternative to mass tourism, emphasizing the importance of preserving local traditions and socio-cultural identities to protect the environment, generate revenue for host destinations, and involve the local community in tourism decision-making (Medina, 2005).

The concept of responsible tourism emerged at the same time as sustainable tourism, to promote cultural and biological diversity. The concept of responsible tourism (RT) focuses on all stakeholders' actions and consciousness toward sustainable travel (Mondal and Samaddar, 2021), which considers the three pillars of sustainability: nature, local community, and economy.

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According to Mihalic (2016), adopting sustainability in tourism requires considering tourism's economic, social, and environmental responsibility and accountability toward tourists. Thus, responsible tourism gradually reduces adverse economic, socio-cultural, and ecological impacts. Moreover, a study by Dogru et al. (2022) on the impact of COVID-19 on tourism businesses concluded that firms with sustainable business practices are more resilient to pandemic-like shocks. As such, responsible tourism is considered a niche product for resilience to pandemic shocks.

There has been extensive research published on responsible tourism over the past few decades, examining its underlying dimensions and analyzing the factors that affect it, as well as analyzing responsible tourism from the demand and supply sides (Bernardo & Pereiro, 2020; Blackstock et al., 2008). Despite this, only limited research has examined whether tourists are willing to adopt more sustainable behaviors (Budeanu, 2007; Caruana et al., 2014; Cheng & Wu, 2015; Eichelberger et al., 2021; Gong et al., 2019; Hu & Sung, 2022; Lee et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2010; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Parikshat et al., 2021; Stanford, 2008) and which barriers prevent them from making responsible choices (Bramwell et al., 2008; Budeanu, 2007; Carasuk et al., 2016; Goodwin & Francis, 2003). In spite of this, more research is needed to better understand what motivates visitors to behave responsibly, how responsibility is translated into specific practices, and how those practices are evaluated (Stanford, 2008).

Nguyen et al. (2022) critically reviewed the literature about responsible tourism in Vietnam and concluded that few studies in Vietnam clarify the actions to promote responsible tourism and measure their impacts. Nguyen, (2018) analyzed the issue of RT in Vietnam from the perspectives of tourism experts and tourists. However, Bui, Phi, and Le (2022) took a qualitative approach to investigate the RT behaviors of tour operators in Vietnam using a qualitative approach. Similar to Vietnam, responsible tourism in Thua Thien Hue was largely unexplored, and few researchers were interested in it (Nguyen, 2018).

The Thua Thien Hue Department of Tourism reports that responsible tourism has been promoted in Hue over the past few years. Consequently, Hue's tourism industry established a code of conduct that requires tourists to respect Hue culture, protect the local environment, and provide favorable conditions for tourists. There were several activities conducted, including cleaning up the environment, inviting stakeholders to be more involved, and increasing the industry's sense of responsibility for environmental protection. Tourism industry propaganda encouraged tourists and people to contribute to the development of a green and sustainable destination.

Despite Thua Thien Hue's tourism department's strategy to promote responsible tourism, few studies have been conducted. There is only one study investigating the awareness of tourists about responsible tourism in

Hue (Nguyen, 2018). The results reveal that responsible tourism is still a new trend in Hue as tourists are not aware of this issue. Therefore, this study can be considered a pioneering one in responsible tourism in Thua Thien Hue, which examines the relationship between RT behavioral intentions and the choice of responsible tours. This study used a quantitative method and surveyed domestic tourists who visited Thua Thien Hue from April to June 2022 by filling out the constructed questionnaire. This study contributes to the scientific discussion surrounding RT behavior intentions and tour choices. A variety of solutions are also proposed to promote RT.

Literature Review

In the tourism industry, responsible tourism has attracted the attention of many people, including academics in tourism research (Bramwell et al., 2008; Burrai et al., 2019; Carasuk et al., 2016; Caruana et al., 2014; Chan & Tay, 2016; Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal, 2012; Choi et al., 2017; Del Chiappa et al., 2016; Fang, 2020; Farmaki et al., 2014; Gong et al., 2019; Hu & Sung, 2022; Lee et al., 2017; Mathew & Kuriakose, 2017; Mondal & Samaddar, 2021; Parikshat et al., 2021; Weeden, 2014; Um and Yoon, 2020) and tourism practitioners (Mihalic, 2016), as well as tourists and society in general (Leslie and Leslie, 2013). In the 2002 Cape Town Declaration, stakeholders were included in delivering responsible tourism, which emphasizes that tourism sustainability can only be achieved if stakeholders (governments, communities, businesses, and consumers) take "responsibility" (Nguyen et al., 2022).

Several researchers focused on attitudes that affect RT participation in businesses. According to Frey and George (2010), despite the generally positive impression of responsible tourism management, businesses do not invest time and money in modifying management practices. Responsible tourism management participation is hindered by factors such as perceived costs, a highly competitive environment, and a perceived lack of government support.

While others investigated socially responsible consumption traits (Chafe, 2005; Diallo et al., 2015; Prendergast & Tsang, 2019; Song & Kim, 2018) indicated tourists demand ethical products, social investments, and eco-labels (Chafe, 2005). Diallo et al. (2015) report that social engagement affects tourist behavior in a positive way. According to Prendergast and Tsang (2019), three categories of socially responsible consumption have been significantly influenced by attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Afterward, it was demonstrated that the intention to engage in socially responsible consumption significantly predicted socially responsible consumption. A decision tree predictive model was developed by Song and Kim (2018) to examine the predicted impact of virtuous and personality traits

on socially responsible consumption. According to the results, openness, conscientiousness, courage, and self-control indicate socially responsible behavior.

There were many studies investigating environmentally responsible behavior or tourists' environmental awareness (Adams et al., 2017; Andereck, 2009; Chao, 2012; Cheng & Wu, 2015; Cheng et al., 2013; Chiu et al., 2014; Diallo et al., 2015; Dodds, et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2013; Mobley et al., 2010; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Su, Swanson, & Chen, 2017; Wang et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2018). Almost all of these studies found that nature-oriented tourists viewed environmentally responsible tourism businesses more positively than non-nature-oriented tourists.

Chiu et al. (2014) show that perceived value, satisfaction, and activity involvement can promote the environmentally responsible behavior of tourists. Thus, enhancing tourists' value perception of eco-travel is the first step in strengthening environmentally responsible behavior. Panwanitdumrong and Cheng (2021) showed that using the extended theory of planned behavior with environmental awareness and environmental background can explain tourists' environmentally responsible behavior. In contrast, Diallo et al. (2015) found that ecological orientation in tourism has no significant direct effect on responsible tourist behavior.

There have been several debates about responsible tourism, including the relationship between tourist behavior and responsible tourism (Dodds et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2017; Stanford, 2008; Yoon et al., 2019; Zgolli & Zaiem, 2018); ethical responsibility of stakeholders (Chan & Tay, 2016; Goodwin & Francis, 2003; Lee et al., 2017); marketing and corporate social responsibility programs; responsibility of tour operators (Chan & Tay, 2016; Nguyen et al., 2018; Miller, 2003); and responsible tourism from the perspective of the locals (Burrai et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2021). Many of the studies focus more on stakeholders' role in responsible tourism than an engaging critique of the term itself.

However, responsible tourism has been explored in numerous international studies on what motivates responsible tourists, attitudes, and behaviors as well as discrepancies between attitudes and behaviors (Budeanu, 2007; Chafe, 2005; Hu & Sung, 2022; Khan, 2003; Mobley et al., 2010; Mody et al., 2014; Mondal & Samaddar, 2021; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Su Swanson, & Chen, 2017; Ulusoy, 2016). Using Dann's push-pull typology, Mody et al. (2014) identified nine underlying motivations for responsible tourism and three distinct segments of travelers (responsible, novelty seekers, and socializers). While Ulusoy (2016). examined responsible consumption within the context of voluntary tourism and found two distinct types of motivations: one based on ethics of responsibility, and another focused-on novelty experience.

There has been an increase in studies of mindfulness in tourism-related contexts in recent years, where many researchers have investigated its impact on RT and sustainability (Caruana et al., 2014; Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal,

2012; Fang, 2020; Mondal & Samaddar, 2021; Morgan, 2012; Taylor & Norman, 2019; Stankov et al., 2020). The advancement of RT in diverse research strands has led to it being officially accepted and endorsed by numerous tourist destinations, marketers, policy-makers, and academic research organizations throughout the world (Chan & Tay, 2016; Del Chiappa et al., 2016). They believe that tourism impact can be more effectively dealt with in the context of RT.

The Concept of Responsible Tourism

It is not an easy task to understand the meaning of responsible tourism. From a realistic perspective, tourism stakeholders lack a clear understanding and often fail to introduce and implement responsible tourism. RT has been considered one of the "new forms of tourism" since the 1970s. In 1989, the UNWTO held a seminar to classify the activities and role of "alternative tourism" and tried to replace the term with RT (Stanford, 2008; Blackstock et al., 2008). There were many different policies, practices, and labels used to describe responsible tourism in the twenty-first century, including ecotourism, community tourism, ethical tourism, solidarity tourism, fair tourism, ecotourism, nature tourism, and so on (Pereiro, 2016; Spenceley, 2010). Responsible tourism requires the definition of sustainable tourism and its variants, such as "eco," "alternative," "adequate," "new," "smart," and "green" tourism (Weeden, 2013) which revolve around sustainable tourism principles (Stanford, 2008; Gao et al., 2017).

Regenerative tourism and inclusive tourism are novel concepts related to RT. Inclusive tourism, also known as accessible tourism or disabled tourism, aims to ease access to tourism experiences for all people. This is regardless of gender, age, or physical condition. In other words, accessible tourism means making tourist destinations, products, and services available to all, regardless of physical limitations, disabilities, age, or other factors (Münch & Ulrich, 2011). In recent years, regenerative tourism has grown in popularity as a more sustainable travel method. The regenerative tourism movement offers solutions to improve local economies, preserve local cultures, and preserve biodiversity. This is done while offering guests life-changing experiences and allowing destinations to move forward. Regenerative tourism focuses on place, community, and the environment (Dredge, 2022).

Stanford (2008) defines RT as "all forms of tourism that respect the natural, built, and cultural environments of the host and the interests of all parties involved." Fennell (2006) describes alternative tourism as involving ethical behavior and responsibility. Therefore, UNWTO published the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in 2001, which emphasizes that all stakeholders should take responsibility for sustainable tourism. The Code promoted responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible tourism.

Responsible tourism emerged along with sustainable tourism development, but understanding it is clearly challenging (Chettiparamb & Kokkranikal, 2012). Responsible tourism can be considered a form of sustainable tourism in practice (Gao, Huang & Zhang, 2017; Gong, Detchkhajornjaroensri & Knight, 2019; Kim et al., 2020). The concepts of responsible tourism and sustainable tourism are interrelated, so there is a mixture of concepts that confuse the public when approaching them. This is the reason for the existence of different definitions and the proliferation of many related concepts similar to responsible tourism (Bohdanowicz, 2006). Goodwin (2016) distinguishes responsible tourism from sustainable tourism by emphasizing its practical virtues. Contrary to sustainable tourism, responsible tourism is often viewed as a practice-based approach. Further, it is unclear what makes responsible tourism different from sustainable tourism. Several key principles of responsible tourism have been adopted, including the triple bottom line of sustainability and tourism impacts.

RT concerns the welfare of all stakeholders toward sustainable travel (Mondal & Samaddar, 2021). It considers three pillars of sustainability: nature, community, and economics (Mondal & Samaddar, 2021). Therefore, RT is defined as "all forms of tourism that respect the natural, built, and cultural environments of the host and the interests of all parties involved" (Stanford, 2008). The field of sustainable tourism also includes a number of related concepts that define similar types of responsible tourism, such as ecotourism, fair-trade tourism, rural tourism, community-based tourism, and pro-poor tourism (Nguyen et al., 2018).

From the perspective of tourists, responsible tourism involves a lifestyle that fosters cultural and biological diversity as well as environmental and natural conservation, both at home and while traveling (Dias et al., 2021).. It means that tourists should behave responsibly during their trip and when they buy and consume everyday products or services. Responsible tourism creates a different way to think about holidays (Budeanu, 2007) driving an increasing number of people to make travel decisions based on values like consciousness, sobriety responsible consumption, and respect for the local culture, social, environmental, and economic context.

According to Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2016), responsible tourism emphasizes local identities and cultures, reinforces community participation, and promotes mutual understanding between locals and tourists. Therefore, responsible tourism practice provides maximum benefits to local communities and helps them preserve their culture and habitats (Caruana et al. 2014; Mathew and Kuriakose, 2017). A novel contribution to the definition of responsible tourism in the European Charter for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism. It offers a common point of reference for all tourism stakeholders and identifies nine basic principles to encourage responsible policy development and implementation. Many

authors emphasize the importance of involving local communities in decision-making when planning responsible tourism (Brookes et al., 2014; Lee & Jan, 2015). Hence, responsible tourism helps unite tourism stakeholders in tourism decisions, actions, and policies. However, it is also involved in tourism planning, management, delivery, and consumption (Burrai et al., 2019). Camilleri (2016) also presents responsible tourism as a shared value generator among stakeholders to create a truly competitive advantage for all stakeholders. Responsible tourism can improve the relationship between regulatory and social actors, human resource management, market standing, and operational efficiency. It also allows business savings, among other benefits.

Although responsible tourism has been described as a type of tourism for a long time, it is more than just a typology in tourism literature. The RT seems to be more of a model and pathway of travel (Clifton & Benson, 2006). By focusing on local identity and interacting with local people, RT might be viewed as a form of reverence, understanding, and education (Stanford, 2008). Tourism occurs regardless of whether the tourist chooses an expanding area, a developing country, or a growing country. Responsible tourism involves not only economic, social, and environmental considerations but also providing global justice to tourists (Mihalic, 2016).

The Behavior of Responsible Tourist

As part of RT's perspective on tourism sustainability, it maintains that tourism development does not become sustainable without responsible behavior (Grossmann et al., 2021; Purnamawati et al., 2022). RT emphasizes tourists' ability to make a difference in their activities based on RT values and principles. Additionally, Hall and Brown (2006) suggest that RT assists tourists in thinking and judging about their travel. The definition of a responsible tourist is one who respects local cultures (tradition, religion, heritage), protects the environment (flora, fauna, landscapes), benefits local communities (economically and socially), conserves natural resources (water, energy), minimizes pollution (noise, waste, congestion) (Goodwin, 2016). Responsible tourists tend to maintain a balance between experiencing authentic offerings and reciprocating equitably (Stanford, 2008). As part of the RT, tourists participate in a series of tourism activities that allow them to explore the authenticity of a place. These activities preserve a destination's natural, geological, socio-cultural, and economic (Goffi et al., 2019), and environmental heritage (Budeanu, 2007; Clifton & Benson, 2006; Kerstetter et al., 2004). When traveling, responsible tourists seek to understand the local context in an ethical and aware manner while at their destination (Caruana et al. 2014).

According to the literature, extensive research has been conducted regarding responsible visitor characteristics, including socio-

demographic profiles, attitudes and behaviors, beliefs and motives (Kerstetter et al., 2004). Taking environmentally friendly actions and making responsible purchases is a part of everyday life for responsible tourists. Responsible tourism is experienced along the continuum of high to low budget (Baloch et al., 2022). It is possible to participate in responsible tourism at a low cost through self-contained camping trips that can be accessed by bicycle or train. In order to encourage tourists to engage in responsible tourism, destinations must inform tourists of their responsibilities during their visit.

Responsible Tourism Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intention is influenced by attitudes and subjective norms toward that behavior. Subjective norms are the social norms associated with the act, while attitudes refer to the strength of one's attitude toward the act. Positive subjective norms and strong attitudes should lead to higher relationships. It has been demonstrated in many studies that intentions and behavior are positively related (Ajzen, 1991). The impact of these factors on behavioral intentions may differ depending on the individual and situation (Miller, 2003). In a few studies, researchers have found that direct prior experience with a certain activity increases the attitude component of the behavioral intention function. In addition to the more instrumental motivators of time, money, convenience, etc., consumers should also consider the antecedents of their purchase decisions. Consumers' ethical intentions may not always translate into their buying behavior, possibly because other factors such as price and previous experiences overshadow ethical considerations (Bray et al., 2011).

A review of the literature identified the following antecedents affecting sustainable development processes and shaping "responsible tourism behavior" (Hu & Sung, 2022; Mobley, Vagias & De Ward, 2010; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Su Swanson, & Chen 2017; Zgolli & Zaiem, 2018). Tourism contributes to the host community when tourists behave responsibly, purchase wisely, and consume services that are environmentally friendly. In this study, responsible tourism practices are examined in three categories, such as economic, socio-cultural, and environmental. There have been several previous studies that have addressed the issue of responsible tourism intention, which is the measure of tourist intention level to engage in responsible tourism (Song et al., 2018; Diallo et al., 2015; Hu and Sung, 2022;Um and Yoon, 2020; Yoon et al., 2019; Zgolli & Zaiem, 2018). Intentions for active participation in responsible tourism were measured by willingness to participate, time and financial commitment, and recommendations to others.
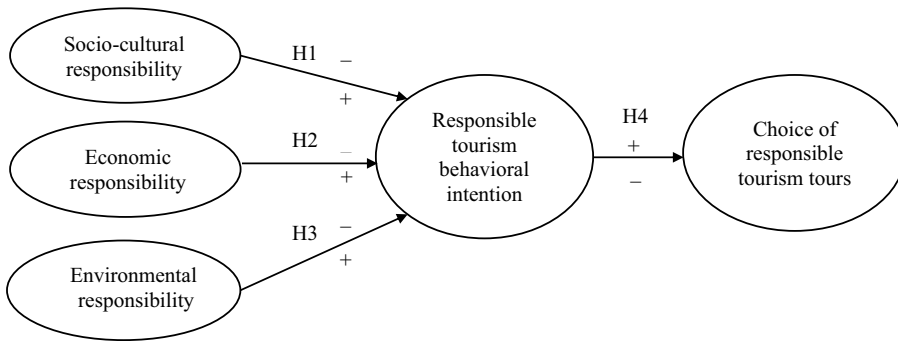
Figure 1. Research model and hypotheses.

The Research Model and the Hypotheses

According to Um and Yoon, (2020), responsible behavior is required of all stakeholders to maintain the sustainability of these determinants. During the execution process of the tourism value chain, responsible tourism is more than just a concept; it encompasses the behavior and attitude displayed by every actor in the chain. In the same way, sustainable tourism requires responsible behavior to preserve native cultural values and landscapes (Nguyen et al., 2018). Vu et al. (2020) unanimously agreed that the philosophy behind sustainable tourism is the importance of a mind-set that focuses on the sustainability of nature, culture, society, economy, and society during the planning process. The experts should examine and analyze the items provided by respondents from the perspective of a tourist. A tourism responsibility assessment should determine which items contribute the least to tourism responsibility and which items contribute the most.

As part of a sustainable tourism approach, responsible tourism behavior involves actions that support economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and institutional factors (Mihalic, 2016; Dangi & Jamal, 2016). There are three dimensions of responsible tourism: economic, socio-cultural, and environmental (Caruana et al. 2014; Farmaki et al. 2014; Fennell, 2006; Mihalic, 2016; Stanford, 2008, Lee et al., 2017; Pratama, 2020). As a result, this study examines how economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and responsibility intention behaviors are related. In addition, the research examines the relationship between tourists' responsible intentions and their choice of responsible tourism tours. The proposed conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Following the presentation of the research hypotheses and the conceptual model, we will present the research methodology (data collection, variable measurement)

The Effect of Socio-Cultural Responsibility on the Tourist's Responsible Behavioral Intention

As Witkowski and Reddy (2010) discovered, socio-cultural engagement underlies responsible behavior in a variety of contexts. Moreover, consumer are involved in community and social activities (Zgolli & Zaiem, 2018). Citizens' attitudes are changed by these activities. Diallo et al. (2015) indicate that socio-culturally engaged tourists make well-informed consumption decisions. To initiate responsible behaviors, socio-cultural engagement fosters tourists' cognitive and perceptual mobility. These authors found that tourists are socially motivated to act in favor of responsible tourism (Prendergast and Tsang, 2019; Purnamawati et al., 2022; Song & Kim, 2018). Based on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1:   Intentions to engage in responsible behavior are directly and positively influenced by tourist's socio-cultural responsibility

The Effect of Economic Responsibility on Tourist's Responsible Behavioral Intention

Tourism's economic responsibility is how tourists use local services and products, which affects the destination's economic status. Medina (2005) explains economic behavior as practices directed at making an economic contribution to the local community, such as buying and consuming domestic goods. In other research, the instrument measures tourism responsibility at the community level, using responsibility indicators in terms of four different themes (local service, regional facilities, local products, and philanthropy (Gong et al., 2019). Lee et al. (2017) indicated that tourists with more travel experience were more likely to make ethically favorable decisions.

H2:   Tourist intentions to behave responsibly in tourism are positively influenced by economic responsibility.

The Effect of Environmental Responsibility on the Tourist's Responsible Behavioral Intention

As tourism grows rapidly, it places enormous pressure on the environment (Mishra et al., 2021; Su et al., 2020a), and increases carbon emissions, soil erosion, and water eutrophication. These issues can be

resolved by modifying human behaviors to be environmentally sustainable (Han, 2020), which requires individuals to change their behavior (buying, consuming, and approaching products in an environmentally sustainable manner) (Wang et al., 2020). This has prompted consumers and academics to put increased focus on the environment's sustainability (Dong et al., 2017; Garvey & Bolton, 2017). Researchers have identified a set of factors that contribute to tourists' environmentally responsible behaviors based on the value-belief-norm theory, including environmental concern, awareness of consequences, and ascription of responsibility (Wu et al., 2022). Moreover, environmental behavior is significantly influenced by behavioral intention based on a model of predicting people's environmental behavior (Chao, 2012; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Su & Swanson, 2017; Wang et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2018).

H3: *Tourists' intention to engage in responsible tourism is positively influenced by environmental responsibility.*

The Effect of Responsible Tourism Behavior on the Choice of Responsible Tourism Tours

This study examines the relationship between responsible behavior and the selection of responsible tourism tours. The measuring scale for choosing responsible tourism tours is adapted from Nguyen et al. (2018). In the survey, 19 items were asked about three dimensions of responsible tourism: the activities related to responsible tourism, the responsibilities of the tour guide and the responsibilities of the tour operator, as well as tourists' satisfaction with responsible tourism programs. In another comprehensive study, Krantz and Chong (2009) profiled responsible travelers as constituting the three spheres of interactive, experiential, and socio-environmental conscience. There are only four items in our research that represent the dimension of responsible tourism activities: selecting a tourism program that benefits the community economically, protects and improves the environment, preserves and promotes local culture, and RT tours that require tourist responsibility practices.

H4: *Responsible tourists' behavior influences their intentions to choose responsible tours*

The Research Methodology

Research Location Description

Vietnam is a growing destination. International and domestic visitors to Vietnam are increasing significantly. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Vietnam welcomed 18 million international tourists in 2019, an increase of 16.2% over the same period last year. Total revenue from visitors in 2019 also reached 726,000 billion VND (Nguyen et al., 2022). As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions, visitor arrivals from abroad declined sharply in 2020 and 2021. International visitors to Vietnam reached an estimated 0.16 million in 2021. Travel restrictions were removed by March 2022, to help tourism recover (the General Statistics Office). Travel restrictions were removed by March 2022, in an effort to help tourism recover. Vietnam welcomed about 3.5 million international visitor arrivals in 2022. The number of domestic visitors reached 101.3 million arrivals, far exceeding the number of 85 million domestic arrivals in 2019.

The research was conducted in Thua Thien Hue province, which offers a diversified and picturesque landscape. Nature and human beings create harmonious beauty in Bach Ma (White Horse) National Park and other attractive beaches such as Thuan An, Lang Co, and Canh Duong. The province provides a well-balanced blend of royal heritage and folk culture. Thua Thien Hue is well known for cultural tourism, eco-tourism, and community-based tourism with handicraft villages. It is a wonderful place for tourists to discover hundreds of handicraft villages, temples, traditional foods, and pagodas with annual festivals. Thua Thien Hue visitors increased in the period before COVID-19 appeared, reaching 4,817,000. In late 2019 and early 2020, the COVID-19 epidemic affected the tourism industry. Hue tourists in 2020 dropped sharply to 1,687,000 and 692 thousand in 2021. After COVID-19 (March, 2022), Thua Thien Hue also saw a 34% increase in tourists year-over-year, to 771,000. However, international tourists were just 1% of pre-pandemic levels.

Although responsible tourism has been promoted by the Thua Thien Hue Responsible Tourism Group since 2012, it is still not the most popular type of tourism. The Responsible Tourism group comprises six leading travel agencies in Hue: DMZ Travel, Huetourist, Viet-Phap Service, Asia Travelland, and Huong Giang Travel. RTG Group has developed responsible tourism tours in Thua Thien Hue. Responsible tourism tours include cultural heritage sites, beaches, national parks, and traditional craft villages. Therefore, the survey was conducted in these places. Therefore, the survey was conducted in these places. There is a common theme among RTG group's responsible tourism tours in that they seek to protect the environment and promote tourism based on mutual benefit and sustainability.

This study examines domestic tourists' responsible behavior and what influences their decision to take responsible tourism tours. It is considered a solid scientific basis for responsible tourism development and responsible tourism tours.

Data Collection

Before collecting the main data, a pilot study was conducted with 20 respondents. Considering practicality, finances, and deadlines, the sampling method is convenient. There has been a significant drop in international tourists to Thua Thien Hue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, we could not attract international tourists. Moreover, responsible tourism tours are attended by more domestic tourists than international tourists. Thus, this study selected domestic tourists as the object of study. Participants in the study were selected only from those who volunteered to participate and answer the questionnaire. In Thua Thien Hue, we collected data from various tourist attractions such as the Citadel, Thien Mu pagoda, Dong Ba market, Gia Long tomb, Khai Dinh tomb, Tu Duc tomb, Minh Mang tomb, Thuan An beach, Lang Co beach, and Bach Ma National Park. The survey lasted from April to June 2022 due to the domestic tourism high season.

In this study, respondents were also asked "How are you involved in responsible tourism practices?" and "How can responsible tourism and responsible tourism tours be promoted.?" Respondents were asked to express their viewpoints on the necessity of actions for responsible tourism tours based on the Likert five-point scale (from one not necessary to five totally necessary). The survey collected 220 respondents. Nevertheless, 20 questionnaires with duplicate responses, empty fields, incomplete evaluations, and overly ambitious evaluations were removed. Table 1 presents the final data set with 200 valid responses. To test the proposed conceptual model, we conducted an empirical study of tourists' exploratory and confirmed natures. The primary objective of this study is to identify how the core variables of responsible tourism practices affect responsible tourism intentions. A secondary purpose is to explore the moderating role of responsible tourist behavioral intention in the relationship with tourists' choice of tours. Therefore, we first used SPSS 22.0 software to analyze the descriptive data. To hypothesize, we used the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) method with Smart-PLS 3.0. Compared to the covariance-based squares structural equation modeling method, PLS-SEM was more suitable to build our theoretical model and had high efficiency in parameter estimation (Hair et al., 2017).

The Measurement of the Variables

To make them fit the context of our study, minor modifications were made, and a review and recommendation survey was conducted by tourism experts.

Table 1. List of used items.

Concepts	Items of measure	Sources
Socio-cultural responsibility	1. I refer to the local customs and traditions with respect 2. I am looking for the community's cultural information 3. I learn basic phrases in the language of the visited country/region 4. During my travels, I communicate with permanent residents. 5. While traveling, unethical behaviors (e.g., prostitution, child labor, sweatshop labor) should not be conducted and do not infringe customs	Olga and Aneta, (2014); the UNWTO (2015). Gong et al., (2019)
Economic responsibility	1. While traveling, eating at local restaurants contributes to the local economy. 2. While traveling, buying local products economically helps the local people. 3. While traveling, staying in local accommodations contributes to the regional economy 4. If possible, I sort waste before throwing it into containers	Chao, (2012); Gong et al., (2019
Environmental responsibility	1. While traveling, walking, or cycling reducing CO_2 emission helps to protect the environment. 2. I throw the trash into containers if possible disaggregated 3. I avoid the use of disposable packaging, especially plastic waste 4. I follow the rules of the protected areas 5. I economically consume water and electricity 6. Considering whether entering the area of unique natural beauty, will not hurt it	Goodwin and Francis, (2003); Chao, (2012); Lee et al. (2013). Olga and Aneta, (2014); Gong et al., (2019
Responsible tourism behavioral intention	1. I will participate in responsible tourism 2. I am willing to participate in responsible tourism 3. I will attempt to participate in responsible tourism 4. I intend to invest time and money to participate in responsible tourism 5. I will recommend other people participate in responsible tourism	Song et al, (2014); Diallo et al (2015); Hu & Sung (2022)
Choice of responsible tourism tours	1. I will choose a tourism program that brings economic benefits to the community 2. I will select a travel program that protects or improves the environment 3. I will select a tour program that preserves and promotes local culture 4. I will choose a tour program that practices tourist responsibility	Krantz and Chong (2009); Zgolli and Zaiem, (2018); Nguyen et al. (2018).

The recommendations implemented following the interviews have clarified the language of the items and enhanced the existing measuring scale. As soon as we completed the questionnaire, we conducted a pretest 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 one "strongly disagree" to five "strongly agree." (Table 1).

There are a variety of activities to be undertaken, as highlighted in previous research. It's clear from these dimensions that responsible tourism is a philosophy that contributes to and enhances local communities, cultures, environments, and economies, while also reducing negative impacts on them (Lee et al., 2017; Pratama, 2020). Therefore, three dimensions of responsible tourism practices were considered: economic responsibility, socio-cultural responsibility, and environmental responsibility. Quantitative studies were conducted on convenience samples to collect data. We conducted a survey with 220 tourists at tourist attractions 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. Using PLS-SEM as an exploratory tool, we tested the research model's validity and reliability.

The parameters of a PLS-SEM model are calculated using proxies, which are linear combinations of observed variables. This technique aims to maximize the explained variance of endogenous latent variables by estimating partial model relationships iteratively through OLS regressions. The most significant feature of PLS-SEM is that the scores of the unobserved variables are accurately estimated according to the linear relationship of the observed variables. Accordingly, the study will provide a reasonable explanation for the dependent variable.

Research Results

Sample Data

All respondents are Vietnamese domestic tourists. The survey results indicate that women participated in the survey in larger numbers (55.0%) than men (45.0%). Most respondents (66.5%) were between the ages of 18–30. Other groups included persons under 18 (8.5%) and people over 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. Tourists' ages between 18–30 and 31–50, and over 50, differ significantly. This is because older tourists were more cautious about traveling 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 2).

Measurement Model

The reliability and validity of the constructs were rigorously assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability as they were motivated by the scholarly literature on the application of PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2019). Many researchers favor composite reliability (CR) over Cronbach's Alpha because

CR evaluates reliability better than Cronbach's Alpha. In exploratory studies, CRs of at least 0.6 are recommended, while in confirmatory studies (Henseler et al., 2014), CRs of at least 0.7 are recommended. In addition, many other researchers hold that 0.7 is an appropriate threshold for most case studies, such as Hair et al. (2019).

Detailed information on the composite reliability is shown in (Table 3), where the minimum and maximum are 0.861 and 0.906 respectively, which satisfy the basic requirements. All factor loadings of constructs were examined, and the 0.6 requirements were calculated to determine how reliable the indicator is. The coefficients of all the constructs in the table below are all above 0.6, with a minimum loading of 0.733 and a maximum loading of 0.871. Detailed information regarding the research constructs and their corresponding loadings are presented in the Table 3. In addition, multicollinearity was of significant concern to the researchers, which was detected with common method variance (CMV) and variance inflation factor (VIF). CMV does not seem to be an issue in the works (Amoah et al., 2021; Jibril et al., 2019). Because of the VIF, which is less than five, which is below the threshold of ten, CMV does not appear to be an issue.

As well as the CR values, the AVE values were also higher than 0.50, the threshold value suggested by Fornell and Lacker (1981). These results verify the convergence validity of the dimensions measured. Additionally, we examined the squares of all correlations with AVE values to determine the constructs' discriminant validity. The square root of the AVE was higher than the correlation coefficients (Fornell & Lacker, 1981), proving discriminant validity.

Henseler et al., (2015) inspired the researchers to evaluate the discriminant validity of latent variables through Fornell and Lacker, (1981). Based on the experts' findings (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015), all the values in the

Table 2. Socio-demographic profile of study participants.

Details		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	110	55.0
	Male	90	45.0
Age	Below 18 yrs	17	8.5
	18–30 yrs	133	66.5
	31–50 yrs	41	20.5
	Above 50 yrs	9	4.5
Educational level	First degree/undergraduate	55	27.5
	Diploma/bachelor	118	59.0
	Master's/Postgraduate	21	10.5
	Others	6	3.0
Occupational status	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

Table 3. Construct reliability, validity, and factor loadings.

Constructs	VIF	Factor loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's alpha(α)	The Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Socio-cultural responsibility			0.903	0.866	0.652
CULSOR1	1.767	0.779			
CULSOR2	2.017	0.810			
CULSOR3	2.056	0.823			
CULSOR4	2.497	0.840			
CULSOR5	2.074	0.783			
Economic responsibility			0.906	0.861	0.707
ECR1	1.994	0.839			
ECR2	2.295	0.871			
ECR3	2.316	0.865			
ECR4	1.723	0.786			
Environmental responsibility			0.903	0.872	0.610
ENVR1	2.152	0.800			
ENVR2	2.038	0.759			
ENVR3	2.024	0.804			
ENVR4	2.118	0.820			
ENVR5	1.794	0.734			
ENVR6	1.736	0.764			
Responsible tourism behavioral intention			0.897	0.857	0.636
RBI1	1.746	0.753			
RBI2	1.792	0.792			
RBI3	1.895	0.783			
RBI4	2.200	0.814			
RBI5	2.247	0.843			
Choice of responsible tourism tours			0.861	0.784	0.608
TC1	1.403	0.733			
TC2	1.691	0.765			
TC3	1.908	0.831			
TC4	1.543	0.786			

Table 4. Test of Discriminant Validity – Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Construct	Socio-cultural responsibility	Economic Responsibility	Environmental responsibility	Responsible tourism behavioral intention	Choice of responsible tourism tours
Socio-cultural responsibility	0.807				
Economic Responsibility	0.715	0.841			
Environmental responsibility	0.678	0.633	0.781		
RT behavioral intention	0.694	0.680	0.732	0.798	
Choice of RT tours	0.678	0.598	0.679	0.701	0.779

diagonal form (bold) are greater than 0.5, and Table 3 shows that the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeds 0.7.

Table 4 shows that the basic and stringent assumptions of the research constructs were established after each AVE construct had higher coefficients in both column and row positions than the others.

Table 5. Discriminant validity (HTMT method).

Construct	Socio-cultural responsibility	Economic Responsibility	Environmental responsibility	Responsible tourism behavioral intention	Choice of responsible tourism tours
Socio-cultural responsibility					
Economic Responsibility	0.828				
Environmental responsibility	0.782	0.730			
RT behavioral intention	0.799	0.786	0.841		
Choice of RT tours	0.820	0.729	0.811	0.846	

After evaluating the cross-load coefficient matrix, a test was conducted to determine the HTMT index. Table 5 - Heterotrait-Monotrait matrix shows that all HTMT indexes are less than 0.90.

Structural Modeling-Path Analysis

This study demonstrates the essence of path analysis, also known as structural modeling, which concerns model fit. In this analysis, the causal relationship between research constructs is revealed. Thus, the results of the study indicate that Responsible behavioral intention (RBI) has a potential impact or effect on current constructs such as Economic responsibility (ECR), Socio-Cultural responsibility (CULSOR), and Environmental Responsibility (ENVR). Further, tourists' choice of responsible tourism tours was strongly affected by their intention to behave responsibly.

Table 6 below shows the regression coefficients of Beta (*), significant values and P-values for the research model. Results with a P-value less than 0.05 indicate there is a significant difference in the effect of independent variables on dependent variables. Moreover, the predictive power associated with the research model that determines the regression model values was also

Table 6. Hypothetical path coefficient sources.

Relationship	Beta (β)	Mean value	SD error	t-value	Effect size (Cohen's f^2)	P-value	Empirical remarks
		Standard bootstrap results					
H1: CULSOR -> RBI	0.236	0.414	0.064	6.464	0.062	0.000	Accepted
H2: ECR -> RBI	0.249	0.248	0.065	3.842	0.076	0.000	Accepted
H3: ENVR -> RBI	0.414	0.703	0.038	18.539	0.233	0.000	Accepted
H4: RBI-> TC	0.701	0.239	0.067	3.525	0.965	0.000	Accepted
Dependent Variable	Coefficient of determination (R^2)			Adjusted R^2			
Responsible tourism behavioral intention	0.636			0.630			
Choice of RT tours	0.491			0.489			

evaluated. Environmental responsibility has a stronger impact on responsible behavioral intention than socio-cultural responsibility and economic responsibility. A significant impact is highlighted on decisions regarding responsible tourism tours as a result of the intention to behave responsibly ($\beta = 0.701$). In the following table and figure, the R^2 for the predictive variable (Responsible Tourism behavioral intention) is 63%. As well, the predictive variable (the choice of responsible tourism tours) had an R^2 of 48.9%.

As a result of the estimation results, the hypothesis is accepted with the path coefficient of CULSOR -> RBI being 0.236 and $p = 0.000$ (<0.05). It is more likely that tourists will engage in responsible tourism if they take greater responsibility for the community and society. The largest proportion of tourists is willing to take responsibility for their behavior and preserve local culture. According to the survey, most tourists respect the region's customs and traditions and avoid unethical behavior. Tourists rarely sought out community cultural information or learn basic phrases in the local language, despite respecting local cultures. In this regard, tourists should be encouraged to research their destinations before traveling. To have a more meaningful experience with the locals and to preserve the culture, they should also learn a few words in the local language.

Based on the estimation results, the hypothesis is accepted with the path coefficient of ECR -> RBI being 0.249 and the p-value smaller than 0.05. Tourist intentions to behave responsibly in tourism are positively influenced by economic responsibility. It means that tourists who are more responsible for the economy are more likely to practice responsible tourism. The majority of tourists used local restaurants and bought regional products which helped the community and the economy. Additionally, tourists stayed in local accommodations and used local tour guides and travel agencies. Generally, tourists are positive about economic responsibility, contributing to the prosperity and development of their communities.

There is no evidence to reject the hypothesis, with the path coefficient between 0.414 and $p = 0.000$ (<0.05). A significant impact of environmental responsibility on tourists' intentions to practice responsible tourism was highlighted. Responsible tourism is more likely to be practiced by tourists who care about the environment. According to statistics, most people support the environment by following protected areas rules and throwing trash into containers. On the other hand, most tourists avoided disposable packaging while fewer tourists used water and electricity. Hence, tour operators should inform tourists to conserve energy during their trips and in their routines. Almost half of the tourists have not changed their choice of vehicles to reduce CO_2 emissions. Tourists need to know that choosing the right vehicle is crucial to protecting the environment since only few tourists walk or cycle.

Responsibility tourists' behavior dramatically influences their intentions to choose responsible tours ($\beta = 0.701$). The majority of tourists intend to participate in responsible tourism and recommend it to others. Responsible

tourism behavior is significantly influenced by environmental responsibility, leading tourists to select environmentally friendly travel programs.

Discussion

Tourism research continues to play a crucial role in determining consumer behavior when it comes to the responsible consumption of products and services. Tourists demonstrate a range of behaviors, some of which are responsible, and some of which are not; therefore, their travel behavior can indicate varying levels of responsibility (Stanford, 2008). According to Budeanu (2007), there are discrepancies between consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward responsible tourism. It has been shown in previous studies that a positive attitude toward responsible tourism is not always accompanied by coherent responsible behavior and choices (Budeanu, 2007; Chafe, 2005; Goodwin & Francis, 2003). While other researchers found that behavioral changes are positively correlated with the adoption of responsible tourism practices (Dias et al., 2021; Stanford, 2008; Parikshat et al., 2021; Um & Yoon, 2021; Yoon et al., 2019).

It is necessary to evaluate the value of T-statistics. If the t-value is over 1.96, the test is statistically significant at the 5% level, which means that there is a relationship between the research concepts. It can be seen from these results (Table 5) that the relationships given are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$ and $t >$ 1.96), indicating that the hypotheses about the relationship of concepts proposed in the study are correct. The estimations result in a path coefficient of CULSOR -> RBI, ECR -> RBI, ENVR -> RBI alternately 0.236, 0.249, 0.414, and $p = 0.000$ (<0.05). It means that tourists who take more responsibility for socio-cultural, economic, and environmental issues are more likely to participate in responsible tourism.

According to the first hypothesis, socio-cultural responsibility will influence responsible tourism behavior. This hypothesis is supported by a positive correlation. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Kim et al. (2020), which demonstrate that pro-social behavior affects tourists' attitudes toward responsible tourism, their intention to travel responsibly, and their behavior toward responsible tourism. Further findings of Diallo et al. (2015) indicate that socio-culturally engaged tourists tend to make responsible tourism consumer choices.

The hypothesis (H2), which is that economic responsibility is positively related to responsible tourism behavioral intention, produced a positive correlation. In other words, economic responsibility influences the intention to engage in responsible tourism behavior slightly. According to Parikshat et al. (2021), responsible tourism practices also impact economic responsibility as well, although the impact level is higher ($\beta = 0.36$).

Responsible tourist pays more for environmentally-friendly transportation and services (Choi et al., 2017; Han 2021). More recent studies have focused on the environmental impact of tourists on responsible tourism practices by reducing garbage production and limiting resource consumption (Choi et al., 2017; Khan, 2003; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Wang et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2018). According to Gong et al., (2019), the findings of the research highlight environmentally ethical behavior as a key component of responsible tourist action. The results of this study are similar to those of the previous one, which identified that ecological responsibility significantly influences customer decisions regarding responsible tourism ($\beta = 0.414$, $p < 0.05$).

Local governments, tour operators, and researchers should note the findings of this study. It provides further insight into the scientific debate on responsible tourism, showing that responsible tourism practices are related to responsible tourism behaviors. Meanwhile, these results provide suggestions for private and public operators interested in responsible tourism.

Conclusion

Vietnam's strategy for sustainable tourism development for the period 2001 – 2010 is not effective. Vietnam has not developed responsible tourism in recent years. In this context, one of the key goals of the draft Vietnam Tourism Development Strategy from 2011 to 2020, with a vision for 2030, is to promote responsible tourism. The Thua Thien Hue Department of Tourism also organizes activities to promote responsible tourism in Hue by establishing a responsible tourism group. A number of travel businesses participate in this organization, working together to develop tourism products, link tourism exploitation with environmental protection, support local people, and share benefits. Although responsible tourism has gained more traction, there are not as many participants as other tours. It is crucial to investigate tourists' motivation to participate in responsible tourism tours. This study provides solutions for implementing responsible tourism as Thua Thien Hue's tourism development strategy.

This study investigated the relationship between responsible tourism practices and the intention to choose responsible tourism tours. Hypotheses about whether tourists' environment, socio-cultural, and economic responsibilities influence tourism behavioral intention were accepted in this study. Study findings indicate that responsible Tourism behavioral intention can be affected by economic responsibility, socio-cultural responsibility, and environmental responsibility. It was highlighted that tourists' choices of responsible tourism tours are influenced by their intention to engage in responsible tourism. A tourist with an interest in protecting the environment would probably enjoy a tour with lots of activities for the environment.

This study contributes to the development of a theoretical framework for responsible tourism by incorporating the concept of responsible tourism behavior. It also explores the significant role that responsible tourism practices play in predicting responsible tourism behavior. The concept of tourist responsibility encompasses economic, social-cultural, and environmental responsibility. Economic responsibility means eating in local restaurants and hotels and buying local products and services. Taking social-cultural responsibility is about respecting local cultures and customs, interacting with local people, and not acting unethically. Environmental responsibility refers to tourism actions that protect and improve the environment.

There is a positive relationship between tourists' responsibility and their intention to participate in responsible tourism. In particular, environmental responsibility plays a crucial role in responsible tourism. Based on the findings of this study, responsible tourism should concern responsible tourism practices and attitudes that significantly influence tourist behavior, a similar finding to previous studies (Chao, 2012; López-Mosquera et al., 2014; Panwanitdumrong & Cheng, 2021; Wang et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2018).

The study provides several practical implications for tourism stakeholders in responsible tourism. To encourage responsible tourism, local governments and communities must foster tourists' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors toward responsible tourism, as tourist responsibility has a significant influence on tourism. Local governments, and communities should promote responsible tourism through travel brochures, the Internet, and social media. Developing responsible tourism may require tourism practitioners and host communities to encourage tourists to perceive responsible tourism positively.

Therefore, local governments and host communities can develop educational programs that raise tourists' awareness of the importance of responsible tourism to the region's economies, socio-cultural life, and the environment. Organizing a variety of responsible tourism tours will inspire tourists to travel responsibly by incorporating many activities that involve tourist involvement. It is very important for tour operators to protect and improve the environment on a package holiday due to the fact that environmental responsibility is one of the most significant factors in the participation of tourists in responsible tourism.

The research was limited to the following: First of all, the sample size was small compared to Vietnamese subscribers. Therefore, it would be interesting if a larger sample could be used to test the model's validity and reliability. Secondly, only tourists who traveled to Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam were included in the study. As a result, the authors are looking forward to seeing a future study that takes a mixed approach from the supply and demand side. Lastly, the study may have overlooked other aspects of responsible tourism practices, thus calling on scholars to find other variables relevant to responsible tourism practices.

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