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EXAMINING INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS'
SATISFACTION WITH HANOI TOURISM

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Summary:

As the capital of Vietnam, Hanoi boasts itself of a rich culture, historical and traditional values that draw attention of many foreigners. There are enormous potentials for the tourism development, but the city still cannot attract as many tourists as expected due to the monotonous tourism services and products. Thus, the study was conducted to explore the relationship between the international tourists' initial expectations and their perceptions to examine their (dis-)satisfaction level with the current tourism destination attributes in Hanoi. By using the utility of mixed-method design as a data collection, the study contemporaneously analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data. In the quantitative research, the survey questionnaire was investigated the opinions and feedback from 246 foreign tourists who visited Hanoi in summer, 2012. The HOLSAT model was applied as a valuable tool to elaborate the (dis-)satisfaction of tourists at the destination. Additionally, it has been inspired by the face-to-face interview with seven tour operators to gain insights into the problems and contribution of their current business toward Hanoi tourism and international tourists to the city. Further, the research proposes some suggestions to improve the positive image of the city as an attracting tourist destination. These suggestions aim to improve the visitors' satisfaction and their willingness to revisit. Finally, the thesis would provide useful insights to local government and tour operators in better planning and managing tourism activities to maximize both visitors' satisfaction and profitability of tourism enterprises, and at the same time sustain natural resources in the long term.

Key words: Hanoi, destination attributes, expectations, perceptions, satisfactions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Known as the non-smoke industry, tourism plays a crucial role in creating jobs for the people of a country as well as contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of that country. In Vietnam, tourism has become a key contributor to the economy. If in 2005, the Vietnam tourism (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2011, p.32) have contributed to over 2 billion dollars; in 2012, the international tourists have contributed to approximately 7.67 billion dollars (160,000 billion Vietnamdongs) (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2013) to GDP in Vietnam. The objective of the tourism sectors striving to turn Vietnam into a country of tourism development in the region by increasing the total income from tourism reaching 10 to 11 billion dollars in 2015 and 18 to 19 billion dollars in 2020 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2011, p.13-14). In addition, the tourism industry not only creates employment opportunities within the tourism sector but also generates jobs in the different domestic industries, such as agriculture, transport and other services. Therefore, promoting development of Vietnam tourism market will deploy tourism resources and create more opportunities for the national and remote area economic growth.

To develop the tourism industry, it is crucial to explore both domestic and international tourism markets and more importantly to exceed the visitors' expectation to attract their return. To achieve this level, the industry needs to understand the visitors' needs to serve them better and satisfy their demands so as to attract their returns. In fact, there are many international visitors to Vietnam yearly, but only 15% to 20 % of the visitors are interested in revisiting (Thu, 2012). Vietnam tourism appears to focus on the short term benefit of tourism development and lack of long-term investment as they lost sight of visitors' feedback on tourist destinations and their evaluation of the services rendered.

As a heart of Vietnam with the cultivation of thousands of year history, Hanoi has become a cultural center of the country with many attractions including natural landscapes, long-standing

historical sites as well as the intangible cultural heritage. Those elements have turned Hanoi into a popular tourist destination in the world. Since the country's innovation, Hanoi tourism has grown significantly and offers many different types of service packages. In addition, Hanoi is the hub of international tourists to Vietnam. The number of domestic and international arrivals to Hanoi has been increased every year. Although the city tourism has improved over the years and turned into the fast-paced tourism industry, it faces many issues such as poor transportation system, traffic chaos, and serious environmental pollution due to rapid urbanization, food hygiene and safety. Hanoi tourism needs to overcome these issues to optimize its potential.

This research focused on obtaining an understanding the strength and weakness of Hanoi tourism industry and evaluating Hanoi's international tourists' satisfaction. As a Hanoian, the researcher's key objectives are to offer insightful recommendations to enhance the visitors' satisfaction with an expectation to assist promote Hanoi tourism.

1.2 Purpose of the study and the research questions

The main purpose of this research is to obtain foreign visitors' feedback on Hanoi as a tourism destination in 2012 by examining the relationships between their expectation and their perception during their visit. Therefore, this study focuses on foreign tourists in Hanoi. Information collected in this study will support the author in evaluating the current situation of Hanoi tourism, and in figuring out how it correlates to the satisfaction of the international visitors.

This study collects positive and negative feedback from foreign tourists during their stay in Hanoi by using a HOLSAT (HOLiday SATisfaction) model developed by Tribe and Snaith (1998). From the study findings, the author's objectives are would like to recommend alternative solutions to help develop Hanoi tourism as a world-class tourism destination.

The main research questions of this study are:

- What expectations did the visitors have on Hanoi as a destination?
- What were their experiences (positive and/ negative) during their visit to Hanoi?

- What is the (dis-)satisfaction level of international tourists in Hanoi tourism?
- How to increase tourists' satisfaction with Hanoi tourism?

The study includes seven main sections which are to be explained clearly in the schedule section, and is conducted over 12 months.

1.3 Thesis Goal

The thesis' goal is to examine the level of international tourists' satisfaction while visiting Hanoi and propose solutions to improve the city tourism development. Below are the specific objectives of this study:

- An analysis on the current conditions of Hanoi tourism.
- Evaluation of satisfaction level of international tourists with Hanoi tourism
- Proposal to improve the satisfaction level of foreign tourists with Hanoi tourism
- As personal goals, the author would like to achieve in-depth knowledge on visitors' satisfaction and Hanoi tourism which may support her further study.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of this paper consists of seven sections. The first section gives an overview picture of the background information, the choice of research topic and the main goal of the study. The second section presents a literature review of the study including the main concept of tourism, tourists, and tourism destination attributes toward tourists' satisfaction. Following is the overview of the case study in Hanoi tourism. The fourth section presents the methodology with a mixed-research method by a questionnaire survey and face-to-face interview. The data collection, data reliability, and validity are also discussed. The fifth section focuses on all the empirical findings and data collected under SPSS analysis and HOLSAT model. The sixth section proposes some suggestion to improve Hanoi tourism in foreigners' eyes. And the last section closes the study with a conclusion based on the main findings of the study.

1.5 Research Outline

Figure 1 below presents the research outline that contains the key components of the research process:

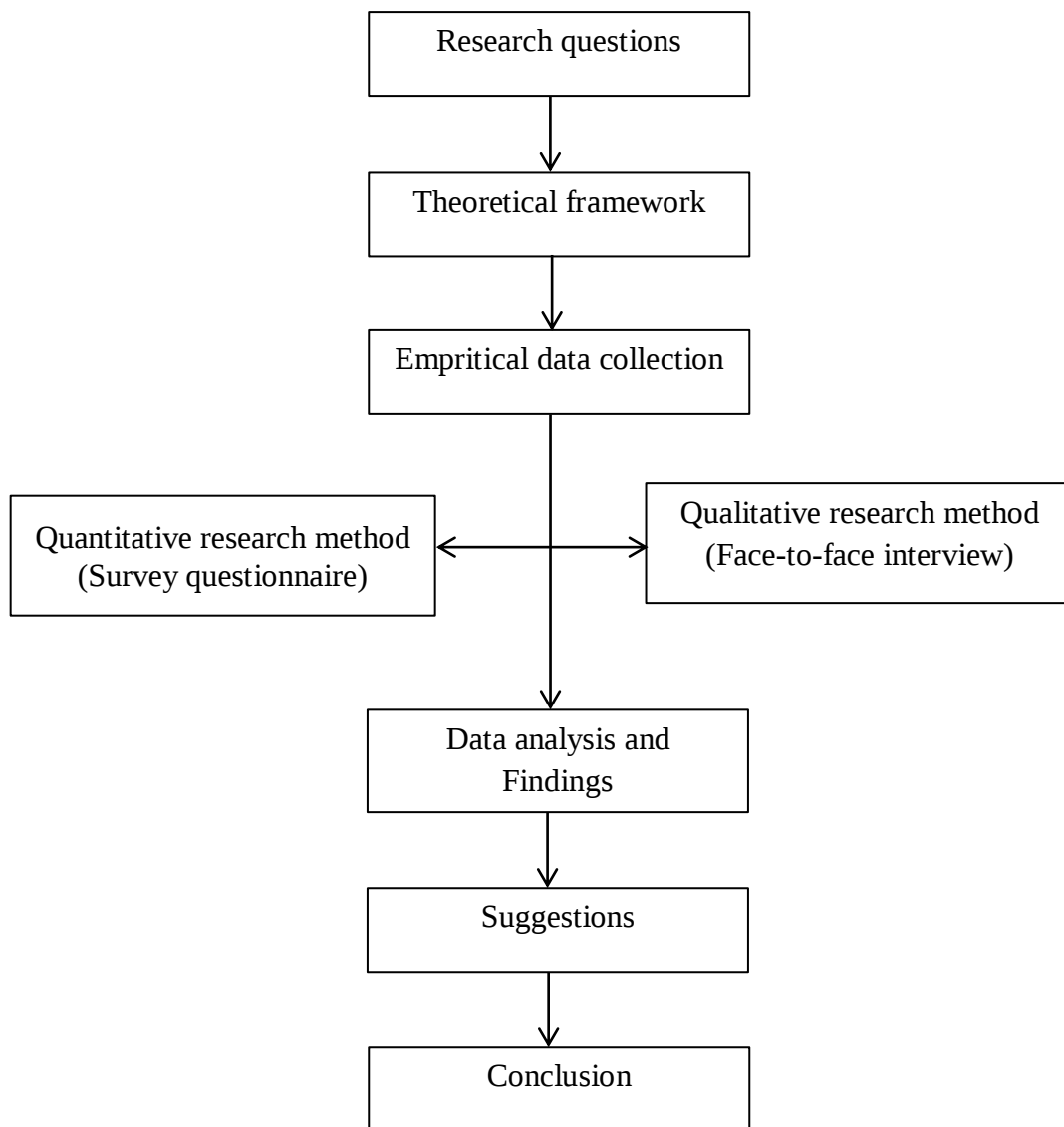


Figure 1: Hanoi Research design

As shown in Figure 1, there are seven significant sections designing for the research of Hanoi tourism, such as identifying the research questions, reviewing the literature, investigating and collecting the empirical data, analyzing data and generating findings, proposing some suggestions and giving conclusion. The use of mixed methods research, namely quantitative research (e.g. a survey questionnaire) and qualitative research (e.g. a face-to-face interview), is to tackle these four given research questions above from any relevant angle and to gain insight into the research problem and to give some useful outcomes for the further research development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework of the study focuses on the basic concept of tourism, tourist's satisfaction, the attributes affecting tourists' satisfaction with a tourism destination, and on analyzing the relationship among these attributes and tourists' satisfaction in terms of their demographic and travel behavior characteristics.

First, the chapter discusses the definitions of tourism, its types and product. Second, the concept of tourist, which involves tourists' characteristics, expectation, perception, satisfaction, is also represented. Finally, the last section focuses on the relationship among the attributes of destinations and tourists' satisfaction.

2.1 Tourism

In fact, tourism has emerged for a long time, along with the development of human society. In ancient time, civilizations such as Egypt, Greece appeared the form of travel, but it was spontaneous activities with the pilgrimage to the holy places, holy grounds, the Christian churches or the excursions of the kings and nobles. The renaissance in European countries came in the seventeenth century with the socio-economic development. Undoubtedly, it supported the rapid growth of information technology, transportation as well as promoted strong tourism development. However, not until the modern era with the explosion of scientific and technical revolution has the advent of new means of transport allowed people to easily move from place to place in a short time. People began to increase their needs for exploring the nature, seeking the cultural knowledge and spiritual enrichment, or simply just to take a break after the long working days. Thus, tourism has gradually become a familiar activity in human life.

2.1.1 Definition of Tourism

There are many definitions of tourism. World Tourism Organization (1991) defines tourism as the activities of persons who move to places outside their usual environment for not more than one year for leisure, business and other purpose. Basically, there are three criteria in this definition such that:

- Places outside of their common environment
- Type of purpose: tourists might travel to a destination for such purposes as holiday, sightseeing, educational reasons.
- Duration: the maximal time of staying at a destination is less than one year. It can be with or without overnight stay

Hunziker and Krapf states tourism as the “sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected to any earning activity” (Cruz, 2006, p.2)

In Vietnam, Ministry of Justice (1999) gives an explanation of tourism as a human activity outside their regular place of residence in order to satisfy their demands as sightseeing, entertainment, and relaxation within a certain period of time.

However, Goeldner, Ritchie, & McIntosh (2000, p.20) explains tourism as a sum of the phenomena and relationships based on the interaction among four elements: tourists, business suppliers, host governments, and host communities with the purpose of attracting and serving tourists and visitors.

From what are mentioned above, tourism can be described as an activity related to an individual, a group or an organization that goes out of their habitual residence in the short or long journey in another place without a primary purpose of making a profit.

2.1.2 Types of tourism

Newsome, Moore & Dowling (2002, p.11) state that there are two types of tourism in Figure 2, namely, mass tourism and alternative tourism. The mass tourism is so-called as traditional or conventional tourism, formed by large numbers of people pursuing their own cultural replication in institutionalized settings with the little cultural or environmental interaction in the actual installation. The alternative tourism can be deemed as “special interest tourism” or “responsible” tourism, which regularly puts considerable emphasis on contact and understanding between hosts and a small number of tourists as well as between tourists and the environment.

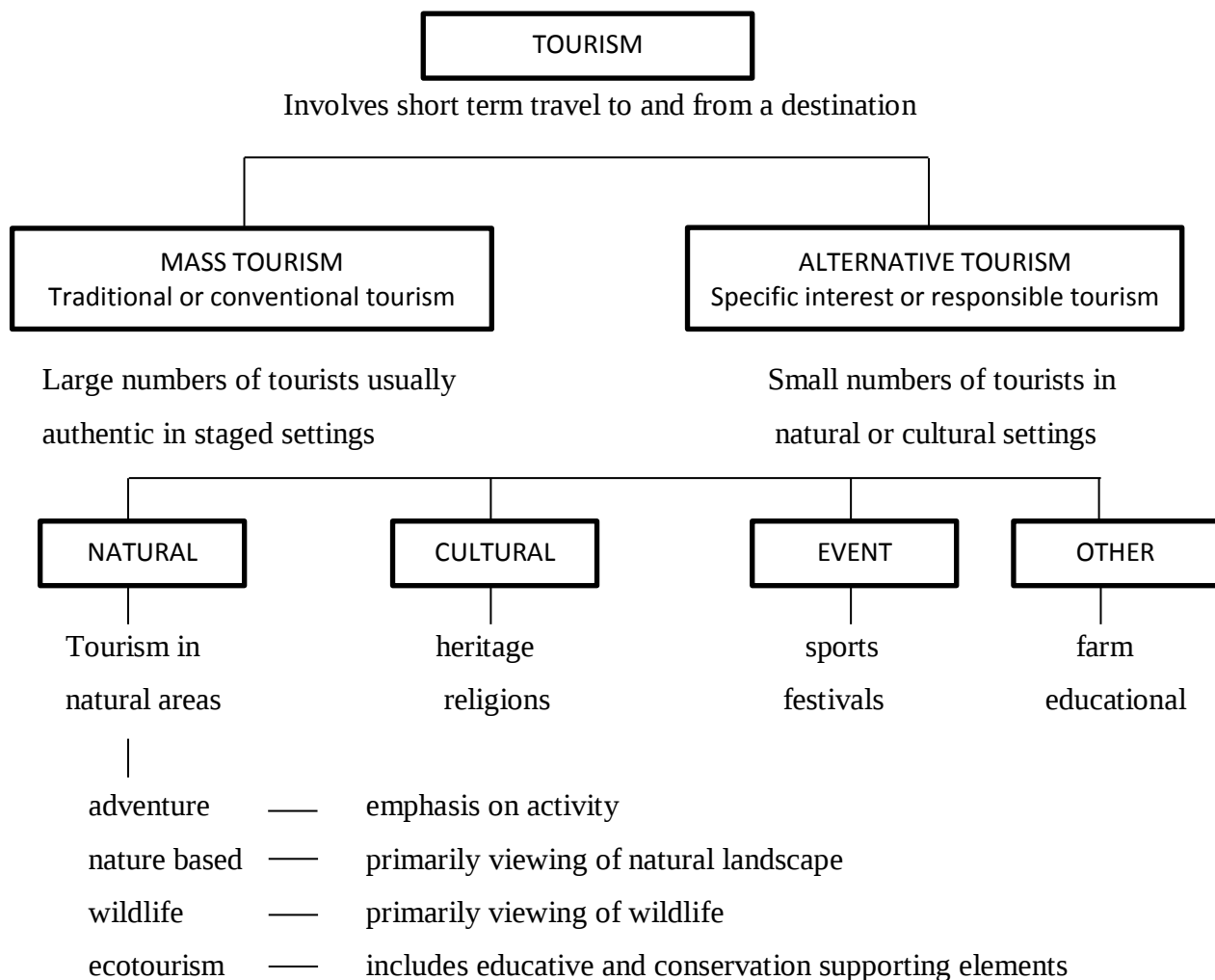


Figure 2: An overview of tourism (Newsome, Moore & Dowling, 2002,p.11)

2.1.3 The city as a tourist product

Products (Kandampully, Mok, & Sparks, 2001, p.6) are as a whole consists of different tangible goods and intangible services, or even the mixture among those facets. Thus, products can be “purely tangible goods, tangible goods with accompanying intangible service, a major intangible service with accompanying tangible goods, and a pure intangible service”.

In the study of Kandampully, Mok, & Sparks (2001, p.9-10) reveals that tourism product is as a combination of all goods, activities, and services provided to tourists in different areas of the tourism industry to meet their travel needs. There are many types of tourism products that can be offered at a tourism destination: accessibility (e.g. transportation, communication), amenities (e.g. entertainment, food and beverages), accommodation, attractions (e.g. exhibitions, relics), and activities (e.g. outdoor and indoor activities), and people. Apart from this, a tourism product seems to be a service than a tangible product because all tourist activities are based on both direct services (e.g. transportation, accommodation, catering) and indirect services (e.g. insurance, wholesaling). However, the tourism product is not only an amalgam of tangible products and intangible services but also includes psychological experiences and human component. The psychological experiences are all the feelings of tourists from the beginning to the end of their trip. Obviously, tourist's perceptions play as a part of the tourism product and represent its psychological component. Different people have different needs and seek different experiences or benefits from the same and products. Therefore, the tourists' experiences and perceptions are diverse that may cause to the different outcomes of the level of tourist satisfaction. What's more, the perceptions of a human component are significant facet of tourism product. The interaction between tourists and hosts (e.g. locals, tourism workers) occurs in both direct and indirect way. This contact may impact on how tourists feel and examine an offered service or provided products. If tourists receive high quality of goods or services, they will feel happy and satisfied with the tourism product. If not, tourists may complain or discontent with those offers (Kandampully, Mok, & Sparks, 2001, p.9-10).

Kolb (2006, p.10) mentions a city as a product because it contains physical goods (e.g. monuments, transportation), services (e.g. festivals, events) and (visit) experience. These elements combine to form an image of the city which can be shown in figure 3 below:

Place	Services/ Events	Image
Interesting architecture	Festivals	Exciting
	Parades	Historical
Historical buildings	Cultural events	Charming
Cultural facilities	Plays	Friendly
Churches, temples, mosques	Sports	Beautiful
Unique street patterns	Tours	Artistic
Publics parks or squares	Cinema	Ethnic
Walking paths, canals	Hotel rooms	Spiritual
Mountains, rivers, oceans	Dining	Licentious
Monuments	Entertainment	Family fun
Transportation system		

Figure 3: Product Components of the City (Kolb 2006, p.11)

The Figure3 illustrates the combination of a place, services/events, and the image to create a city as a tourist destination. The “location” factor includes all the physicals structures (historical and traditional infrastructure) and physical products (geographic setting, cultural facilities and spiritual buildings); meanwhile, the services/events are what a city offers to tourists such as accommodation, local performances, and so on. Plus, the image of the city is mentally created and developed by the combination of the physical city and its services/events. A city’s image can boast of beauty, history, hospitality or artistic value. By visiting a city, tourists can absorb authentic experience in their own way. Because of its attractiveness to visitors, a city also can be so-called as a tourist product. Kolb (2006, p.60-61) states that a city may offers a variety of core products (e.g. festivals, transportation) and supporting products (e.g. guidebook, souvenirs) toward different interests among tourists. Nevertheless, consumers may form positive or negative feelings towards the city’s products based on their authentic experience.

2.2. Tourists

Obviously, the tourist is an object which has an essential part for the development of tourism and its activities. If there is no tourist, the tourism industry cannot be thrived, and operation of the travel business becomes meaningless. That is why, Devashish (2011, p.29) considers tourism and its product as a supply side to meet the needs of a demand side as a tourist in the marketing perspective.

2.2.1 Definition of Tourists

There are many definitions of tourists standing on different angles. Reisinger & Turner (2003, p.37) define tourist as “a temporary visitor who stays at least 24 hours in the region visited for the purpose of leisure (holiday, sport, study, recreation), business, family (visiting friends and relatives) or meeting and conferences”

Ministry of Justice of Vietnam (1999) defines tourists as those who travel or a combination of travel except for going to school, working or practicing to receive earnings in the destination.

Lubbe (2005, p.51) lists four different types of tourists, namely, a tourist, an international tourist, a domestic tourist, same-day visitor or an “excursionist”. A tourist is a visitor who travels to another venue where they are not familiar for less than a year and with a purpose of not receiving any remuneration for his or her activities undertaken at the place visited. An international tourist is a visitor who travels to a different country other than his or her normal place of residence and usual environment for more than 24 hours but less than a year with the major purpose of implementing the trip than receiving remuneration of what he or she does at the site visited. A domestic tourist can be anyone who is living in a country travelling and staying at a place within that country for more than 24 hours with the main purpose of undertaking the trip than receiving remuneration for any activity. Same-day visitor or an “excursionist” is a visitor who travels to a place for less than 24 hours and he or she does not stay overnight there.

Conversely, Ministry of Justice of Vietnam (1999) divides tourists into two specific types: domestic tourists and international tourists. Domestic tourists are citizens and foreigners living in Vietnam, who travel within the territory of Vietnam. International tourists are foreigners, Vietnamese residing overseas and travel to Vietnam, or Vietnamese citizens and foreigners residing in Vietnam go abroad for travelling.

According to the respective objectives of the study, the author only focuses on the targeted group as foreign tourists who visited Hanoi during the research period.

2.2.2 Tourists' Characteristics

The characteristics of tourists (Huh, Uysal, & McCleary, 2006, p.80) are vital factors when analyzing satisfaction with destination. Ivanovic (2008, p.302) classifies three faces of a tourist that are often useful in tourism research or marketing and promotion strategy. The demographic features included age, education, income, occupation, gender, marital status, family status, ethnic background. The tourist socio-economic indicators referred to how the possibility of tourist to engage in a chosen destination. Additionally, behavioral characteristics allowed enhancing the understanding of needs, motivation and travel awareness of a tourist.

Similar to Ivanovic, Zhu (2010, p.118-119) views the tourist characteristic in the context of demographic and cultural background, consumer's socio-economic characteristic and past consumption experience.

Many scholars (Ivanovic et al, 2009, p.134; Tassiopoulos, 2008, p.31; and Jafari, 2000, p.557) find that demographic factors can impact on tourism demand. Age, gender, education, social class, nationality (Kadhi, 2009, p.43) are core inputs affected to how tourists perceive the image of tourist destinations or why tourists (Shahrivar, 2012, p.62) choose a destination over others. Decision-making is also affected by demographic characteristics. Additionally, the distance between the place of residence of visitors and tourist destinations is one of the factors that strongly influence their perception and satisfaction. The further the distance is, the greater the difference in climate, weather, culture, traditions is.

Beerli& Martin (2003) describe that the tourist's socio-economic indicators (e.g. occupation) can affect to the perception of places which can be continued to reflect the level of tourist's satisfaction. In general, the majority of high-income tourists will spend more money on services with an expectation of receiving high quality service. Obviously, the higher expectation is, the difficult it is to achieve satisfaction.

Travel characteristics (Yan et al, 2011, p.491) can be divided into two facets: travel behavior characteristics (e.g. travel purpose, travel mode, travel distance, travel urgency, value of time) and travel information characteristics (travel information sources, type and content of travel information, travel information issue method). A study of Factors That Influence Tourists Satisfaction (Shahrivar, 2012, p.62) shows that travel behavior characteristics can impact on tourists' expectation and perception. The past experience may bring to travelers some knowledge to compare with their upcoming trip which can influence their view to tourism service or product at a destination. Negative perception during the trip may cause unsatisfied or complaint behavior. Another point is that the travel information can create the interaction between tourists and tourism suppliers (e.g. travel agencies, host communities). With limited knowledge, travelers usually search for information and feedback of the tourism product or service before making their decisions.

Based on the findings of cited studies, the author has decided that it is necessary to include demographic, socio-economic and behavioral indicators of tourists in the study to examine the level of tourists' satisfaction. The demographic characteristics are made up of age, country-of-origin; travel behavior characteristics included travel companion, type of tourism, influenced their traveling decisions and sources' information about the destination.

2.2.3 Tourists' expectation

The phenomenon of expectation has been defined in many ways. Strogdill (Yau, 1994, p.87) specifies the concept of expectations as 'function of drive, the estimated probability of a possible outcome, and the estimated desirability of the outcome'. Oliver (2010, p.63), for instance, asserts

that expectation is such a predictability of the future results based on the past experience, current circumstances, or other sources of information

Expectation (Manente, 2008) happens before the visit. Tourists always visualize their chosen destination and the potential benefits that they can receive toward their coming trip. It can be inspired from tourism advertisements, commercials, brochures, mass media and informal information, or word-of-mouth by friends and relatives. In the case of Ireland, many first-time visitors have well prepared for their trip by using the internet as a useful tool to search for some advance information beforehand. Multiple websites with virtual brochures are available for searchers to view idyllic scenery of Ireland. By creating eye-catching tourist attractions, a destination can easily become a push factor to motivate tourist to travel (Skinner & Theodossopoulos, 2011, p.149).

Expectations have many different typologies in a tourist side regardless to the ideal type, the expected type, the minimum tolerable type, the deserved type. The ideal facet is what consumer wishes for the product; meanwhile, the expected facet refers to the reflections of what he or she predicts the upcoming performance of the product. If the minimum tolerable element is the lowest level of the performance of the product that can be accepted by a consumer, the deserved element may reflects what he or she recommends to a better performance of the product from his or her own point of view. Besides, expectation can be formed by the nature of the product or service, costs and efforts involved in attaining benefits, and the social benefits or costs. Nonetheless, business divided expectation into predictive and normative aspects. Predictive expectations, which can essentially cause dissatisfaction, are expectations allocating beliefs in the prospect of the performance level. Normative expectations are the ideal standards of how a product should perform, and are matching to the above ideal facet. (Yau, 1994, p.87-88)

Undoubtedly, expectation is such a driving force to stimulate economic activity, movement through space, social change and reorganization in specific local settings. It plays a vital role in shaping the tourism experience in determining success or failure in promoting the local community or students to adapt to travel or explore new possibilities through cultural boundaries.

2.2.4 Tourists' perception

Schiffman and Kanuk (Seaton & Bennett, 1996, p.74) explain that perception is “a process by which individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world”.

As stated by Pizam&Mansfeld (1999, p.104-106): “a tourist perception can be defined as the process of translating tourist information from the external world into the internal, mental world that each of us experience”. The ideal self-image of what the tourist views a destination and the actual self-image of what he or she observes and experiences at a destination may get impacted by him or herself as being cognitive. In other words, perception (Manente, 2008) refers to the place achievement that tourist discover in their trip to examine what they have expected before their visitation. Echtner& Ritchie (2003, p.41) find that tourists' perception may be influenced by the overall impressions and feelings of a destination image. In the study of Haahti (1986) reveals that tourist perceptions (of 12 examined European countries) may impact by a wide range of different attributes, such as money, accessibility, sports facilities and other activities, nightlife and entertainment, peace and quietness, hospitality, wilderness, tracking and camping, cultural experience, scenery, change from the usual destinations. Tourists may have negative or positive perception of these same values in different destinations.

Perception has external and internal stimuli. External stimuli contain controlled, induced or targeted information such as advertisement. Internal stimuli take account of uncontrolled, naive or self-directed information on television, newspapers, authentic or prior experience, or by word-of-mouth. Uncontrolled information is usually considered being highly-remain and thus may have more impact on beliefs. Perception may not conceal and be acceptable if the information does not go through the current beliefs. In addition, internal stimuli with motives (push factors), needs (embodiment of the motive), want (expression of needs), and the benefits (expected results), act as a significant role in the tourists' perception. The element of personality, lifestyle, and attitudes may impact on how tourists feel pleasant, enjoyable, angry or surprised at a destination (Hübner & Gössling, 2012, p.48).

Seaton & Bennett (1996, p.73-74) forms perception in relation with sensations. There are five sense modes (sight, sound, taste, touch, smell), four senses of movements and position in space (pain, cold, warmth, kinesthesia), and vestibular senses (body balance, position, movement). During the trip, tourists convert these senses to experience a place, such as tasting food, smelling air, hearing local sounds, touching actual product. However, perception and sensation are totally different. Sensations may act as the raw material of experience; meanwhile, perceptions interpret and add meanings to them.

It is argued that tourists (Moutinho, 2000) may perceive risks during their visit. Whenever tourists purchase or consume any kind of service or product at the destination, they may confront with the potential risks and ambiguous issues: the vagueness of the product, uncertainty of the location and the method of purchase, a certain degree of psychological and financial consequences, and even by the personal uncertainty of the tourist. The study of Morakabati (2007, xvii) shows that the travel decision may get impacted by those varieties of risks regarding to health risks, financial loss, and the risk of dissatisfaction from their travel experience. For instance, the Luxor massacre by the Islamic terrorism killed 58 foreign tourists in Egypt in the last quarter of the 20th century. After the attack, the volume of tourists did not increase insofar as it impacts to the slowdown in the growth of expenditure in this country. (Morakabati, 2007, p.62-63)

One can conclude that perception (Reisinger& Turner, 2003, p149) can be affected by personal characteristics: people's value orientations, expectations, experiences, and interests, as well as denoted to tourism behavior before, during, and after the trip.

2.2.5 Tourists' Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction (Kozak&Rimmington, 2000) is an indispensable facet influencing directly to a success of the destination marketing because it impacts the choice of destination, the consumption of goods and services, and the decision to return.

In Figure 4 below, Pine & More (1999, p.120) measured customer satisfaction in the correlation between expectation and perception. Expectation (E1) means “what a customer expects” and perception/ experience (E2) shows “what the customer perceives he gets”

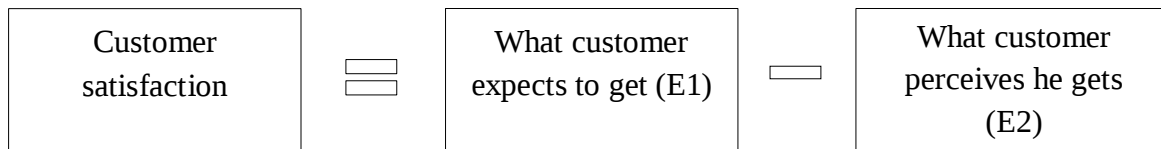


Figure 4: Customer satisfaction design (Pine & More,1999, p.120)

Similarly, a study based on the concept of satisfaction (Tribe & Snaith 1998) found that tourists' satisfaction with a destination is based on the level of assessment of tourist destination properties that exceed their expectations for these attributes. HOLSAT model is its ability to measure the level of tourists' satisfaction by examining the relationship between their holiday perception and their previous expectation.

As a consumer, tourist (Zhu, 2010, p.119) has his or her own expectation of a chosen destination before the trip. It can be about an image of a destination, price or quality of a service or product, and so on. The tourist perceives the performance of a destination within his or her trip. The perception of a destination allows tourists to evaluate their prior expectation to see if the trip makes them satisfied or discontented. Thus, the expectation directly affects both the perceived value and satisfaction. When consumer (Reisinger & Turner, 2003, p.176) has gained more experience than what they expected, they entirely satisfy with their trip. In contrast, if experiencing at a destination makes tourist feel displeasure, then dissatisfaction occurs.

However, the study of Reisinger & Turner (2003, p.177) has found that positive satisfaction might happen when experience has failed to meet the expectation. They classify three levels of positive satisfaction ranking from “very satisfied”, “quite satisfied”, to “satisfied”. The satisfaction level is high or low depending on the fulfillment of expectation. Another aspect is that customer satisfaction (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999, p. 279) can be high even if one part of the service did not meet expectation. Many tourists play a role as a main actor in the consuming experience to create their own satisfaction. They retain their social and adaptive skills during the visitation and are motivated to have a ‘good time’ by their willingness to adopt needed plans to complete that goal.

Even though, dissatisfaction may be caused by the constraints of limited time and the costs of taking holiday time, various travelers allow adapting value displacement to contribute to their whole holiday experience.

In this study, expectation and perception have been defined as significant facets to verify the level of tourists' (dis-)satisfaction during their visitation in Hanoi. It is a crucial input to influence a decision to repurchase a service/ product, revisit a destination, or repeat a specific type of holiday. (Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999, p.275)

2.3 Tourism destination attributes toward Tourists' satisfaction

The study attempts to identify tourism destination attributes toward tourist satisfaction based on the push-pull framework. There are “push” and “pull” forces which affect the choice of visitors for a destination. Firstly, the push factors largely joined Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which focuses on five levels of human motivation, such as Physiological needs, Safety needs, Love and Belonging needs, Self-esteem, and Self-actualization. Understanding human needs is able to enhance the reasons why tourist choose (or not choose) a destination. Added to this, there are seven elements within socio-psychological or push motives, such as the escape from perceived mundane environment, exploration and evaluation of self, relaxation, prestige, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships and facilitation of social interaction. Those are the intrinsic motivations that push one to travel. Secondly, the pull factors, on the other hand, have been described those which are the features or attributes of the destination to serve as attraction for tourist. The cultural pull motives were novelty and education. Tourist assessments of destination attributes and their perceived utility values have become an indispensable element for destination choice (Woodside and Martin, 2008, p.18-19). In the study, socio-psychological push motivations are emphasized in order to explain why people choose to travel to Hanoi, while pull factors are what elements of Hanoi attributes to influence foreign tourists to visit this place. A more detailed explanation is presented in chapter three.

According to Reisinger & Turner (1999, p.1), destination attributes are aimed to measure how tourists perceive a destination. Each destination has its own multiple attractive attributes that

differentiate it from the others. Scholars in the past have categorized different types of destination attributes. In 1986, Haahti measured Finland's competitive position as a tourist destination from 10 aspects: money, accessibility, sports facilities and other activities, nightlife and entertainment, peace and quietness, hospitality, wilderness, tracking and camping, cultural experience, scenery and change from the usual destinations. In 1989, Calantone (Woodside & Mazanec, 2004, p.288) researched thirteen attributes of how tourists perceived a destination including shopping facilities, hospitality, safety, food, culture, tourist attraction, tourist facilities, nightlife and entertainment, scenery, beaches and water sports. Five years later, Driscoll, Lawson, & Niven (1994) examined the tourist perception of 12 destinations. He chose 18 elements which were considered as attributes of those destinations, such as facilities, landscape, safety, climate, culture, modern society, different experience, value for money, accessibility, shopping facilities, organized activities, cleanliness, family oriented, exotic place, outdoor activities, religious values, hospitality, nightlife and entertainment. After exploring these previous researches, the author has identified several attributes of a tourism destination as the followings:

2.3.1 Price

The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness report (2009, p.78) mentions that price seems to be an indispensable attribute of competitiveness which influence the tourists on deciding where they are going for their trip. Dwyer & Kim (2003, p.397) states two types of price, which are: transportation costs and ground costs. Transportation costs mean that the expense tourists need to pay for travel to and from destination; meanwhile, ground costs are payments which they spend during their visit. The consumer's decision process of travelling may be influenced by those expenses. It came as no surprise that tourists always make a comparison of the price between the destination and their location before making a decision for their trip. Even though, every country has different exchange rates and levels of living costs, travelers may have a price comparison among places. Also, the price elasticity has inversely changed among destinations or locations. The larger country it is, the different types of travel experiences it offer. The smaller a country is, the more-limited choice it proposes. It's obvious that the larger nations seem to have more price sensitivity toward their international travel behavior than the smaller ones.

2.3.2 Culture

Culture (Haviland, Prins, Walrath, & McBride, 2008, p.26) is described as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”. Culture is more than observable behavior because it is “a society’s shared and socially transmitted ideas, values, and perceptions, which are used to make sense of experience which generate behavior and are reflected in that behavior”. Reisinger & Turner’s (2002, p.311) results indicate that “cultural differences are very useful constructs for international tourism promotion, and they can provide very accurate criteria for targeting and positioning. As a result, tourism marketers should take into account the cultural backgrounds of international tourists to identify specific profiles of the market segment and determine how a destination should position itself in the international marketplace to appeal to international tourists”.

What is the connection between culture and tourism? Hall, Grindstaff, & Lo (2010, p.613-614) consider tourism as a metaphor of cultural transformation. During its development, tourism has not only created a global transformation and local activities, but also, boosted the growth of new modes of local culture through tourism consumption. In other words, tourism activities refer to a variety of culturally specific practices such as the production of nostalgia, the retrieval of collective memories and heroic imagery, the estheticization and theming of space, and the movement of people to specific places to enjoy culture, history, and nature.

Rising demand in tourism has contributed to the growth of cultural and heritage tourism. The trend (Gunn, 1997, p.28) is evident in the rise of the volume tourists who are seeking a variety of experiences such as adventure, ethnic experiences, culture, history, archaeology, bird watching, diving, and encounters with local citizens. Günlü, Pınar & Yağcı (2009, p.215) state that cultural attributes can interact tourists within their trip in three kinds, namely, the physical (e.g. built heritage), the general (the everyday life in the host community) and the specific cultural activities of the host community (e.g. rituals and festivals).

2.3.3 Entertainment and Recreation

Tourism (McKercher, 1993, p.12) is such an entertainment that satisfies the interests and demands of tourists. Pearce (2008) states that tourism entertainment is organized and managed stages designed for a large audience. It is available for all types of visitors which comprises of cultural shows, dance performances, theme park presentations, fun guided tours, and film and video presentation. Unlike from those, tourism attractions are likely to create an enjoyment for visitors to enhance their experience when they are on a visit. Those participants not only get to know, but they also have a chance to learn about culture and environment at the chosen tourist places. This fundamental element can help to improve destination competitiveness at a host community. Base on the consumer demand, host communities can plan a suitable marketing strategy toward tourism so as to strengthen their destination image in global tourism market.

2.3.4 Environment

Tourism and the environment are two inseparable parts because healthy environment brings sustainable development of tourism. Unlike any other smoke stack industries such as the mining industry, a well-managed tourism can be considered as a useful tool to save the environment. Many forms of tourism development rely on maintaining and even repairing the landscape and its natural features (lakes rivers estuaries and wildlife areas). Wildlife tourism - especially in arid regions of the country - is dependent on the restoration of natural vegetation and soil cover. Many state and private sector projects have spent large amounts on rehabilitating land damaged by commercial farming and other forms of land-use. Tourism, which is responsibly practiced furthermore, allows for the protection of biodiversity on land used for its purpose.

2.3.5 Landscape

The European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000, p.5) describes the landscape as a product of people's perception which is created by the interaction between natural and human factors. In one way, landscape (Mikulec & Antoušková, 2011, p.272) brings unforgettable experience to the tourists by staging them in its natural and artificial scenes. The perception of good experience can lead to a satisfaction about the trip. The research has examined three characteristics of the landscape which attribute to a tourist destination, natural character, cultural and historical elements, and essential features of aesthetical values respectively.

2.3.6 Climate and Weather

Tourists are able to know about the climate condition by weather or climate forecast, travel brochures and advertising. The personal satisfaction or pleasure of each tourist may be influenced by climate condition or weather. Its effect is divided into three elements, which are: thermal, physical, and aesthetic. Firstly, the thermal attribute of climates comprises the body's thermal state, the rational index with sound physiological basis, the relationship between the thermal states of the body and the condition of mind, and the rating of the perceived thermal sensation and corresponding thermal index. Secondly, the physical aspect includes the specific meteorological elements (e.g. rain, snow, wind, sand) which can be one of the main causes that bring down the satisfaction of the tourists. Last but not least, the aesthetic facets refer to the resource properties climate controlled environment. Those fundamentals may cause the comfort or discomfort experience for tourists during their stays or their decision on destination selection. That's why climate or weather is primarily an impetus for attracting visitor to the destination (Hall & Higham, 2005, p.31).

2.3.7 Accessibility

If the travel cost influences on the trip expenditures, distance may impact to the destination selection. Accessibility (Kim, 1998, p.345) refers to how easy or difficult it is for visitors to reach a chosen destination. In the dictionary of Travel, accessibility (Medlik, 2003, p.273) can be deemed as ‘‘a function of distance from centres of the population, which constitute tourist markets and of external transport, which enables a destination to be reached. It is measured in terms of distance travelled, the time taken or the cost involved’’.

Regards to report of the Central Europe (2011, p.2), there are five factors that relate to the tourists accessibility of a destination including barrier-free destination; transport; high quality services; activities, exhibits, attractions; marketing, booking systems, websites & services. Initially, the barrier-free destination refers to the development of infrastructures and facilities. Subsequently, transport facet in accessibility means the ease of reaching a destination. There are many types of transportation by air, land and sea which are available for all travel purposes. Then well-trained staffs can ensure excellent services for customers to access the area without any circumstances. For instance, people with disabilities may require special needs, the mid-aged need more help with the guidelines. Formerly, an attractive destination gives tourists an opportunity to explore a series of activities, exhibits, and attractions. Ultimately, information and communication technology (ICT) has an enormous impact on the tourist’s purchase decision. Websites or services may create sales revenue growth at the same time with increasing customer satisfaction by integrating the booking systems into them.

2.3.8 Safety and Security

Safety and security have always been two of the main concerns for tourists to visit any place. With the basic requirements of the industry is to serve people, tourism needs to ensure safety and security for its customers. In this context, some specific topics (Kovari & Zimanyi, 2011, p.60) covered included political security, public safety, health and sanitation, personal data safety, legal

protection of tourists, consumer protection, safety in communication, disaster protection, environmental security, getting authentic information, quality assurance of services.

A study of Lepp & Gibson (2003, p.607) has identified four primary risk factors associated with international tourism: terrorism, war and political instability, health concerns, and crime. First to mention, terrorism attacks have impacted on tourism industries and diminished tourist's motivation to travel. For example, the terrorist attacks in September 11th in New York increased shocks and fear to both locals and tourists. As the result, less than 6.8% of international travelers visited North America in 2001 compared to the total tourist number in 2000. Next, it is undeniable that war and political instability have negative impacts to tourism development. Wars and its famine (Timothy, 2001, p.20) affect the tourist flows to the countries that get directly involved in the battle. The conflicts or political instability in one country not only negatively influence to the growth of the tourism, but these elements also impact on its neighbors. Let's take Croatia as an example for that. Its tourism industry was totally crippled by the war of Bosnia. Many tourists had a poor image about Croatia and considered the nation a dangerous place to visit. For every visitor, healthcare is undoubtedly a top condition to ensure the success of each trip. In mid-march 2003, the World Health Organization (WHO) (Koh, Plant, & Lee, 2003, p.110-111) claimed the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) as a global health threat because of its rapid transmission and high mortality. In the report, Hong Kong was one of the places that WHO warned against tourists to travel most. In April 2003, the country had heavy losses in its business because the number of visitors dropped by 70%. The economy of Hong Kong, therefore, lost approximately 5 billion dollars. The last one is the crime against tourists has been also the primary concern on safety. The study of Ryan (1993, p.174) has found a strong correlation between tourism and crime. He explains crime as "an action which is contrary to written or case law in either the tourist-generating or tourist-receiving country". Five types of scenarios were included in his tourism-crime typology. The first is a tourist as an accident victim because they may go to the wrong place at the wrong time and can be seen as an easy mark. The second is the location as criminogenic venue. Unwary tourists can be the easy targets for thieves when they go out at night time, drink or get drugs, and so on. The third is, tourism itself is a provider of victims. Travelers seem to be risk takers because they are more vulnerable and less able to implement security measures than they often apply at home. The fourth type evaluates tourist as imported demand for deviant activities. Indecent behavior may shape tourists as victims

or criminals. And the fifth form sees tourist as objectives of politico-criminal action. Tourists are targeted as hostages of the terrorist groups. Earlier research indicated that a large number of tourists (Pelfrey, 1998, p. 293) refused to visit Florida in 1993 by the fear of crime. The state's economy lost \$ 1.55 billion during that time. It also affected on the quality of life of citizens and visitors.

With this in mind, safety and security (Donaldson & Ferreira, 2009, p.5) has been playing an indispensable role in the perceptions on the image of destinations. It may create or change the perceptions of what tourists and potential visitors immersed within their trip. A personal experience or worth-of-mouth communication can directly transform the positive or negative image of a destination to consumers. Bad image of a destination can lead to the cancellation of the trip or avoid booking trips to related destinations. Hence, the World Tourism Organization (2011, p. 23) mentioned that every country should develop a national policy on tourism safety to against potential risks.

2.3.9 Local communities' attitudes

From an economical point of view, the growth of the tourism industry has brought many benefits to both host communities and local people. Tourism (Gmelch 2003, p.10) supports to develop and reconstruct the community infrastructure and facilities. For instance, the infrastructure in Barbados, which includes airports, roads, sewage treatment plants, landfills, electricity, and telephone, has been designed and reconstructed in Western-style to attract more tourists. The destination's facilities have also improved to create a comfortable space for guests. By renovating or building new infrastructure and facilities, tourism can attract more people at the same time with satisfying its current tourists. It also brings advantages to the local community. Frequent interaction with guests (Gmelch 2003, p.190) helps locals become more confident and improve their social skills. Added to this, the local people have enjoyed better living conditions and improved their income than that previously. For this reason, local residents often have a positive view toward tourism in general, and tourists in particular.

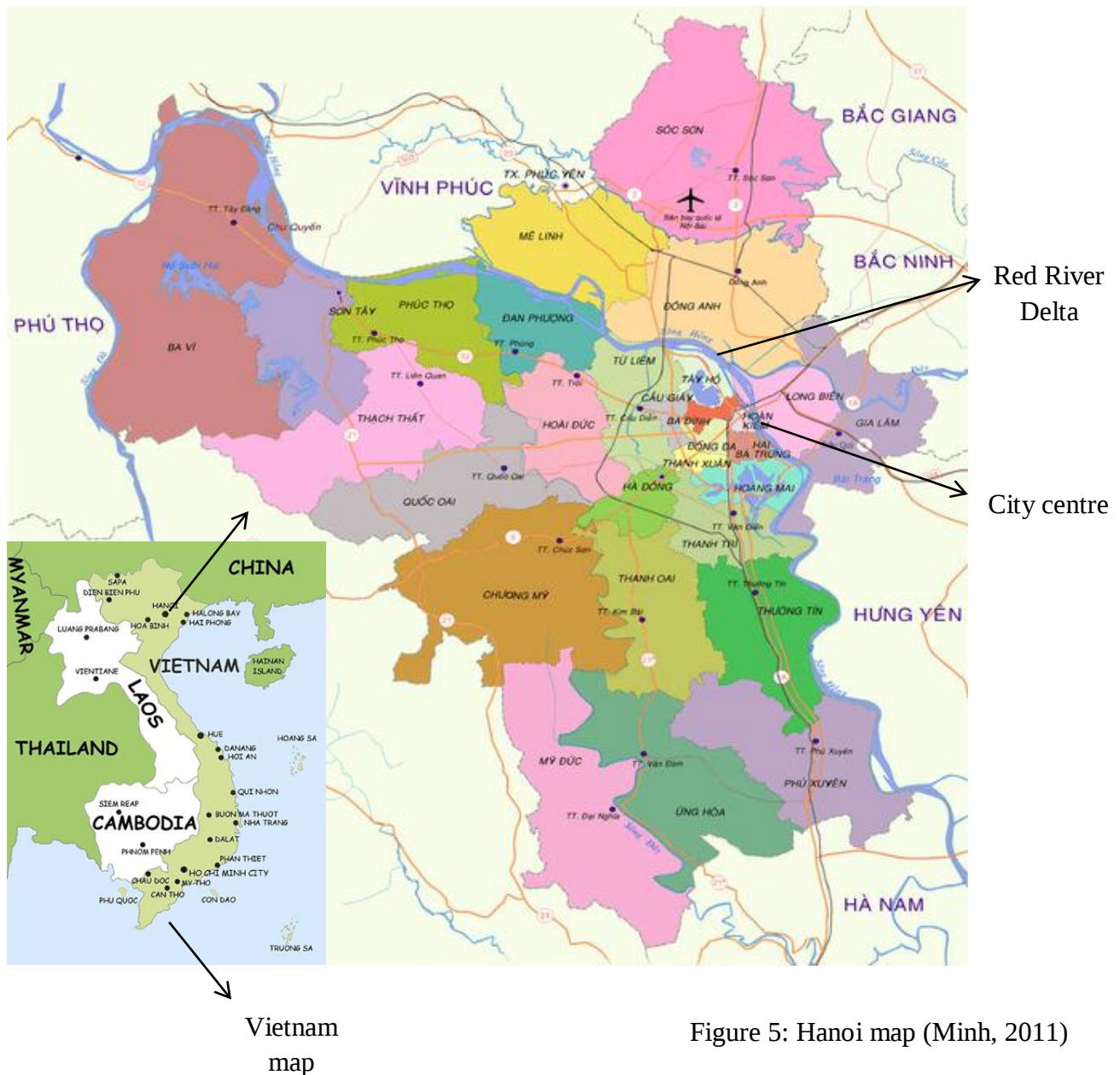
However, Gmelch (2003, p.191-192) points out that some locals of Barbados feel unpleasant to interact with the guests. They do expect visitors to respect local customs or rules of daily life. For instance, inhabitants do not want to see tourists who wear swimwear in public places because it seems to be an abnormal action for them.

Taking everything into consideration, locals' attitude seems to have an influence directly on the tourists. If they have a negative view, tourists may feel unwelcomed at the destination they chose and may lead to the reduction of the number of visitors as well as decrease the tourism economy at both local and state level. Conversely, if their reaction is positive, tourists may feel desirable and enjoyable at a place, which can bring them happy memories or even revisiting trips. Those meritorious things help to promote tourism with lots of benefits to that area.

3. OVERVIEW OF HANOI TOURISM

3.1 Conditions and the potential for development of tourism in Hanoi

Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam which has a municipality of more than 6.5 million residents in the total area of 3530 square kilometers. Known for its self-natural, cultural, social and economic conditions, Hanoi possesses great chance for tourism development and makes it as a key economic sector.



3.1.1 Natural and historical conditions

As it shown in Figure5, Hanoi sprawls along the right bank of the Red River Delta, which is blessed for many advantages, from the flat land and rich ecosystem to hardworking and creative locals. Those elements turn Hanoi into an ancient capital of culture, beautiful and unique city that no one should miss.

Hills of Hanoi can hold many types of tourism such as hiking, hunting, adventure, relaxation treatment, and it is only 50 km from the centers to the ecosystem rich as the Ba Vi National Park.

Hanoi is located in a tropical monsoon climate with four distinct seasons (spring, summer, autumn, and winter). It is hot, humid and rainy in summer whereas it is cold, dry and unlikely to rain in winter. The annual average temperature is about 23 Celsius degree. In winter, the temperature is approximately 17 Celsius degree whereas it can be 29 to 42 Celsius degree in summer time. The most appropriate time to visit Hanoi is in the autumn, from early September to late November. During this time of the year, the weather is cool with blue sky and chilly breeze. It is the alstonia- scholaris blossom with a unique fragrance that is known as a special charm of the city in the fall. In addition, Hanoi can be called as a “green” city with over 200 thousand trees including 46 different crops: nacre, eagle, alligator, and phoenix. (Thoitiethanoi, 2013)

Over thousands of years, history has left the city with many well-known historical and cultural monuments which can bring many benefits for tourism. These monuments do not only have unique architectures (e.g. One Pillar Pagoda, Van Mieu Temple) but also have ancient statues (e.g. QuanThanh Temple, Ngoc Son Temple, Hanoi Citadel). Besides, Hanoi has witnessed many historical revolutions as the country transitioned from imperialism to socialism with the interjection of colonialism over the past century. As the city was under the French colonial for a number of years, French influence is still strongly presented until today.

3.1.2 Facilities and technical infrastructure

In comparison with the other parts of the country, Hanoi’s facilities and infrastructure for tourism are developed, but compared to other capital of many countries within Asia region and the world

it is still at a developing level. The city offers a variety means of transport including land, sea, airways, and railways. First of all, Hanoi is the convergence of the main transport axes with six domestic and international railway lines and eight main roads within the Red River Delta and the whole country. However, the traffic is extremely congested due to increased numbers of commuters and motorcycles. In addition, the pollution has gotten worse over the years. Secondly, Noi Bai international airport is located only 35 km from the city center. The number of domestic and international flights as well as flight frequency at Noi Bai airport have been increasing that make Hanoi an easily accessible destination by air. Aside from a Noi Bai airport, there is a domestic airport located in Gia Lam which is approximately 8 km from the city center. This airport was the main airport in Hanoi in the 1970s and became the helicopter station to serve visitors with many attracting tours. Thirdly, many rivers flow through Hanoi including 1,183 km long Red river, Duong river and other waterways such as To Lich river that has linked to the development of Hanoi for 1,500 years. However, the port system, river tourist transport fleet, and staff service, have under-developed. Thus, river transportations as well as river tours have not attracted as many tourists as other means of transportation (Mai, 2013).

3.1.3 Architecture

With thousand years of history, Hanoi has cultivated an impressive cultural heritage with unique architecture. Many first-time visitors to Hanoi were fascinated by the beauty of the capital city with the harmonious combination of ancient architecture and its rich flora. As an administrative center for the French colony of Indochina, the Hanoi architecture was truly much influenced by the French colonial architecture. Many of the colonial structures are the mixture between French architecture and indigenous architecture styles, such as the Vietnam National Museum of History, the Vietnam National Museum of Fine Arts.

The Hanoi's architecture is bearing the stamp of the long history with the beauty of the Old Quarter (36 ancient streets and guilds) from the end of the 19th century. This is unique architecture with antique moss roof and small tubular houses that create ancient and lively space architecture.

Moreover, Hanoi is also home of many largest and most important museums of the country. There are including the Museum of History, the Revolutionary Museum, Ho Chi Minh Museum, and Military Museum. Those museums reflect the highly - concentrated and most comprehensive way to develop the country, its nation, and distinctive features on culture, the Vietnamese people. Therefore, those places are often the first point of the city tour for the tourists visiting Hanoi.

3.1.4 Food and Culture

As a capital of Vietnam, Hanoi boasts of a rich and diverse culture, historical and traditional values. It has been inhabited since 3000 B.C and has served the government seat for over 1000 years. The city is a home of many village festivals, the region festivals and the whole country festivals. It is the cradle of agricultural festivals and traditional history festivals. This means that the folk festival in Hanoi also covers the basics of festivals throughout the country. However, Hanoi has its own unique festivals as An Duong Vuong Festival at Co Loa Citadel in Dong Anh district on the 6th of January, somewhat similar with Giong festival in Phu Dong, Gia Lam on the 9th April, and the festival of Hai Ba Trung Temple in Hai Ba Trung district on 6 February. All festivals in Hanoi usually take place throughout the lunar calendar, but most concentrated in the spring, this feature is considered to be an advantage.

Hanoi has many traditional craftsman ships with exquisite art, talented workers within 36 streets. In the past, each street was associated with a famous line such as Hang Trong street with folk paintings; Bat Trang with ceramics; Buoi village with wind paper; embroidery in Yen Thai village. Hanoi and surrounding areas are preserved many traditional crafts such as rice transplanting, planting vegetables and flowers, livestock, poultry and other art crafts. It can say the suburban districts are not only to provide food products to the needs of the people in the city, but it also is able to meet the needs of tourists about the high quality of goods, aesthetic.

One of the delights when visiting Hanoi is its extraordinary cuisine which has won the hearts of both domestic and international tourists. The CNN (2013) describes Hanoi as a “birthplace of many quintessential Vietnamese dishes”. Hanoi food is less expensive, immensely varied and distinctive with many famous delicacies. Each dish represents an amazing combination of tastes,

colors and spices which are inspired by the cooking styles of local Hanoians. For example, Hanoi is famous with many world famous foods: pho, spring rolls. Pho is kind of rice noodle soup with two different flavors: beef or chicken. It can be eaten for at any time of the day. In addition, Hanoi cuisine is a blend of history, culture and people of Vietnam which is marked as a characteristic of all three regions of Vietnam. The main meal of Hanoi has a unique style from staged trays to the status of food which looks simple but beautifully presents in an elegant and noble way. Especially, Hanoi is listed as one of the ten greatest street food cities in Asia by the CNN (2013). The true Hanoi taste lies in its street food which offers tourists an authentic experience of the city's culture and pace of life.

Many would agree that Hanoi may not be known for the best drink spot, there are still many bountiful beverages that tourists should not be missed. Many local versions of the drink – alcoholic or not – are easy to find and cheap to buy. The most popular drink in the city is the local fresh beer – “bia hơi”. Visitors can find beer in a lot of shops in Hanoi, from the small shops on the sidewalk to the large stores selling beer. For non-alcoholic, drink made from sugar cane may be the best option. It is a mixture of fresh-pressed sugarcane juice served over ice. Nowadays, street lemon tea, which is a fantastic drinks combination between lemon, sugar and fresh tea leaves, has become the most popular drinks for everyone in every season in Hanoi.

3.2 Current status of tourism in Hanoi

Reference to Kolb's (2006, p.60) reveals that a city can be considered as a tourist product. Known as a capital of Vietnam, Hanoi is marketing itself as a tourist destination by offering a variety of tourism products, services/events to help tourists enjoy exploring and getting a taste of local life. Tourism activities in the area are considered as a rich capital in different perspectives and particularly in tourism services, such as tourism infrastructure, environment, tourism product, and (international) tourists, as the followings:

3.2.1 Tourism infrastructure

Below are four elements of tourism infrastructure in Hanoi including accommodation; travel and transportation businesses; arts, culture and entertainment; cuisine and catering services:

a. Accommodation

The prestigious France-based tourism website – Trivago (Reuters, 2013), which specializes in evaluating the quality of hotel services around the world, has announced the results of its new survey. Accordingly, Hanoi hotel services are appreciated and ranked as the second position the list of 100 cities with the best hotel services in the year of 2012.

Doan (2010) states that Hanoi has 880 accommodation establishments with 17,000 rooms, including 9 five-star hotels, six four-star hotels and 25 three-star hotels. According to the statistics of the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the number of hotels and high standard apartments in Hanoi until June of 2011 (Mai, 2013) has been increased and shown in table 1 below:

Hotels	Total rooms	Total numbers	Total percentage
5 stars	3984	12	4,91 %
4 stars	1655	10	4,10 %
3 stars	1935	29	11,89 %
2 stars	3696	117	47,95 %
1 stars	1079	73	29,92 %
High standard apartments	700	03	1,23 %
Total	13049	244	100 %

Table 1: the system of accommodation facilities in Hanoi (Mai, 2013)

From table 1, it shows that the size of the Hanoi hotel is generally small compared to the potential and the number of tourists coming to the city. Hotel classifications in Hanoi have used a

star-rating system. In total 244 hotels and apartments, there are 12 five-star hotels accounting for 4,91 %; 10 four-star hotels accounting for 4,10%; 29 three-star hotels accounting for 11,89 %; 117 two-star hotels accounting for 45.81%; 73 one-star hotels, and 3 high standard apartments making up 1,23 % of the total number of accommodation facilities.

With the current growth of the number of tourists (both domestic tourists and foreign tourists), the number of rooms are not sufficient to supply the needs of customers, especially the high quality room of three-star to five- star hotels on high seasons or important occasions. For instance, Hanoi attracted tourists in large numbers in the celebration of 1000 years of Thang Long in 2010. However, there were not enough rooms available in hotels and apartments to accommodate the hordes of visitors. (Doan, 2010)

b. Travel and Transportation businesses

In Hanoi area, there are nearly 500 international business travel agencies and 500 domestic business travel agencies. There are about 50 enterprises, households and individuals in tourist transport business. (Mai, 2013)

c. Arts, Culture and Entertainment

The city is not only known as a political, economic, scientific and technological center but also a country's hub of culture. The city is home to many cultural institutions (e.g. the Opera House, the National Cinema Center), the main museums (e.g. the Revolutionary Museum, Ho Chi Minh Museum), galleries and art exhibitions (Apricot Gallery, Nguyen Art Gallery), and the performing arts (e.g. Thang Long Water Puppetry Theatre, Hanoi Cai Luong Theatre). The water puppetry art is one of the most famous and attractive performances which has won hearts of international and domestic audiences.

There are many scenic lakes (e.g. HoanKiem Lake, West Lake) and parks (Lenin Park, Ho Tay Water Park) in the city. HoanKiem Lake means “Lake of the Returned Sword” which is well-known for the famous historical legend of King Le Loi and his magic sword.

Although Hanoi does not have many shopping malls, there are plenty of choices to shop throughout the city. Much of the best local goods and products can be found on the streets. With its wide range of different shops, Hanoi has many authentic products, such as silk, handicrafts, ethnic minority products.

d. Cuisine and Catering Services

Hanoi is the land of extraordinary cuisine with a wide range of delicious dishes. Each dish has its own distinguishing features, fragrance and flavor which are prepared by the exquisite cooking style of Hanoians. A variety of options for eating and drinking (Mai, 2013) can be found throughout the city. With a high quality catering services, many restaurants and bars in Hanoi offer good-value food and beverages to meet the needs of a large number of visitors and the people of Hanoi. However, to get the real sense of local food, tourist may try the authentic street food. In Hanoi, food and beverages are everywhere in sight. In recent years, Tong Duy Tan and Cam Chi are two famous streets for the culinary arts of Vietnam in general and Hanoi in particular.

However, many restaurants and bars (Mai, 2013) are currently lack of necessary infrastructure such as car parks, poor landscapes, and professional service to meet the needs of tourists. Also, food hygiene (Vietnamnet, 2013) has always been an obstacle for visitors to experience local cuisine in Hanoi. Though most restaurants and food stalls hold a food hygiene certificate, it is still difficulties in food safety management of vendors. Most of them have not attended any training course on food safety, so there is no guarantee for food quality. Additionally, the image of Hanoi cuisine (Nguyen, 2011) has not been promoted to adequate its current tourism promotion strategy. It does not yet have any official website or advertisement to introduce and promote the variety of food culture. Furthermore, it is not easy for tourists to explore the local

culinary experience as indigenous people. To be honest, they may fall into a tourist trap that requires them to pay extra money for the goods or services on the street

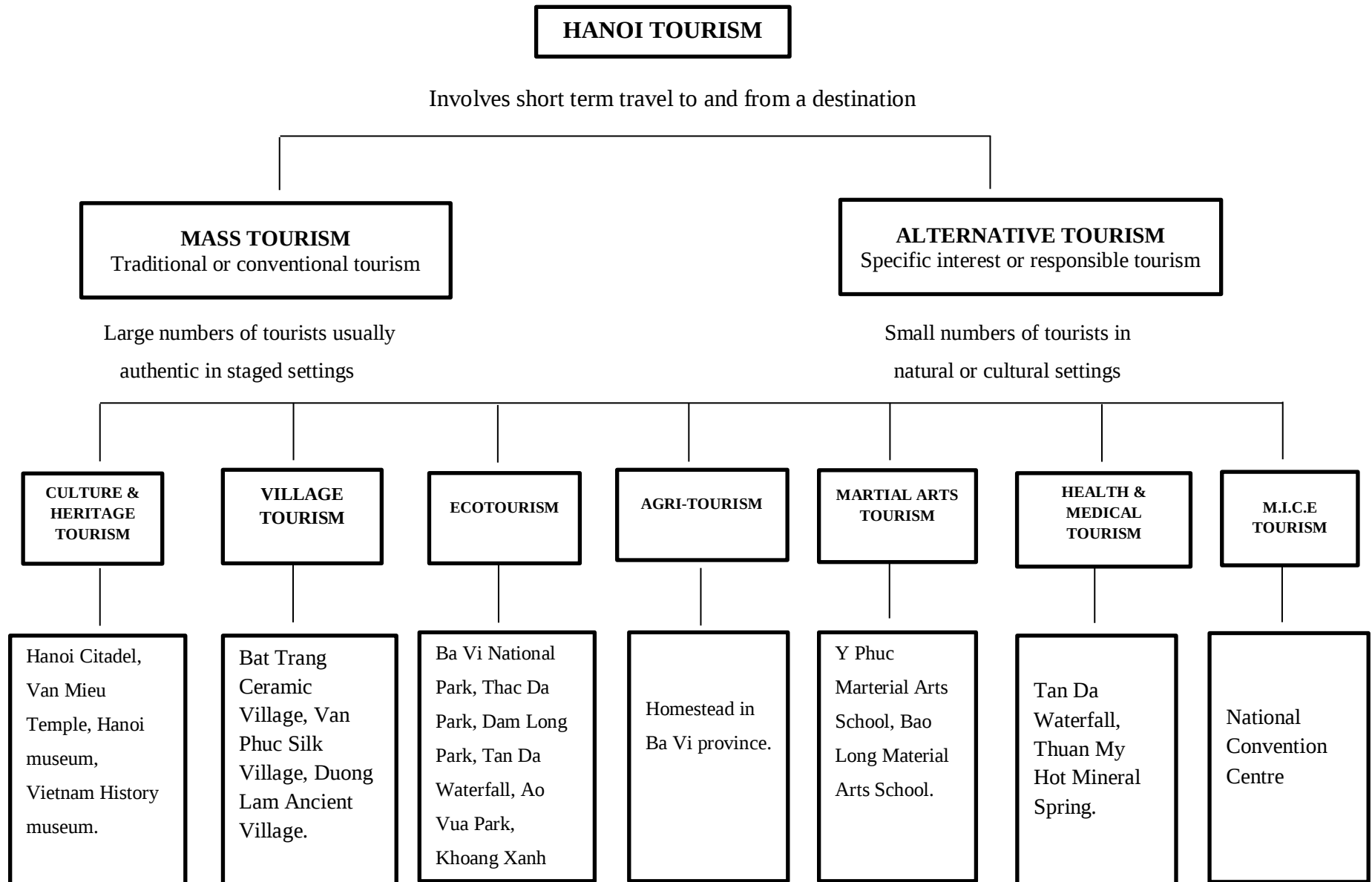
3.2.2 Environment

Environment is considered as a key factor which directly affects to the quality and attractiveness of the tourism product as well as the ability to attract tourists. In fact, Hanoi is facing many environmental problems. The air and dust pollution are alarming problems for the tourism industry in the city. Problems with dust pollution are worsening the image of Hanoi as a tourist destination. It transformed the landscape of many areas and tourist streets. Not only that, the dust pollution also affects to the health of both locals and visitors. Many streets have the dust concentration that is 3.8 to 6.3 times higher than the permitted standard. Thus, dust contamination has made the environment of Hanoi tourism lose its points in the eyes of visitors. It is also a risk of reducing the number of foreign tourists from Europe, America, Japan, South Korea to Hanoi (Nguyen, 2012)

3.2.3 Hanoi as a tourist product

Refer to the model of an overview of tourism by Newsome, Moore & Dowling (2002, p.11), the below figure 6 describes different forms of Hanoi tourism:

Figure 6: An overview of Hanoi tourism



As it shown in Figure 6, Hanoi currently offers tourists many different forms of tourism as the followings:

- Culture and Heritage tourism: visiting local relics, traditional events and festivals, such as Hanoi Citadel, Van Mieu Temple, Hanoi museum. This is the traditional form of travel in Vietnam. Tourists, especially international tourists, can visit different attractions at the same time with gaining knowledge of local culture (Mai, 2013).
- Village tourism: visiting traditional occupation villages. Currently, the city has 244 traditional craft villages in the total amount of 1,350 craft villages. Each village specializes in one special professional, such as porcelain and ceramic in Bat Trang village, silk in Van Phuc Village. (Mai, 2013)
- MICE tourism: organizing the conference room with a high technical equipment and modern machinery, and combining with some short tours to bring customer a relaxing time in Hanoi. For instance, Hanoi Convention Centre (2013) has a large hall and 30 conference and meeting rooms for more than 3.500 people. This place was selected for many international conferences, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in 2006, the 17th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit in 2010. After the conference, it is an opportunity for participants to have a city tour or some designed tours to gain insight into historical and cultural diversity of Hanoi.
- Ecotourism: spending time in ecotourism spots. The outskirts of Hanoi are areas of many ecotourism attractions and resort which are suitable for all the needs and groups of customer, such as Ba Vi National Park, Da Waterfall. (Mai, 2013)
- Agri-tourism: experiencing the agrarian lifestyle. In Hanoi, Ba Vi has become one of the leading community-based tourism development in Vietnam with its diverse tourism products, including eco-tourism products, culture tourism products, agriculture tourism products, and geological tourism products. (Mai, 2013)
- Martial Arts tourism: providing high quality martial arts performance of the traditional dojo clan with authentic training courses. Y Phuc and Bao Long (Tap Chi Vo Thuat, 2011) are the two famous professional dojo organizations which co-operate with other travel agencies to organize martial arts tour in Hanoi. Nonetheless, it has not been developed in Hanoi tourism. All dojos have sketchy facilities and unprofessional

customer service to welcome the tourist. Many travel agencies hesitate to take their customers to those dojos because there is not sufficient accommodation for overnight stays.

- Health and Medical tourism: offering advanced medical and health care treatment by using tourism products and services. For example, tourists can visit Ba Vi province to enjoy Thuan My Hot Mineral Spring to enjoy spa baths. With a long-term development of ethnic traditional medicine and acupuncture, good beauty care centers, and diverse eco-tourism destinations, Hanoi absolutely can become a potential destination for Health and Medical tourism. (Mai, 2013)

3.2.4 Numbers of foreign visitors to Hanoi from 2008 to 2012

With its historical and cultural values, Hanoi has become a favorite choice of many international tourists. When returning home, each of them has his or her different impressions of Hanoi. Normally, Hanoi is considered as a peaceful and safe city with the hospitality of the people, exotic food and culture, reasonable prices.

According to the statistics of the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the number of foreign tourists visiting Hanoi is increasing as the figure bellows:

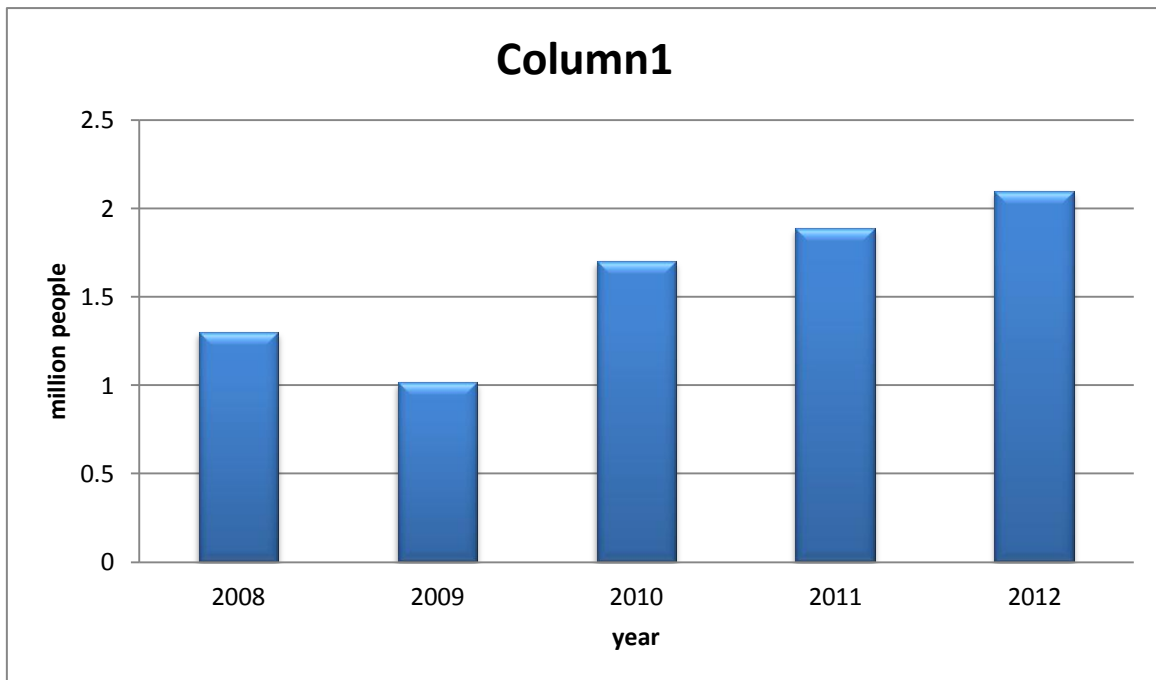


Figure 7: Foreign Tourist Numbers in Hanoi from 2008 to 2012 (Mai, 2013)

The Figure 7 above compares the figures of international guests visiting Hanoi from 2008 to 2012. There was an upward trend in the quantity of international visitors who came to Hanoi, from 1.3 million to over 2 million visitors. This means the percentage of the average number of annual international tourists (Mai, 2013) has risen up to 18% or 20%. When Hanoi welcomed 1.3 million in 2008, there were only 1.02 million visitors in 2009. Undoubtedly, 2009 was the year of global economic crisis and the disease which led to the decision of not travelling by many tourists. However, it can be easily noticed that the number of travelers choosing to go to Hanoi grew up quite dramatically from 2010 to 2012. Between 2009 and 2010, there was a marked increase in tourist number. With the big 1000 thousand year anniversary of Thang Long – Hanoi in 2010, the total number of foreign tourists has been speedily increased of 1.7 million people. After 2010, the foreign visitor numbers increased slightly with a total amount of 1.89 million people. In 2012, Hanoi hit a record high with over 2 million international tourist arrivals.

3.2.5 Cause and Effect Review

In Hanoi, the government uses many different policies to encourage investment in tourism development in the city. These elements become a pull factor and an indispensable impetus to improve the city attractiveness so as to invite local investors at the same time with attract outside entrepreneurs to make an investment to Hanoi tourism. The city has many tourism projects aiming to develop local tourism products associated with strengthen of its rich culture and ecology values, such as cultural tourism in centre area of Hanoi, ecotourism in Son Tay and Ba Vi, village tourism in Ha Dong. These projects contributed to the vibrant atmosphere and breakthrough developments in Hanoi tourism activities. It is obvious that perceptions of tourism and its development have been changed markedly in all levels and sectors of governments and locals' awareness. The interdisciplinary coordination and local sectors create many attracting tours and tourism activities to attract both local and foreign tourists. Especially in recent years, the number of tourists has increase significantly which contributes to the revenue growth to the local economy. (Dinh 2012)

In general, the city's tourism development has been implemented as its basic orientation of planning, such as the type of products and tourism, the determination of potential tourism resources, the infrastructure projects. System facilities - technical tourism increased significantly, especially in the area of residence. The local activities of the travel business are followed the proposed planning options, and there are no passive actions damaging landscape and environment. Also, the State has enhanced the management plans for tourism by strengthening the significant infrastructure projects, suddenly inspecting quality of tourism products and services at business places, doing tourism research, training and improving the quality of human resource, promoting and advertising city's tourism to both local and international market. (Truong & Thanh 2009)

3.2.6 Limitations and Challenges

However, the city's tourism is currently encountering many difficulties and limitations. First, urban and tourism infrastructure are still inadequate. Many infrastructure and facilities for tourism development are still under-construction and poorly maintained. The investment in renovation, preservation and protection of the cultural relics and ecological environment is limited. Thus, this does not promote return visitors. Second, Hanoi is lack of synchronization between government sectors and private sectors. The State does not encourage and support investment in both tourism policy and in practice in a right way that makes investors sometimes confused in their business activities. Next, the city's tourism master plan did not meet the development needs of investment. Then, tourism promotion activities were lack the professionalism and inefficiency due to lack of funding. Also, the global economic recession also negatively affected the investment rate and deployed with the stagnation. Last, investment in human capital for success in tourism has improved but still weak comparing with demand development. The quality of the tourism workforce is still not sufficient enough of professional qualifications; language skills did not meet the requirements of tourism development. (Truong & Thanh, 2012)

Together with some limitations, Hanoi tourism is also met diverse challenges. First, the competitive tourism products in the region and global market have been rapidly increased whereas the competitiveness of Hanoi tourism is still limited. Besides, Vietnam tourism, including Hanoi tourism is more unpredictable changes of the world situation in the development environment. In 2008, the world suffered a financial crisis leading to global economic recession significantly influence travel needs of international visitors. In the early months of 2009, the World Tourism Organization warned UNTWO pandemic H5N1 influenza spread worldwide which led to a decrease in international travel to the city. And in 2012, many foreign tourists cancelled or felt confused when booking a trip to Hanoi because of A/H7N9 flu.

4. CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH STUDY

This section describes the process utilized by the author to conduct the research. It includes the concrete research methods and the reasons behind of these method choices. The study sample, data collection, and the data analysis, are well-presented. Finally yet importantly, the validity and reliability are going to measure to evaluate the accuracy of the study.

4.1 Study Implementation

As its main purpose, the research is to study positive and negatives tourists' perceptions about their holiday in Hanoi and how their view may impact on Hanoi tourism. In the tourist study section, the study is primarily based upon the expectations and awareness of foreign travelers who had visited Hanoi during summer 2012. Additionally, it receives some recommendations from visitors' opinions on what and how to improve the quality of Hanoi tourism. In the tour operators study section, the author focuses on understanding how seven chosen travel agencies identify the current tourism products and services toward international customer, how they attempt to improve these facets to create consumers' satisfaction and loyalty, how they suggest developing a better tourism for the city.

4.2 Research methods

The study focuses on the measurement between the expectation and the perception to verify their (dis-) satisfaction with the current tourism's offerings in Hanoi. The analysis of the research was done using mixed-methods research which includes both qualitative and quantitative research.

According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994, p.2), qualitative research is an interpretive and naturalistic approach that attempts to explore or interpret phenomena related to the problem at hand. Supporting for this, Berg (2011, p.3) explained that qualitative approach helps to understand “the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things”. In other words, the use of qualitative research (Hollensen, 2003, p. 740) is to provide a holistic

view of a research problem. There is a variety of data collection methods (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2) used in qualitative research including interview transcripts, personal experiences, personal diaries, case study, introspective, and observation. In addition, interview (e.g. structured interview, unstructured interview, semi-structured interview) between researchers and individuals is widely used as a method for qualitative research. It allows the researcher to examine and achieve deep insights into interviewees' attitudes, behaviors and their motivation. (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005, p.132)

In contrary, quantitative research (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005, p.110) is not only a means for testing and verification of data, but also a critical approach to data analysis. The scholar (Creswell, 2003, p.18) mainly uses positivist claims for developing knowledge which involves cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation as well as the test of theories. This method uses two strategies of inquiry (e.g. experiments and surveys) and collects data on predetermined implements that measure statistical data. In the study of Moser & Kalton (1971, p.1), a survey is considered as “a need for administrative facts on some aspects of public life” and it helps to examine “the demographic characteristics, the social environment, the activities or the opinions and attitudes of some groups of people”.

Although both qualitative and quantitative research methods vary enormously in many ways, these approaches can be successfully used together in mixed-methods studies. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods (Creswell, 2003, p.18-21) allows investigators gain a better understanding about the research problem by collecting either sequential or simultaneous data. In this approach, a broad survey mainly is used to collect an overview of a target population whereas open-ended interviews to gather detailed opinions from partakers.

For the aforementioned reasons, the mixed-method research is the most appropriate approach to collect and analyze data of the research. The Figure 8 below is going to describe the research methodology design of the study.

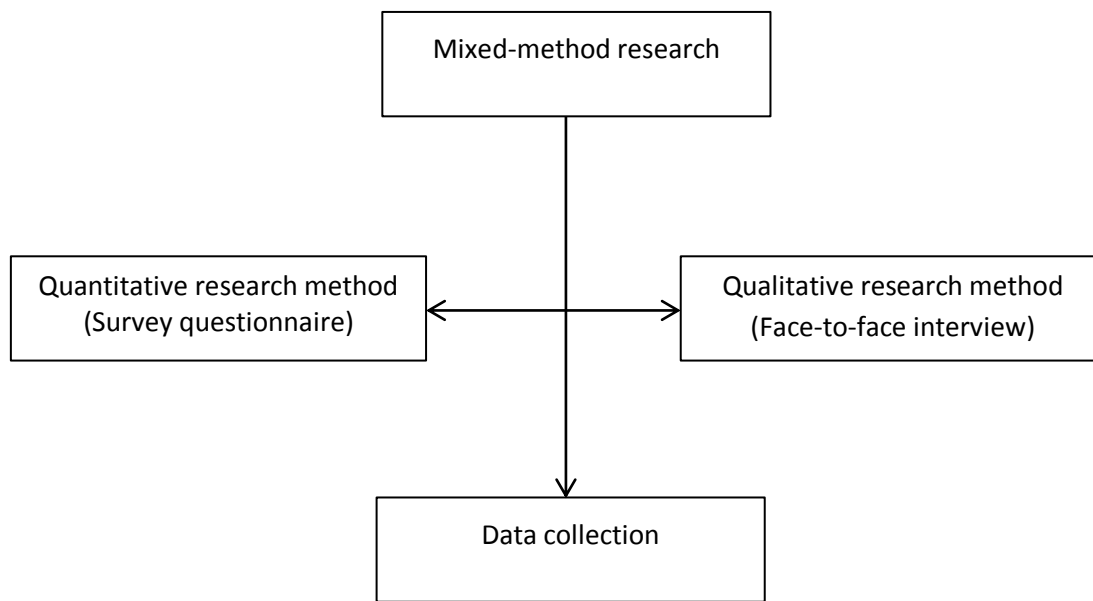


Figure 8: Hanoi research mixed method design

In the first part, the study began with the survey questionnaire which can be found at the end of this study as appendix 1. According to Altinay and Paraskevas (2008, p.120), questionnaire is an effective method to help investigator collect information from a large number of respondents, at a low cost, so as to produce summaries and quantitative descriptions. All of the respondents were foreign tourists who had visited Hanoi during summer 2012. In the second part, the study was conducted by a small sample of personal interview with the manager of seven chosen travel agencies in Hanoi. By using a structured or semi-structured questionnaire, personal interviews (Sprenkle & Piercy, 2005, p.222) are considered as the most convenient tools to collect deeper information of what the respondents think, believe, and behave. In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to gain in-depth information from the respondents. The questionnaire can be found at the end of the paper as appendix 3. Additionally, the interview was focused on data collection related to aim and purpose of the study. The document analysis was one of the effective qualitative research methods to collect appropriate information. In addition, the correlation between literature and research process were reliable sources to support the key findings of the thesis.

4.3 Participants

The study was conducted among 258 foreign visitors who had visited Hoan Kiem Lake and Van Mieu Temple in Hanoi during three weeks (from 20.07.2012 to 10.08.2012). By choosing random tourists, the study was to collect diversified results from all classes of visitors and different age groups. Respondents were asked to denote their expectation, perception and general satisfaction with tourism products and services in Hanoi on a five-point liker rating scale where a “1” response indicating “strongly disagree” and “5” correspond with “strongly agree”. While most of the data appeared to be valid, there were 12 invalid responses because of missing answers or multiple answers checked in scaling questions. In addition, at the end of the survey, participants were asked to provide additional comments and recommendations to improve the current situation of Hanoi tourism. This section provides more accurate information on tourists’ (dis-)satisfaction that enables the author to achieve concrete study findings.

Moreover, the author selected seven popular tour operators in Hanoi to gain insights into the problems and the impacts of their current business on Hanoi tourism and international tourists. The interviews with these tour managers were conducted in two weeks from 15.08.2012 to 29.08.2012. Not only did the interviewees answer all required information, but they also gave some suggestions to improve the given problems identified the research.

4.4 Data Collection

According to Creswell (2003, p.20), the data collection in mixed methods research is the process of gathering both numeric information as well as text information so that the final database describes both quantitative and qualitative information. There are two main data collected to support the research study, such as survey questionnaire and face-to-face interview. The survey questionnaire helps to collect travelling experiences from actual tourists, who had their trip in Hanoi. And the face-to-face interview supports the author to examine the perception of tour operators toward Hanoi tourism and their foreign visitors.

Firstly, the survey questionnaire was designed into four parts; the introduction which related to travel behavior characteristics of respondents, the body which includes questions that cover information needed to identify the tourists' expectation and perception within Hanoi tourism, the upcoming part which focuses on the (dis-)satisfaction and loyalty, and the last section ends with the basic data of all tourists' demographic characteristics. Those questions in the survey were arranged in different question forms in order to avoid stress to answerers, such as multiple choices, open-ended and closed-ended questions. In addition, to support for the author's work, the language of the survey questionnaire was written in English. Beforehand, the questionnaire was sent and evaluated by the thesis's supervisor. During three weeks, the modified questionnaire was distributed to foreign visitors at two most popular tourist sites in Hanoi, namely Hoan Kiem Lake and Van Mieu Temple. With the large amount of tourists visiting these attractions, there were 258 responses collected by the researcher.

Secondly, the face-to-face interview was held between the author and seven travel agencies in Hanoi. The main objective of the interview is to know how those travel agencies perceive the current tourism products and services toward the targeted tourists (as international tourists) from their business site as well as what they expect to promote the better quality for Hanoi tourism as a tourist product. Similar to the structure of the survey questionnaire, the face-to-face questionnaire was designed in a logical way with eight open-ended questions which had previously confirmed by the thesis's supervisor at University of Lapland. Based on the limited meeting time with the tour operators, each interview lasted in about one hour within two weeks from 15.08.2012 to 30.08.2012. As the study was carried out among Vietnamese's tour operators, the use of Vietnamese language seemed to be the most convenient way of oral communication. All interview documents were conducted in Vietnamese and translated into English by the author. In each the interview, the author wrote down all the answers and asked permission to take pictures to ensure the actual information for the research.

4.5 Data Analysis

After using different tools to collect the data, the researcher received a variety of rich information to answer those given three research questions above as well as to support the results of the investigation which showed various impacts and management weakness of Hanoi tourism.

As the author mentioned before, the survey questionnaire was based on the research of tourists' satisfaction that helped to determine the satisfaction towards the products and services of Hanoi tourism. By using HOLSAT model, it allows the researcher to examine both positive and negative attributes of a destination from the respondents' view. A distinctive feature of the model is a questionnaire in which respondents were asked to assess their expectations of every destination's attributes (e.g. their impressions before traveling) and their perception or experience on the same attributes (e.g. after traveling) (Tribe & Snaith 1998). The use of a Likert scale in the survey effectively supported to inspect the different between the expectation and perception of foreign tourists during their visit in Hanoi as well as to examine their (dis-)satisfaction of their stays.

After sorting out of the twelve invalid answers and coding data, the author used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and HOLSAT model as main tools to analyze the 246 responses in order to find answers to the research questions. The SPSS software (Bryman & Cramer, 1990, p.16) helps investigator to score and analyze quantitative data in a short time and different ways of performance. According to the respective objectives of the study, the statistical analyses such as Chi square and the Paired-Samples T Test were developed by using SPSS. The HOLSAT model, then, has been applied for comparing the different means between two parts (expectation and perception) on each dependent variables. The difference in average scores between "expectation" and "experience" for each attribute brings a quantitative measure of the level of tourists' satisfaction. All the results are presented in a matrix, in which both positive and negative attributes are represented on separate matrices: experience (X-axis) and expectations (Y axis). The win and loss area are delimited by the "draw line" - a 45-degree diagonal. The win area represents the attributes that consumer expectations are met or exceeded their experience, whereas the loss area describes the consumer's expectations are not met, and the 'draw line' is launched as a tie close between expectations and experience. Depending on the positive or

negative figures of the properties, the area of win or loss is laid in the upper left or lower right of the draw line (Tribe & Snaith 1998).

Furthermore, face-to-face interviews were analyzed to describe the research problem from the business point of view. The combination between the analyses of the survey questionnaire and personal interview was supported to give concrete answers for the research questions as well as to provide fruitful outcomes of the study.

4.6 Validity and Reliability

In the research, validity and reliability is based on the given answers in both survey questionnaire and interviews by respondents. All responses were carefully collected, analyzed and discussed for the development of the empirical findings. The study has a strong validity because it denotes to a basic framework of expectation, perception and satisfaction as well as the consideration of a designed survey questionnaire. The reliability is there to explain how well the survey relates to the current situation in Hanoi tourism.

In quantitative research, Hopkins (2008) mentions that the use of validity and reliability are common as two tools of measuring precision. Firstly, validity aims to describe the studies by identifying the truly measures of the research or the truthful information of the research results. Secondly, reliability tends to support the experimental part of the studies because it explains how reproducible the results of study remain are same on a retest. Reference to Sprenkle and Piercy (2005, p.26) reveals that validity represents the accuracy of the research findings whereas reality denotes to the consistency or stability of the data obtained. In the research, the questionnaire was sent separately to 258 international tourists by the author. During the survey, tourists were asked permission to take picture of when they were filling the paper. It ensures the validity and reliability of the research. All collected answers were analyzed by the SPSS software which made the results reliable. Additionally, the questionnaire was made in a logical format with different types of questions, such as closed-questions and open-questions. Comparing with the main research objective, the content's validity is measurable.

According to Kananen (2001, 69), validity and reliability have no complete truths in the qualitative research. Elsewhere, Sprenkle and Piercy (2005, p.27) has argued that validity and reliability can be measured by two perspectives of trustworthiness. While reliability refers to the trustworthiness of the data, validity means trustworthiness of the interpretations of the collected data. From the author's point of view, qualitative research method using in the research ensures both validity and reliability. Firstly, this research method was proven to be valid. All the questions were designed to be simple and logical in order to avoid misunderstandings and discomfort for the interviewees. The issue of saturation was limited. Before the interviews, the interview questionnaire was sent to the thesis's supervisor from Lapland University for checking and confirming. Secondly, this qualitative research method evaluated the reliability. The author made the face-to-face interview with seven travel agencies in Hanoi. The reliability of this qualitative research was based on a written document, and photos.

On the other hand, the given results of the research are based on the literature review and the empirical data. Thus, the study only covers some specific aspect of which denotes to the foreign tourists' satisfaction with Hanoi tourism from this representation. However, this research is a small effort in the field of tourism and may become a reliable source for further research.

5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 Survey Questionnaire

5.1.1 Tourist's Demographic Characteristics

a. Nationality of respondents

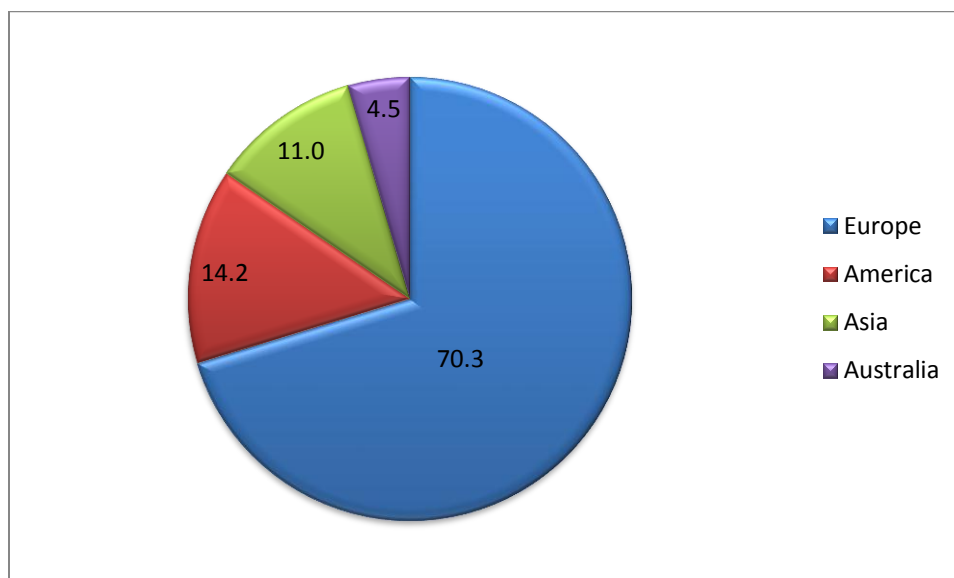


Figure 9: Nationality of respondents

In the survey, there are 246 respondents who come from different continents. As it shown in Figure 9, the guest visitors from Europe love to spend their holiday in Hanoi, with 70.3% of people. Unsurprisingly, America travelers come in second with 14.2%. Tourists living in countries that are near to Vietnam do not choose Ha Noi as their destination, and it shows in the pie chart, with only 11%. Last but not least, Australia has the smallest percentage among all. Only 4.5% of them come to visit. In my opinion, from this chart, it is reasonable that Hanoi tourism should mainly focus on how to attract visitors from America, Asia and Australia. The more travelers come, the more profit tourism can be earned.

b. Age and Gender of respondents

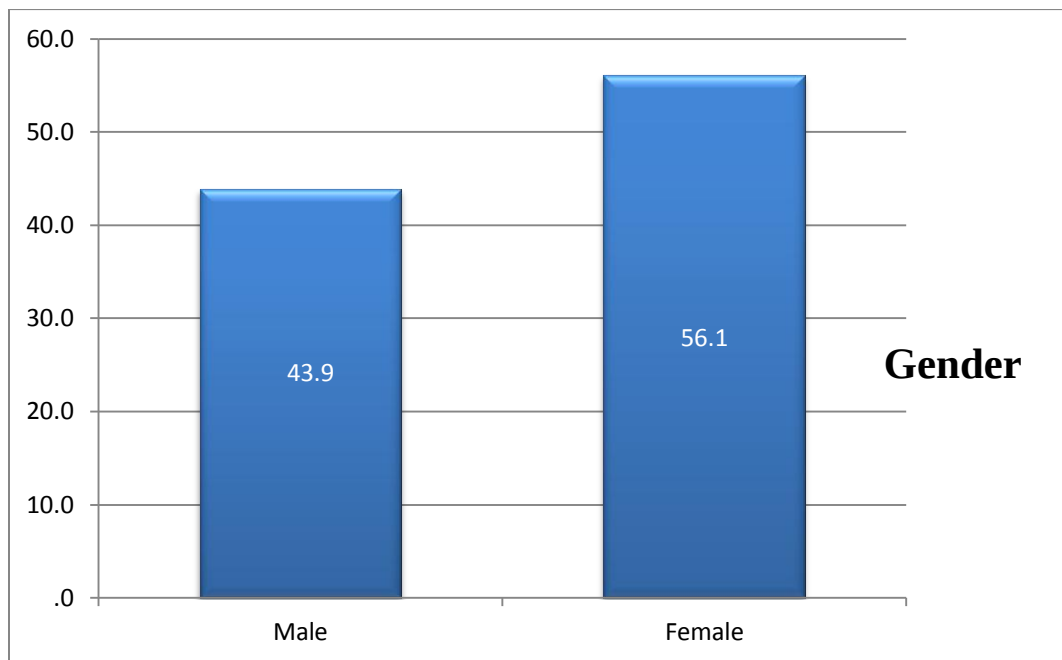


Figure 10: Gender of respondents

The Figure 10 above shows that female visitors have a tendency to go on trip more than male tourists. However, the percentage of the two genders is not that much different. As it clearly can be seen, the difference is only 12.2%.

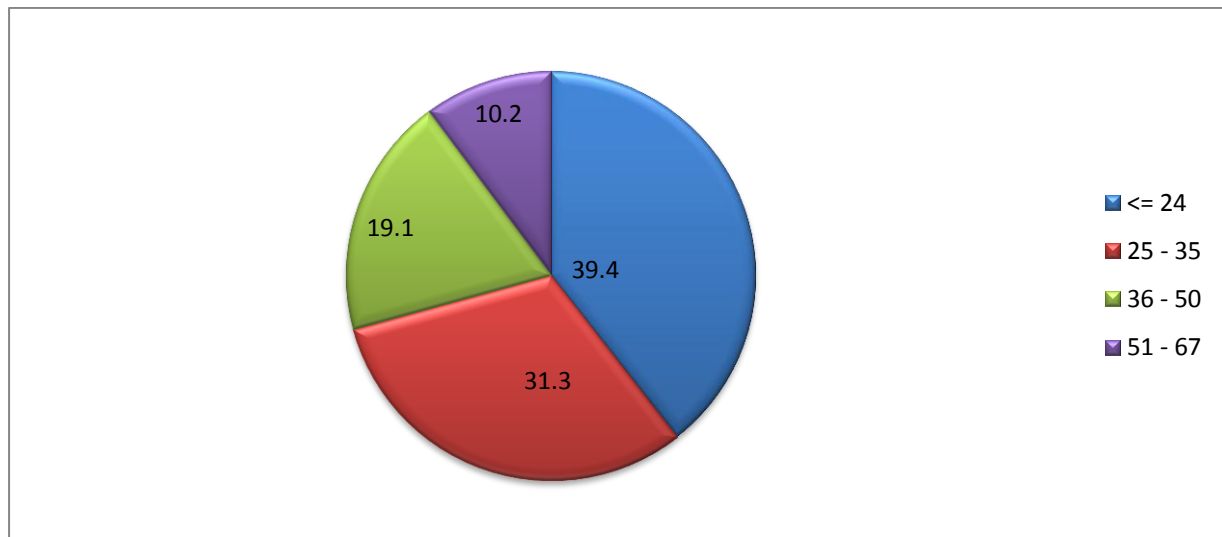


Figure 11: Age of respondents

It can be seen from the Figure 11 that the number of people who are on the age of less than 24 dominates with the percentage of 39.4%. Followed by that group of age is tourists from 25 – 35 and visitors from the middle age, 31.3% and 19.1% respectively. It comes as no surprise that people in the age group of 51 – 67 are not many and so, they only account for 10.2%.

c. Information educational attainment of the respondents

As it shown in Table 2 below, there are different employment statuses of respondents:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	primary school	4	1,6	1,6	1,6
	secondary school	12	4,9	4,9	6,5
	high school	23	9,3	9,3	15,9
	vocational school or course	5	2,0	2,0	17,9
	Polytechnic	13	5,3	5,3	23,2
	university, bachelor degree	95	38,6	38,6	61,8
	university, master's degree or upper	94	38,2	38,2	100,0
	Total	246	100,0	100,0	

Table 2: Information educational attainment of the respondents

The Table 2 shows that there are different educational levels among these tourists. Among the 246 respondents, bachelor (38.6%) and master and higher degree (38.2%) accounted for the majority of tourists in this group. This makes sense because these groups may spend more money on travelling. On the other hand, only small amount of visitors holding primary (1.6%) and secondary school (4.9%) attainment level. The results may come from 9 of 246 respondents who are under 18 years old and some others. In addition, there are 5 tourists with the vocational school or course (17.9%) and 13 visitors with polytechnic degree (23.2%).

d. Information on annual income of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less \$19,999	86	35,0	35,0	35,0
	\$20,000- \$39,999	47	19,1	19,1	54,1
	\$40,000- \$59,999	56	22,8	22,8	76,8
	\$60,000- \$79,999	37	15,0	15,0	91,9
	\$80,000 or more	17	6,9	6,9	98,8
	Missing data	3	1,2	1,2	100,0
	Total	246	100,0	100,0	

Table 3: Information on annual income of the respondents

Tourists who came to Hanoi varied in many categories. First, in the Table 3, employed individuals travel more than the unemployed. Obviously, people who have job, earn money and afford to take a vacation; while the jobless people are dependent on the government, and they have much to worry than travelling. Anyone who has an annual income from \$40.000 to \$59.999 finds that it is affordable to go on vacation to an Asian country, however, the same does not hold true for those who make less than \$19.999 to \$39.999 annually.

5.1.2 Travel Behavior Characteristics

Among 246 respondents, only 23 of them have been to Hanoi, which takes account of 9.3%. This could be easily explained due to the price. It is not very cheap when they travel from Europe to Asia, not to mention the expense they have to spend for their accommodation while in Hanoi. Naturally, when going to another country, it is essential to make a plan.

	Less than three months	Three to six months	Over six months
Frequency	133	75	38
Percent	54,1	30,5	15,4

Table 4: Information on visiting times to Hanoi

As it shown in Table 4, most people organize their trip less than three months, and in this case, it falls into approximately 54.1%. In fact, the percentage of visitors who start to plan over six months before their departure is about 15.4%.

	Percent	
1-5 days	80.9	
5-10 days	9.8	
>10days	9.3	
Mode	3 days	51.20%

Table 5: Information on a number of travel days in Hanoi

However, visitors only spend a short time in Hanoi. In the table 5, 80.9 % of the total number of visitors spends one to five days to stay in Hanoi whereas only 9.8 % would stay from five to ten days. There is also 9.3 % of tourist's number who stays over ten days in the city.

Alone	29	11.8
A couple	83	33.7
Family members	31	12.6
Friends and relatives	73	29.7
Organized group	30	12.2
Mode	A couple	

Table 6: Information on travellers' partner

Moreover, it is greater to be in another country with their lovers, and so, 83 of the respondents decide to visit Hanoi in couple. Still, 73 travelers have a vacation with their friends and relatives while 31 visitors go to the city with their family. As it shown in table 6, only 29 people travel alone in Hanoi and 30 tourists go by organized groups.

• Printed media (magazine...)	114	46,3
• Internet	106	43,1
• Words of mouth	15	6,1
• Media	1	0,4
• Fair/ Exhibition	2	0,8
• Others	8	3,3
Mode	Printed media	

Table 7: Type of information sources about Hanoi

In Table 7, visitors mainly want to have a trip to Hanoi when they read about it on a commercial or a magazine or even a newspaper. Indeed, its percentage is 46.3%. Knowing information about Hanoi tourism via the internet is another popular way. There are 106 passengers used that tool, which makes up of 43.1%.

• Motel	7	2,8
• apartment	5	2
• Hostel	80	32,5
• Hotel	144	58,5
• Homestay	5	2
• others	5	2

Table 8: Type of accommodation staying in Hanoi

Also, where is the best way to stay in Hanoi? It must be in a hotel because it gives visitors more convenience than the other places. The Table 8 above shows that there is 58.5% of people enjoyed staying in hotels while others took pleasure residing in a motel or a hostel, respectively 32.5% and 2.8%.

Furthermore, there are so many reasons for tourists to come and visit Hanoi which are illustrated in table 9 below:

• Holiday	129	52,4
• Attractions	40	16,3
• Visit friends	9	3,7
• Education	14	5,7
• Sightseeing	43	17,5
• Business	7	2,8
• Others	4	1,6

Table 9: Main reasons for visiting Hanoi

Generally, people come only for holiday. In percent, 52, 4% of the people who would like to take a rest and spend some time with their mates or their family. 17.5% of the tourists just want to come and see how life goes in an Asian country while the other 16.3% are fascinated by Hanoi attractions, such as the Temple of Literature, the One Pillar Pagoda.

5.1.3 Tourist expectation versus Tourist Perception within Hanoi Tourism

a. Image of Hanoi

For visitors, the process of selecting and deciding on a travel destination is influenced by how they perceive the general image of Hanoi as a destination which includes many factors of nature, economy, society and politics. Survey results are presented in the table given below:

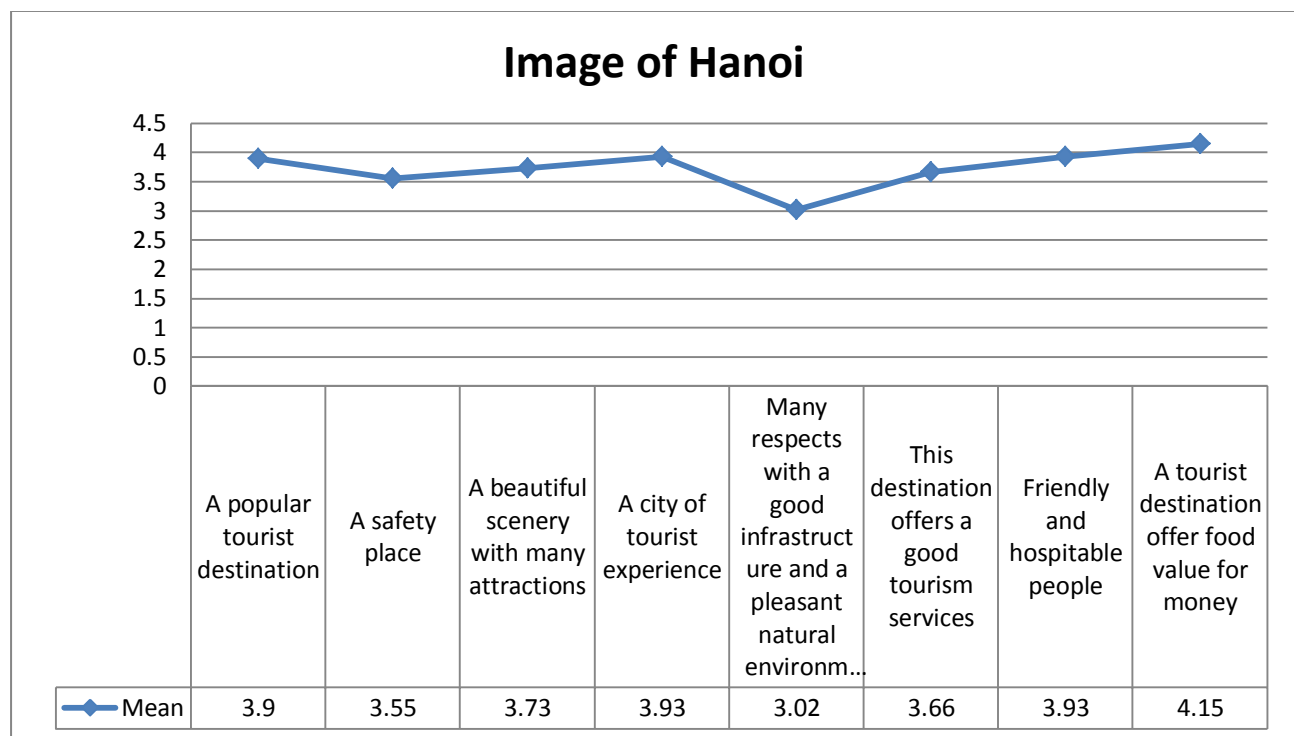


Figure 12: Image of Hanoi by respondents

The Figure 12 above shows how well the feeling of visitors is about the images of Hanoi. It can be easy stated that Hanoi is a tourist destination which offers food that is valuable for the money they expensed. To prove that, one can look at the mean and see that factor earn 4.15, the biggest contributor among the others. One noticeable thing is that Hanoi is a city of tourist experience which offers many attractive choices. Friendly and hospitable people are another major factor

that earns a lot of great feeling from tourists. Unsurprisingly, Hanoi is a popular tourist destination since it is the capital of Vietnam, with the mean of 3.90. Many tourists agree that Hanoi is a city with beautiful scenery and many attractions, and also, it offers good tourism services. This can be explained by the witness of the mean, with 3.73 and 3.66 in respective. When visiting another country, guests are very worried about the security, and fortunately, Hanoi tourism has erased that concern. Visitors evaluated Hanoi safety by the mean of 3.55. The lowest mean is the respects with a good infrastructure and a pleasant natural environment with only 3.02 from the visitors' feedback.

b. Tourism destination attributes towards tourists' satisfaction

To examine the level of satisfaction of international tourists, the author compares the difference between tourists' expectations and perceptions/ experiences toward the nine parts of tourism destination attributes to Hanoi as a destination. By applying Paired-Samples T Test (t-Test) in SPSS program, the statistical significance of the differences between the scores has been tested. The below figure 13 describes the research results:

		Expectation (E1)		Experience (E2)		E2-E1	t-Test	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		N	Sig t
<u>Elements of tourist destination</u>								
C1	Personal safety and security	4.37	.829	3.67	.906	-.701	246	.000
C2	The easily reached destination	3.60	.979	4.03	.873	.433	246	.000
C3	Cleanliness of the destination	3.33	.939	3.17	.857	-.158	246	.029
C4	Unspoiled nature	3.71	.894	2.84	1.018	-.868	246	.000
C5	Climate conditions	3.18	.963	3.26	.876	.081	246	.276
C6	Diversity of cultural/ historical attractions	4.19	.748	4.05	.763	-.146	246	.012
C7	The quality of accommodation	3.45	.942	3.96	.822	.510	246	.000
C8	Friendliness of the local people	4.03	.768	4.00	.937	-.025	246	.731
C9	Convenience of the local transportation services	3.60	.894	3.42	.932	-.189	246	.022
C10	The variety of local cuisine	3.82	.892	4.17	.784	.348	246	.000
C11	Possibilities for shopping	2.95	1.174	3.94	.827	.986	246	.000
C12	Availability of sport and recreational activities	2.67	1.149	2.98	1.057	.312	246	.001
C13	Availability cultural and other events	3.85	.837	3.68	.823	-.170	246	.008
C14	Nightlife and entertainment	3.03	1.037	3.51	.882	.475	246	.000
C15	Wellness and spa services	2.56	1.176	3.24	1.037	.682	246	.000
C16	Conference services	2.07	1.182	2.90	1.151	.835	246	.000
<u>City Environment</u>								
C17	Cleanliness	3.43	.961	3.08	.895	-.354	246	.000
C18	Good weather	3.54	.937	3.52	.946	-.016	246	.838
C19	Old/historic visual appeal	4.17	.681	3.87	.896	-.309	246	.000
C20	Modern/visual appeal	3.19	.932	3.19	.854	.000	246	1.00
C21	Variety of recreational spaces	3.20	1.018	3.26	.861	.061	246	.361
C22	Dense built environment	3.06	1.107	3.64	.949	.577	246	.000
<u>City Experience</u>								
C23	No language barriers	3.40	.871	3.01	1.112	-.396	246	.000
C24	Lively nighttime	3.00	1.129	3.23	.871	.227	246	.007
C25	Opportunity to experience the local life	4.13	.768	3.68	.860	-.451	246	.000
C26	Family friendly environment	3.33	1.172	3.29	.949	-.041	246	.575
C27	Friendly and hospitable local people	4.13	.697	3.78	.997	-.359	246	.000
C28	Vibrant urban atmosphere	3.81	.917	3.81	.965	.000	246	1.00
C29	Easy to walk around	3.96	.957	3.15	1.243	-.809	246	.000
C30	Easy to follow the directional signs	3.70	1.081	3.59	1.442	-.102	246	.343
<u>Range of attractions</u>								
C31	Variety of museums and galleries	3.77	.967	3.61	.909	-.163	246	.031
C32	Various forms of music and performance	3.36	1.043	3.19	.852	-.167	246	.017
C33	Unique history	4.14	.780	3.95	.892	-.193	246	.002
C34	Variety of historical sites and cultural attractions	3.98	.825	3.65	.842	-.325	246	.000
C35	Variety of special events and festivals	3.36	1.055	3.15	.923	-.211	246	.002
<u>Tourism Service</u>								
C36	Rich variety of tourist information	3.96	.868	3.54	1.032	-.419	246	.000
C37	Convenient opening hours	3.85	.841	3.51	1.039	-.347	246	.000
C38	Good availability of tourist attraction signs	3.89	.812	3.34	.977	-.547	246	.000
C39	Good availability of service signs	3.73	.882	3.18	1.022	-.549	246	.000
C40	Good availability of community facility signs	3.67	.926	3.29	.987	-.386	246	.000
C41	Reasonable price of local services	4.12	.804	3.80	.985	-.325	246	.000
C42	Various type of local product and service	4.08	.792	3.86	.871	-.220	246	.001

<u>Transportation</u>								
C43	Easy to understand and use local transport	3.63	.970	2.86	1.113	-.764	246	.000
C44	Safe transportation to and from places	3.90	.871	3.37	.942	-.533	246	.000
C45	Accurate timetables	3.69	.964	3.29	.804	-.397	246	.000
C46	Good condition of transportation technology	3.60	.950	3.16	.878	-.439	246	.000
C47	Reasonable prices	4.13	.768	3.70	.942	-.431	246	.000
<u>Food and Beverage</u>								
C48	Reasonable prices	4.26	.771	4.02	1.004	-.244	246	.002
C49	Variety of restaurants and cafeterias	4.24	.735	4.07	.977	-.167	246	.021
C50	Diversity of food and beverage	4.21	.762	4.06	.924	-.150	246	.030
C51	High quality food and beverage	4.03	.852	3.71	.923	-.325	246	.000
<u>Accommodation</u>								
C52	Reasonable prices	4.22	.805	4.11	.870	-.118	246	.064
C53	Efficient Booking services	3.99	.914	3.91	.912	-.078	246	.240
C54	Effective Management and Customer services	3.98	.857	3.93	.973	-.049	246	.490
C55	Pleasant hospitality environment	4.10	7.92	3.96	1.005	-.138	246	.056
C56	Standard of cleanliness property	3.94	.965	3.84	.892	-.098	246	.168
C57	Standard of furnishing property	3.63	.990	3.73	.910	.098	246	.171
C58	Good location	4.16	.820	4.15	.876	-.004	246	.952
<u>Adventure and Outdoor Recreation</u>								
C59	Variety of adventurous, challenging and exciting outdoor trips	3.70	1.048	3.45	1.047	-.254	246	.001
C60	Opportunity to be closeness to nature	3.64	1.036	3.25	1.100	-.386	246	.000
C61	Opportunity to join sports and recreational activities	3.04	1.246	3.04	1.074	.000	246	1.00

Figure 13: Segmentation analysis for foreign holiday satisfaction with Hanoi tourism

Figure 13 summarizes the analysis results for properties, including the following information:

- Properties on vacation in Hanoi include: group of positive attributes and negative attributes
- The average value (Mean) and standard deviation (SD) for both expectation and experience of each attribute.
- The difference between expectation (E1) and experience (E2).
- Number of pairs of observations (N).
- The significance level (Sig t) for each pair (expectation- experience).

As shown on Figure 13, there are 45 out of 61 elements of destination attributes, which are analyzed by the T-test results, gaining the statistical significance level of 5%. The others (C5, C8, C18, C20, C21, C26, C28, C30, C54, C55, C56, C57, C58, and C61, which are yellow

highlighted) cannot achieve statistical significance (because $\text{Sig } t > 0.05$). It means that there is no difference between the two means of expectation and experience.

Based on studies of the Tribe & Snaith (1998), the positive and negative attributes are represented on separate matrices of Experience (X-axis) and Expectation (Y axis). The region of win and loss is delimited by the draw line, a 45-degree diagonal. Depending on the different positive and negative figure of the properties, the area of win or loss appears in the upper left or lower right of the draw line. In addition, for each attribute, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of international travelers is determined at the intersection between expectation and experience. In the case of negative attributes, a low level of expectation and high levels of perceived trend will be closed to the loss area of the matrix at the same time with correspondingly creating a slowdown in the level of satisfaction. In contrast, in low expectations and high experience, but in the case of the positive attributes satisfaction tends toward the win area of the matrix, corresponding to increased levels of satisfaction.

Elements of tourist destination

The result below shows that the “personal safety and security” (C1) is estimated as the most important element for tourists to decide a place to go. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the “personal safety and security” is always the important part of any of our lives because everybody has a greater need to feel safe. Examples of safety and security needs include a desire for staying in a place which has a steady political situation, street security, road congestion safety, and shelter from environment. However, any cases of foreign travelers had a negative experience with their security during their trip in Hanoi which drives the result of the “personal safety and security” element (C1) into the loss area of the matrix. It is not safe to cross the sidewalks in Hanoi because some drivers may ignore traffic signals or even drive on sidewalks (United States Department of State, 2013). Blocking the way, holding back, clinging to purchase goods has been a common and publicity phenomenon toward foreign tourists visiting Hanoi for a long time. Adding to this, visitors may go on a scam and illegal taxi with rigged meters in the street or even at Noi Bai airport which picks them to wrong destinations or charge too high

compared to the actual price. For instance, the official webpage of the United States Department of State (2013) has given some specific information to tourists about the unsafe traveling environment Vietnam. There is also one webpage as Vietnam good travel guide (2009), which describes travel risks and instructs to have travel safety for visitors to Vietnam. Obviously, the personal safety and security still is a serious obstacle for foreign to travel to Vietnam in general, and Hanoi in particular. Next, the respondents think that the “diversity of cultural/ historical attractions” (C6) is one of the main reasons to choose Hanoi as their tourist destination. Not only do tourists want to spend time on relaxing, but they also look for visiting protected or cultural areas to understand local natural and cultural history of a destination. Throughout over thousand years of national founding and defense, the city still preserves many high spiritual and historical values which named among one of the most attractive destination in Asia in 2012 (Smart Travel Asia, 2013). Although tourists’ perception level of the ‘diversity of cultural/ historical attractions’ (C6) is at a very high rate, it is still lower than their expectation level. It is true that when tourists put too high expectation, they might strictly evaluate their actual experience or visitation. In this case, respondents had some disappointment of the diversity of tourist sites in Hanoi. It might cause by the poor performance of each tourist attraction that do not fulfill visitors’ requirements. Then, tourists also highly expected Hanoi as a place of rich “availability cultural and other events” (C13), but they were a bit dissatisfied when they visit the city. Even though, Hanoi has many interesting cultural and traditional festivals, it is not easy for tourists to participate. Many celebrations are only for locals, so it is not popular that some foreigners come to attend or take photos. Also, even the public events, tourists may feel difficult to enhance their experience in local culture if they do not have any local guide. Moreover, the three factors of “cleanliness of the destination” (C3), “unspoiled nature” (C4), and “convenience of the local transportation” (C9) locate also in the loss area of the matrix which presents the level of tourists’ dissatisfaction. According to Nguyen (2012), Hanoi is currently at the alarming level of air and dust pollution from its rapid industrialization which negatively impacts on the tourists’ perception of “cleanliness of the destination” (C3). As a thousand year-old city, Hanoi is expected to be a place for travelers to stroll through its “unspoiled nature” (C4) with remarkable ancient relics. When tourists visit the city, they were quite disappointed with the current situation that the population explosion and modern inventions turned the city into a bustling one. The customer satisfaction, therefore, drops to the lowest point in the loss area. Additionally, the local

transportation (C9) is not convenient for tourists because they might not understand Vietnamese to be able to follow the map and direction of transportation routes.

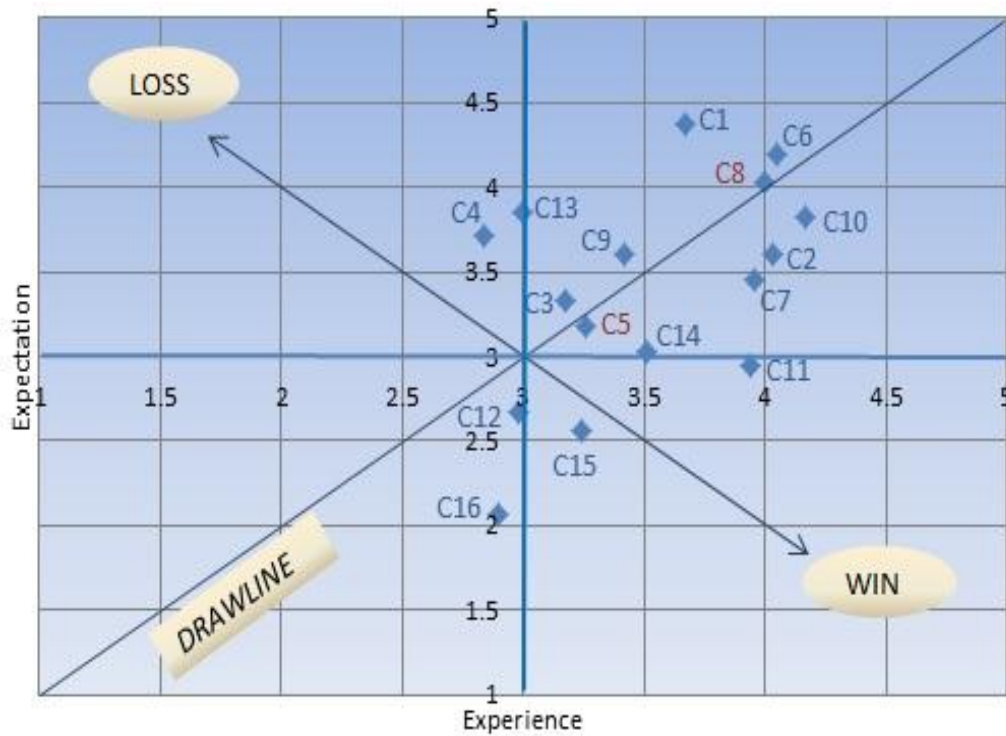


Figure 14: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of a tourist destination

In figure 14, the elements “the easily reached destination” (C2), “the quality of accommodation” (C7), and “the variety of local cuisine” (C10), are evaluated in the win area of the matrix. It is no doubt that Hanoi has rich food traditions and famous dishes in the world in general, and in Vietnam in particular. The CNN (2013) has rated a top ten famous food that tourists should not miss when they travel to the city, such as pho (vermicelli noodles with beef or chicken), bun cha (noodles with grilled pork patties and sliced of port belly), iced coffee, and so on. Because of the various cuisines, tourists can get food and beverage everywhere in the city. For the reason, they gain more experience and felt satisfied with the “variety of local cuisine” (C10) than they used to expect. In addition, the two factors of “the easily reached destination” (C2) and “the quality of accommodation” (C7) are measured in the win area which illustrate the positive tourist’s perception and satisfaction. Most of the tourist sites are located in city centre of Hanoi, so it is easy for visitors to reach the attractions by local transport or even on foot. The

accommodation in Hanoi as well has a good quality comparing with its offered price that can fulfill customers' satisfaction.

On the other hand, the factors considered the least important of the destination selection process are “possibilities for shopping” (C11), “availability of sport and recreational activities” (C12), “nightlife and entertainment” (C14), “wellness and spa services” (C15), and “conference services” (C16). In general, tourists mainly visiting Hanoi come from the developed countries, and those services are already sufficient to them in their home-country; that is why those are not really necessary for tourists. Adding to this, most of the respondents visit Hanoi for sightseeing, so they do not highly expect or want to spend their time on these elements. As discussed above, they only focus on the advantages of the visiting country to gain an authentic travel experience. Nonetheless, when visiting Hanoi, the respondent has changed their previous perception into a positive experience when they get to know and explore the authentic life in Hanoi. It's the reason why rate these elements at higher scores.

Besides, the two factors of “climate conditions” (C5) and “friendliness of the local people” (C8) are in the “path of indifference” of the matrix. Before travelling, tourists often check the weather forecast to prepare their packing strategy, so the actual weather in Hanoi is quite similar to what they previously expect. Also, this element is not considered as an important issue for tourist when choosing Hanoi as a holiday destination because they rated it at neutral level in a Likert scale. In addition, it is general psychology that tourists highly expect to meet friendly and hospitable locals. It is also true with the case in Hanoi when respondents scored the element of “friendliness of the local people” (C8) at 4 to 5 point in the scale, and they were happy with their perception.

Undoubtedly, when choosing Hanoi as the destination, the principles and factors are considered very careful by the tourists. However, the level of consideration and expectations of visitors to these factors could be adjusted, depending on the amount of information and reliability, the verification that tourists can make:

- If it follows the above analysis, then the “personal safety security” (C1) and “diversity of cultural and historical attractions” (C6) are the main priorities when selecting a place to visit. Having over thousand years of history and marked as ten-year conferment as “City

for Pearce” by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) from 1999 to 2009, Hanoi internationally boasts itself as an attractive and peaceful place to live. These factors can be controlled explicitly and systematically, so visitors do not have to consider many options when choosing Hanoi. In contrast, this factor does not belong to the top seven elements in the win area when tourists perceive Hanoi as a tourist destination because there are still many obstacles preventing tourists during their visitation.

- The other factors are still carefully taken into account, which are: “the easily reached destination” (C2), “cleanliness of the destination” (C3), “unspoiled nature” (C4), “the quality of accommodation” (C7), “convenience of the local transportation services” (C9), “the variety of local cuisine” (C10), and “availability of sport and recreational activities” (C12). In fact, these factors are intangible, so the enjoyment and evaluation can only be done by real experience. Plus, how people feel about the place is varied, and it is deciding to the satisfaction of the trip.
- These factors of “possibilities for shopping” (C11), “availability of sport facilities and recreational activities” (C12), “nightlife and entertainment” (C14), “wellness and spa services” (C15), and “conference services” (C16), are at a lower level of expectation and experience. Because of the purpose of the participants’ trip to Hanoi is for sightseeing, they may want to gain more authentic experience embracing local cultures and interacting local people than human science activities which they can do everywhere else.

Attributes and Factors of Hanoi Tourism

To evaluate the satisfaction level of visitors when visiting Hanoi, the researchers have studied the eight elements that have an influence on the expectation and feeling of the tourists. Below are the results of the investigation:

City Environment

This is a group of factors that create the context and atmosphere, but it is not highly-expected. Because tourists may come from some areas that have already had the given factors, they may less expect than people who have not previously gain experience in the city life.

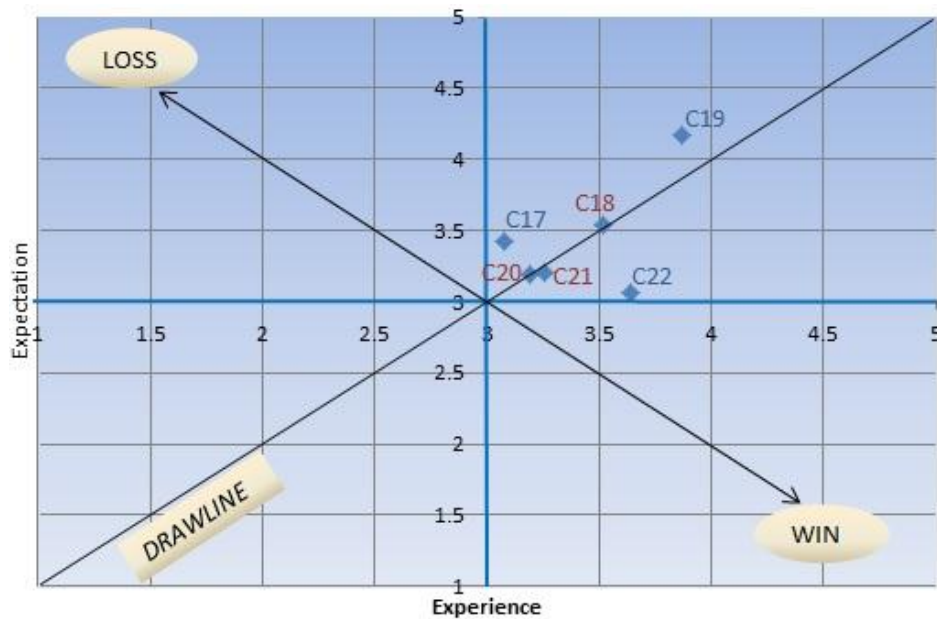


Figure 15: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of a city environment

According to HOLSAT model, the beneficial characteristics, the positive difference between expectation and actual experience can keep the visitors satisfied (Tribe & Snaith 1998). As shown in figure 15, the “dense built environment” (C22) is the only factor presenting on the win area of the matrix which shows the higher level of tourists’ perception than their expectation. In recent year, Hanoi has grown significantly in terms of building its environment due to the developed economy. Many attractions have been built based on the available natural environment to satisfy the majority of tourists, such as Thien Duong Bao Son Park, Thien Son – Suoi Nga Park. Next, the “old/historic visual appeal” factor (C19) is highly expected by the respondents. Perhaps, most of them thought Hanoi as a historic city which still preserves many ancient buildings and architecture works. However, it is a little disappointing that when they visit, Hanoi becomes a modern city featuring many structures on the move of its development. Thus, it may not truly offer tourists a sense of culture and heritage to meet and exceed their original expectation. Adding to this, the factor of “cleanliness” (C17) is on the loss area of the matrix because the tourists were not satisfied with the city conditions. There are a number of reasons why respondents gave ridiculous low rates to these elements. It includes the alarming level of air pollution, water pollution, or even noise pollution in the city (Nguyen, 2012).

Besides, there are three elements, which have no difference between tourists' expectation and their perception, includes: "good weather" (C18), "modern/visual appeal" (C20), and "variety of recreational spaces". In term of statics, these factors do not hold any meaning; however, psychologically, the assumption for these elements is not high so if the reality is not much prominent, and the satisfaction will have no difference with the expectation.

City experience

In this category, most of the tourists' actual experience is lower than their expectation. With a significance level of 5%, 4/8 criteria lies in the lost area, the rest are mostly located on the "path of indifference", and only one factor in the accepted region. The three elements of "family friendly environment" (C26), "vibrant urban atmosphere" (C28), "easy to follow the directional signs" (C30) have received quite similar results between tourists' expectations and experiences.

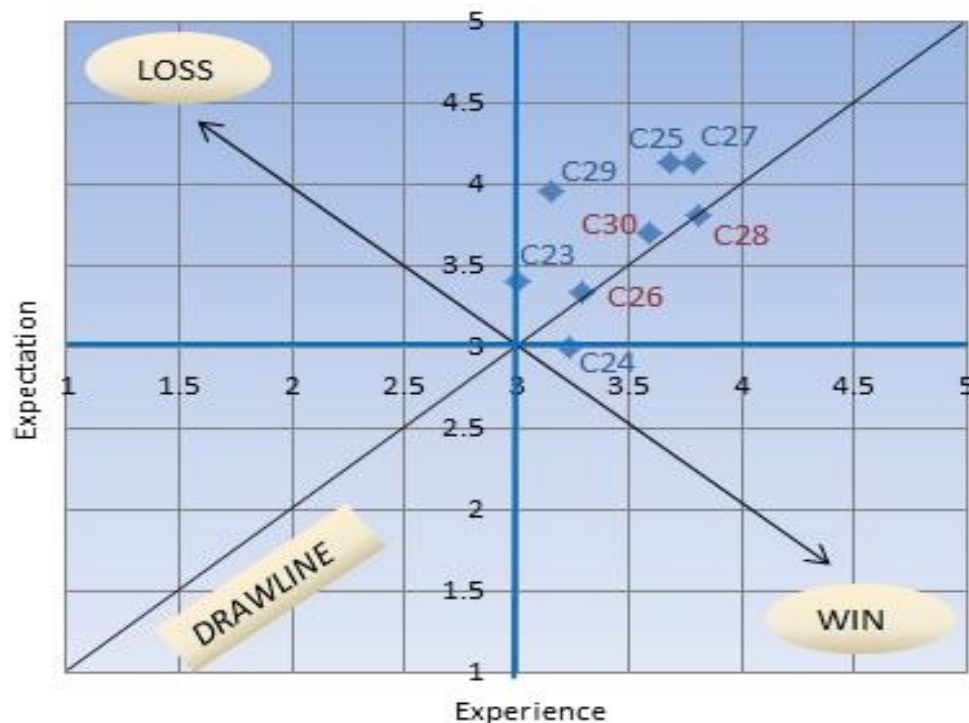


Figure 16: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of a city experience

In Figure 16, most of the tourists' actual experience is lower than their expectation because they lie on the loss area of the matrix. First, the two criteria that are most expected all belongs to Hanoi people traits including “opportunity to experience local life” (C25) and “friendly and hospitable local people” (C27). As discussed above, these elements are also important factors that tourists carefully considered when choosing Hanoi. However, both factors do not meet the visitors' expectations, with evidenced by negative differences between actual experience and expectations thus put them on the loss area of the matrix. It is noticeable that these two elements are related to attitudes and behaviors of local residents. Many tourists have recorded that merchants, taxi drivers and sales staff have rude behavior and dishonesty toward their customers. Obviously, tourists seemed to have a negative interaction with local communities. Second, the two factors, which are: “no language barrier” (C23) and “easy to walk around” (C29) also lie in the loss area and especially, there are enormous differences between actual feeling and reality. The first one, “no language barriers” (C23) is evaluated at neutral level of tourists' expectation and perception because the level of foreign language using by locals in Hanoi is not that good. While travelling to Hanoi, tourists may meet some difficult in communicating with Vietnamese people which impact on their lower rate on perception. The other two as “easy to walk around” (C29), has the biggest influence on the satisfaction of the tourists when they are on their journey in Hanoi. This can be explained as the fact that most people prefer to wander so as to discover new places. Although the factor of “lively nighttime” (C24) is not highly expected before the trip, visitors are satisfied with it during their visit in Hanoi. Tourist may imagine Hanoi as an elegant quiet city where the whole city goes to sleep in the night time. Nonetheless, it is only true in some are of the city. Conversely, the Old Quarter is the place to be experience the nightlife in Hanoi, such as coffee houses with live music, mini bars, clubs, night market, street food stalls, which stay open through the night. Although being rated at a neutral level of perception, Hanoi's nightlife still seems to fulfill foreign tourists' satisfaction in their demand of night entertainment.

Range of Attractions

In general, it can be easily seen that factors belonging to this category do not meet the expectation, but the gaps between visitors' feeling and expectation are not significant.

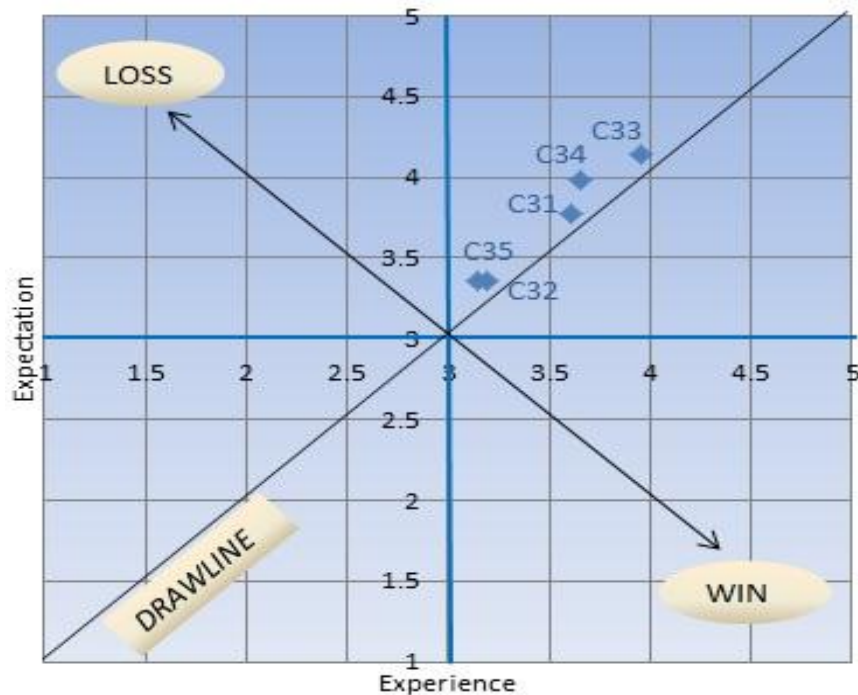


Figure 17: Expectation/ Experience matrix for a range of attractions

As it is shown in Figure 17, the factor about culture and history, including “unique history” (C33) and “variety of historical sites and cultural attractions” (C34) are mostly expected. Unlike many cities around the world, especially the Western cities, aside from small down town and old Quarter areas, the majority of Hanoi landscape are its suburb and agricultural and rural sections. Visitors have the opportunity to explore many cultural attractions and old architecture which made by many generations throughout the process of Hanoi’s national construction and defense. The natural sceneries are beautiful and charming, the craft village existed for hundreds of years, and the traditional festivals, which are considered as cultural products crystallized many spiritual values, can be attractive tourism products to foreigners. In addition, Hanoi has created its own unique history of thousand years of civilization which has drawn attention of tourists. Despite the potential historical and cultural values, same as other factors, these two do not achieve a high level of tourists’ expectation. It may be attributable to the poorly preserved conditions of the historical sites that are different from the description and recommendations on newspapers or online webpages. For instance, there are 600 degraded monuments which are still waiting for funding to reconstruct or preserve (Luu 2013).

Other factors, such as “variety of museums and galleries” (C31), “various forms of music and performance” (C32) and “variety of special events and festivals” (C35), not only receive a low expectation from customers’ point of view, but they also scored at a low level of perceptions. These low expectations and perceptions may be driven by the ineffective advertisement of the available offerings. It is possible that tourist activities are less interesting nor is it impressive so they escape the tourists’ memories after their trips. That’s why; their satisfaction is low and that these factors do not achieve the initial expectation.

Tourism service

This factor is about the tourism service quality of Hanoi and the travel companies. It has certain impacts on the actual feeling of visitors in the place they visit. The better the service quality and variety needs of tourists are met; the more satisfied they will be. If the service is poor and the travelers’ requirements are not fulfilled, it would affect to the whole trip. In fact, the majority of tourists set high expectation on this factor. Their expectation is ranging from level 4 to level 5 on a Likert scale. However, in reality, this factor does not live up to their expectation, with evidence that their satisfaction is much lower than what they expected

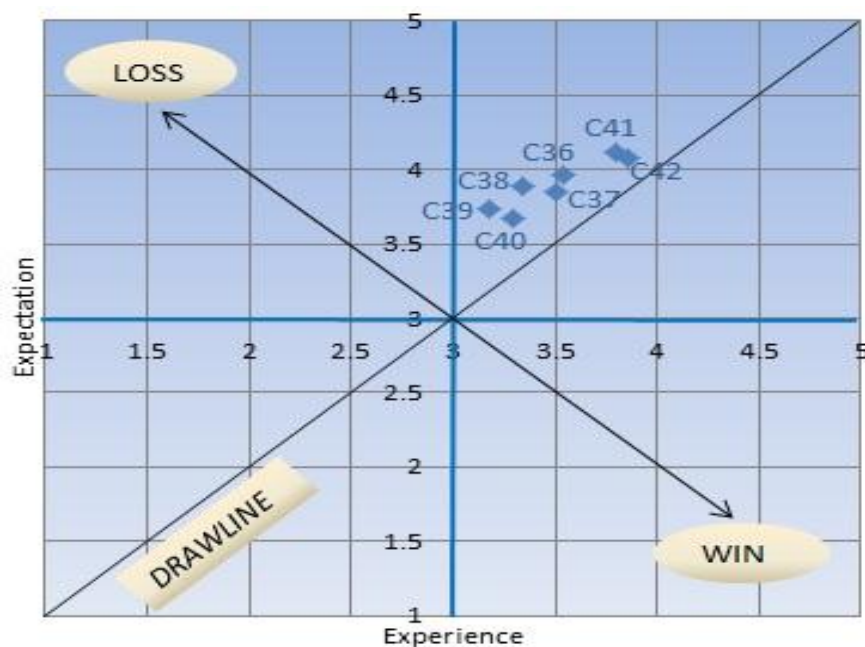


Figure 18: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of tourism service

As it shown in Figure 18, the three elements: “reasonable price of local services” (C41), “various types of local product and service” (C42) and “rich variety of tourist information” (C36) are looked forward on a high level. A big number of visitors choose the expectation which is on the “important” or “very important” rank. When thinking about travelling to Vietnam, many foreigners consider it as a low-cost holiday destination. They expect that in Vietnam, the expense of service would be very reasonable or equivalent to the special value they would receive thus creating their plan to purchase souvenirs while in Hanoi. In contrast, when experiencing reality, satisfaction of many tourists fell down, some even choose the “neutral” level which means that nothing is special at the given points. In many cases, tourists visit a street stall or check some snack items of a street vendor, they may be paid twice or three times than the actual value of the goods, especially food items, beverages. Adding to this, many tourists are curious and excited to explore and experience services and products offered by street vendors and even to have their picture taking with the merchants. At first, the vendor seems very friendly and welcomes them but later inflated the price of the merchandise. In addition, many tourists expected to have the “convenient opening hours” (C37) at tourist sites in order to easily visit. In fact, each tourist attraction in Hanoi has its own opening schedule that may cause inconveniences to the tourists. For example, Ho Chi Minh mausoleum opens from 7.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. every day, except Monday and Friday whereas Hanoi museum daily opens from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. For the reason, many tourists may choose the wrong time of visiting that influence their dissatisfaction with the element.

Moreover, the two most-cared elements are: “good availability of tourist attraction signs” (C38) and “good availability of service signs” (C39) because of big differences between reality and the tourist’s atonement. These are the most dissatisfied because tourists want to experience more. Since many old, damaged or missing signposts are not repaired, it is difficult for tourists to find the way to tourist sites and tourist services. There is a few Tourist Information Centre is available in some main streets in the city centre such as Dinh Tien Hoang street, Hang Duong street. Unfortunately, there is no self-service information kiosk or Tourist Information board around the city. Without a tour package, tourists may feel confused or waste of time to find the right way to the attractions. Unlike in Hanoi, Singapore has many clear and visible signposts including Tourist Information Signs and Tourist Information Centre in order to help customers reach their expected

destination. There are also local interactive maps available in shopping malls to support visitors at any time. As a result, most tourists have marked Singapore as a convenient self-discovery vacation destination.

Transportation

This has the negative difference between actual feeling and reality. This indicates that transportation service in Hanoi is still limited, and not able to live up to tourists' expectation.

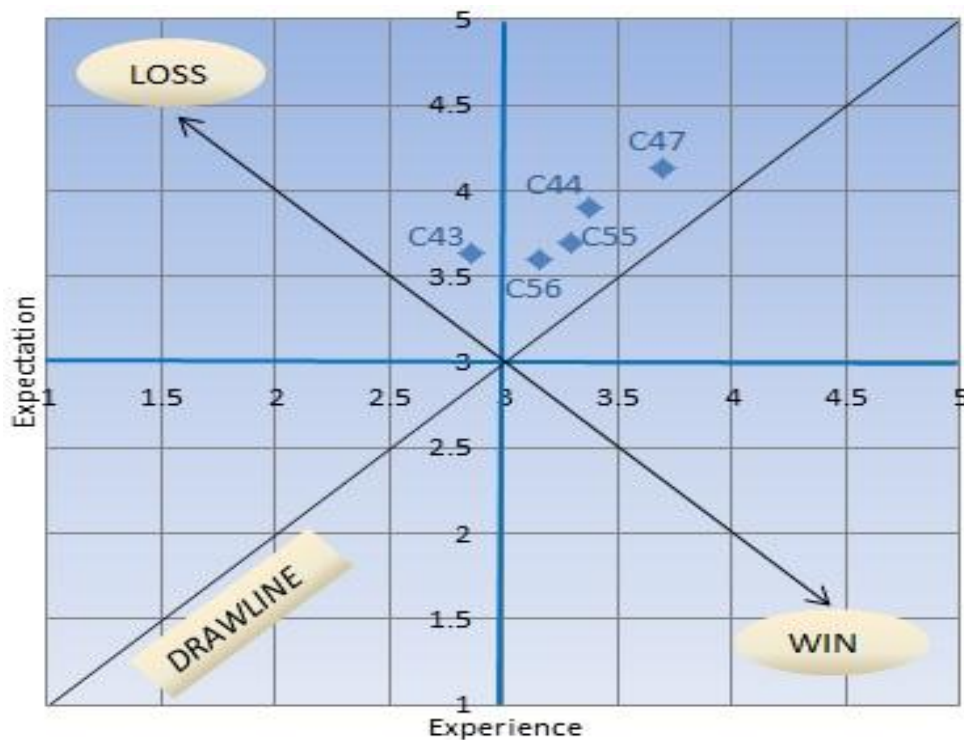


Figure 19: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of transportation

The factor that dissatisfies the visitors most is: “easy to understand a use local transport” (C43). Many domestic tourists choose land bus because it has cheap price and flexible timetables. Nonetheless, it is difficult for tourists to go around the city by local bus because the information is not available in foreign languages and bus workers only speak Vietnamese. Besides, a cheap mean of transport, motorbike taxi is quite popular in Hanoi. There are many men with

motorcycles waiting on the pavements at every city's street to serve customer. Normally, customer and driver have an agreement on price before sitting on the motorcycle. Many foreigners felt excited and had an enjoyable experience with that means of transport, meanwhile, others were scared to get around Hanoi by some careless drivers. As a result, many tourists prefer taxi as one of the most convenient and safe transportation during their trip in Hanoi. However, there is also one issue with a taxi as the taxi driver may not well-versed in English, some would try to impose an inflated rate instead of relying on the meter or even having a defective meter. Therefore, this factor presents difficulty for tourists while choosing transportation during their stays.

The others, “safe transportation to and from places” (C44), “accurate timetables” (C45), “good condition of transportation technology” (C46), are also in low level. It points out that there is nothing much dissimilarity when they travel in other countries or situations that they visualize when in Hanoi. Before the trip, international visitors could ask friends for some recommendations or find information from the internet about transportation in Hanoi. Some travelers reportedly had trouble with the local transportation which they had to pay a high price for a short distance of travelling. For instance, two Australian had to pay sixty five dollars for five kilometers of travelling by cyclo in April, 2013. Additionally, many taxis, motorcycles, cyclos, and land buses are in poor condition and sometimes smelly that annoys tourists.

The highly-hoped factor is the “reasonable prices” (C47) of local transport which is based on the typical characteristic of Vietnam and South-East countries as low-cost travel destinations. In reality, it is the opposite. This one does not make tourists more content because the expenditure of some people is nothing more saving and worthy than when they are in other countries. Let's take an example of taxi in Thailand, the fare starts at 35 baht (approximately 1 euro) and 5 baht (0.14 euros) from first to twelfth kilometer (Thai Taxi, 2013). It costs 85 baht (2.4 euros) for ten kilometers. Conversely, one of the popular taxi brand name in Vietnam, Mai Linh Taxi, the fare starts at 12.000 vnd (about 0.45 euros) and 17.000 vnd (0.65 euros) per kilometer up to the thirtieth kilometer. It costs 189.000 vnd or 7 euros for ten kilometres (Mai Linh Group, 2013). Comparing the taxi price between Thailand and Vietnam, it is obviously that the price of using

taxi in Vietnam is more expensive than in Thailand. In short, it is not cheaper to use local transportation in Vietnam than it is in other Southeast Asia countries.

Food and beverage

This is another factor that is highly looked forward, even though the satisfaction level has not met the expectation of tourists. However, most people generally are content with the criteria that are given.

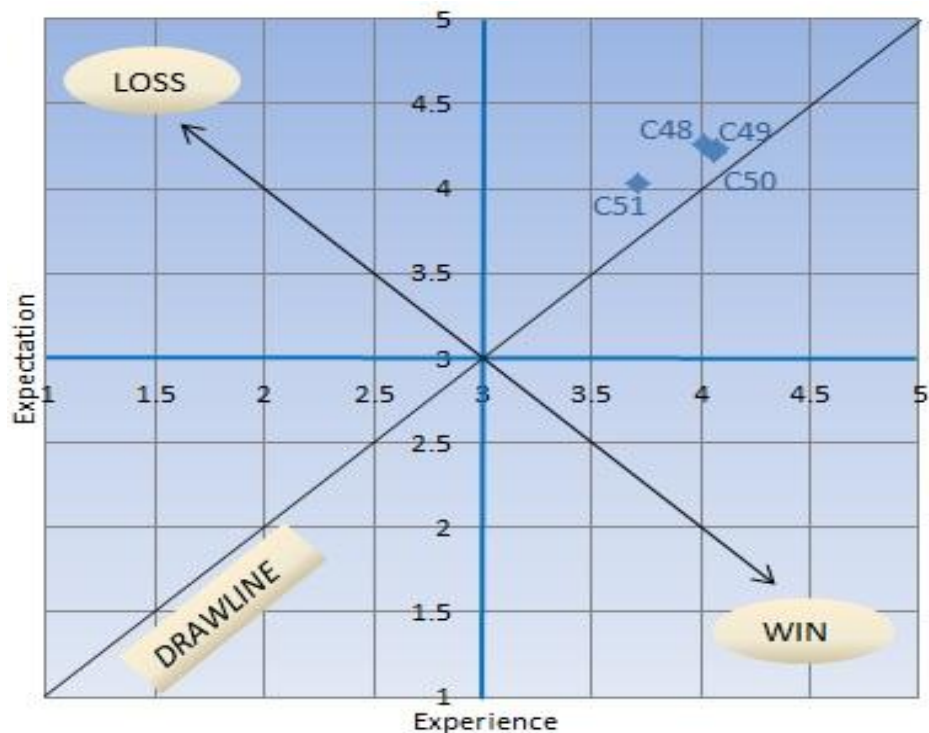


Figure 20: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of food and beverage

Most tourists expect to turn the elements of “reasonable prices” (C48), “variety of restaurants and cafeterias” (C49), “diversity of food and beverage” (C50), and “high quality food and beverage” (C51), at level 4 on the Likert scale. There are many reasons that lead the way of high expectation to local cuisine. First, it could come from the interesting information and good feedback about Hanoi cuisine which was spotlighted in different media channels that make tourists curious and decide to visit the city. Second, from the need, tourists start to have a demand to make a plan for travelling. Then, when they are in Hanoi, they choose some typical food and beverage to get an authentic experience. Adding to this, the cultural differences may be a travel motivation that drives tourists to discover Hanoi.

In the element of “reasonable prices” (C48), the difference between income and expense among the countries leads to the high expectation of price in the countries that rely on products and service. As a developing countries, Vietnam has a comparatively low cost of living expenses so that foreigners, especially who come from developed countries, always feel that they pay cheaper than at their countries. Therefore, this element is even rated higher at tourist’s perception than their expectation. In addition, Hanoi has always been a famous of “variety of restaurants and cafeteria” (C49). Hanoians love eating, drinking tea or coffee and chatting with friends so tourists can find alive with food and drink stalls which are available all the time for those seeking quick refreshment or those wanting to spend time with friends. It is not hard to find a Vietnamese and foreign restaurants that could offer visitors “diversity of food and beverage” (C50) either local specialties or cuisine from a foreign country. For example, a Vietnamese noodle restaurant chain, Pho 24, is a quite popular brand name in the international market generally (e.g. Tokyo, Hong Kong), and in the local market particularly. Besides hot noodle soup – Pho and a few other vermicelli dishes, these stores has offered Pho24’s instant noodle which is convenient for taking away. Pho 24 stores are always located in a good location where customer can enjoy Vietnamese taste at the same time enjoy sampling of Hanoi delights. Although Pho 24 chain provides fast food with both a local taste and price, the authentic and extraordinary taste of Pho comes from the city’s ubiquitous homemade stalls where tourists can experience an everyday life of indigenous people throughout their typical eating. Not only do visitors want to enjoy fresh local food and drinks, but they also expect healthy and quality products. In Hanoi, most of ethnic cuisine is available in small street stalls and vendors which may be treated warily by some visitors because of hygiene fears. There is currently no hygiene license for street food vendors and small street stall in Hanoi, so they are not aware of hygienic and sanitary practice in preparing and serving food and drinks. The standards of food hygiene may become an obstacle for tourists to tasting local food in Hanoi. Thus, the respondents in the survey expected to enjoy high quality food and drink product in their trip to Hanoi.

As shown on the matrix, all the elements of the food and beverages are located in the loss area which symbolizes to the customers’ dissatisfaction. Even though there is much positive

information influencing the pre-trip perception of Hanoi cuisine, a review of visitor perceptions has highlighted that local food and drinks do not meet their very high demand beforehand.

Accommodation

Accommodation is not only highly-hoped, but also its satisfaction is highly-appreciated. In the view of statics, the figure 21 shows the difference between the group of people who satisfy with the reality and the people who are content with the hotel service; meanwhile, in the view of statics, these factors give no meaning of significance level (sig. $t > 0.05$). Though, in terms of the economy and tourism, this kind of service has fulfilled the customer's expectation. But stating that does not mean it actually satisfies the increasing demand of them.

It is obvious that sleeping is very important thing for people to consider when making the decision to travel anywhere outside of their daily environment. Tourists always look for a clean and good place with a comfortable bed to stay after a long tired day of travelling. In the survey, there are seven elements in accommodation were asked respondents, such as “reasonable prices” (C52), “efficient booking services” (C53), “effective management and customer services” (C54), “pleasant hospitality environment” (C55), “standard of cleanliness property” (C56), “standard of furnishing property” (C57), and “good location” (C58).

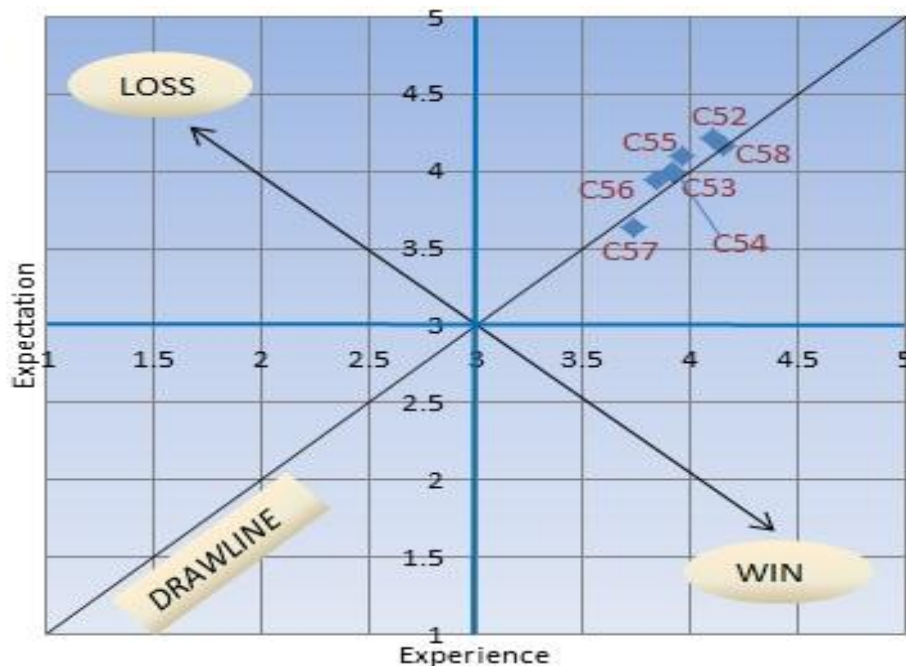


Figure 21: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of accommodation

In Figure 21, the factor which has the highest level of expectation and satisfaction in accommodation is “reasonable prices” (C52). It is understandable that Hanoi is considered as a comparatively low-cost of living which offers a cheap price to stay. For instance, one night stay for two persons in a deluxe twin private room at a top-rated hostel as Hanoi Lucky Guesthouse costs approximately 16 euros whereas it costs 41 euros for staying at the same room type in a top-rated hostel as Smile Society in Bangkok, Thailand (Hostelworld, 2013). Evidently, Hanoi is currently offering a high standard of hotel with a lower price comparing with other city destinations around Southeast Asia. Likewise, most of the respondents rated this factor at a high level of their perception. As mentioned above, there are a lot of hostels and hotels are available in “good location” (C58) as in the old streets in centre of Hanoi that are very easy for guests to discover local life. Compared to what is expected, foreigners seemed to be happier when they arrived and stayed. Similarly, others facets including “efficient booking services” (C53), “effective management and customer services” (54), “pleasant hospitality environment” (C55), “standard of cleanliness property” (C56), are over customers’ expectation. The visitors satisfied with their stays in Hanoi. It means these elements met the customers’ demand at the same time with satisfy them. Although the “standard of furnishing property” (C57) in the hotel has the lowest score of expectation and perception in the accommodation attribute, it still lies on the win area in the matrix. Many customers evaluate hotel facilities as a less essential element when they make their accommodation choice; meanwhile, some may look for good condition of hotel furniture. From the figure 21 above, only the “standard of furnishing property” element shows that the level of tourists’ perception meets their actual needs. It means the current Hanoi accommodation has provided good facilities for its guests.

Adventure and Outdoor Recreation

As a city of thousands of green tree-lined streets and hundreds of beautiful lakes, Hanoi is expected to be a place for exploring the refined taste of Hanoi nature. Although no adventurous and challenging activity is available in Hanoi, there is still an opportunity for tourist to enjoy some interesting outdoor trips in or around the city. For instance, tourists can take a walk or join a buffalo tour for sightseeing and shopping traditional porcelain and ceramic products in Bat Trang Ceramic Village which is situated approximately 15 kilometers outside of Hanoi. As a

result, most respondents expect to experience “variety of adventurous, challenging and exciting outdoor trips” (C59) and “opportunity to be closeness to nature” (C60). However, Hanoi is not a well-known place for adventure and outdoor recreation and a modern city with many high building so tourist may get a bit disappointment when they examine these elements in Hanoi. As it shown in Figure 22, the C60 and C59 fall into the loss area because the tourists’ perception of these elements is lower than the expectation. On the other hand, the element of “opportunity to join sport and recreational activities” is lain on the path of indifference which shows that there is no difference between what tourists expected and what they experienced.

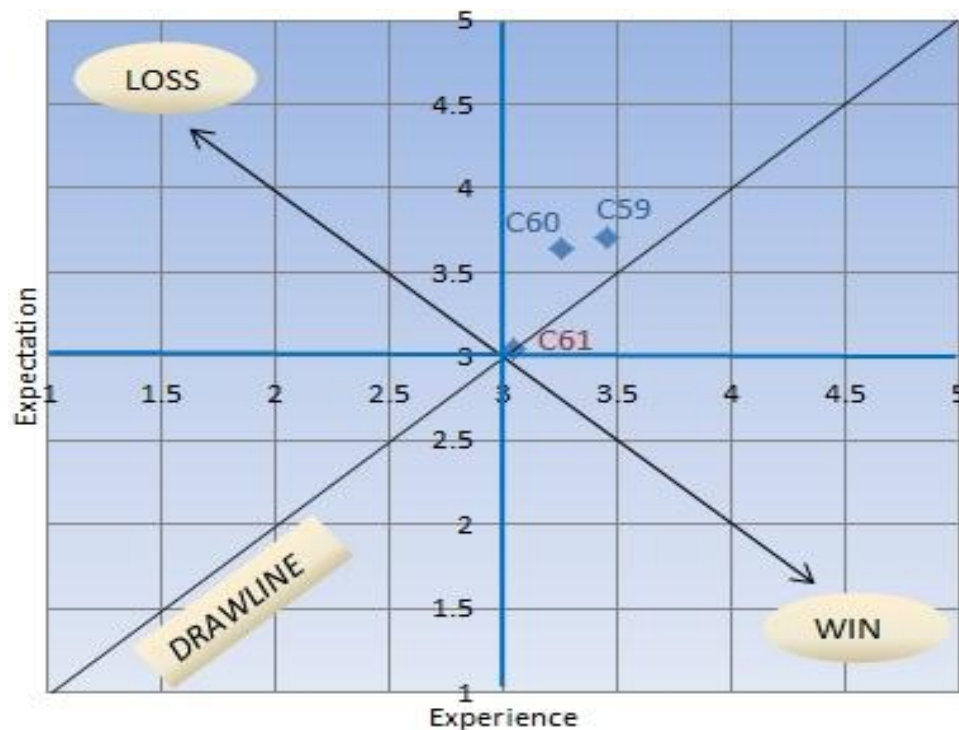


Figure 22: Expectation/ Experience matrix for elements of adventure and outdoor recreation

As it shown in Figure 22, the “opportunity to join sports and recreational activities” (C61) is rated at neutral level of tourists’ expectation and experience. As the major purpose of travelling to Hanoi is to gain an insight into the diversity of cultural and historical values of Hanoi, most respondents do not expect to participant in sports and recreational activities. Therefore, they do not highly perceive these activities during their stay in the city.

5.1.4 Satisfaction and Loyalty

a. Trip satisfaction

The Figure 23 below shows different levels of visitors' happiness when visiting Hanoi:

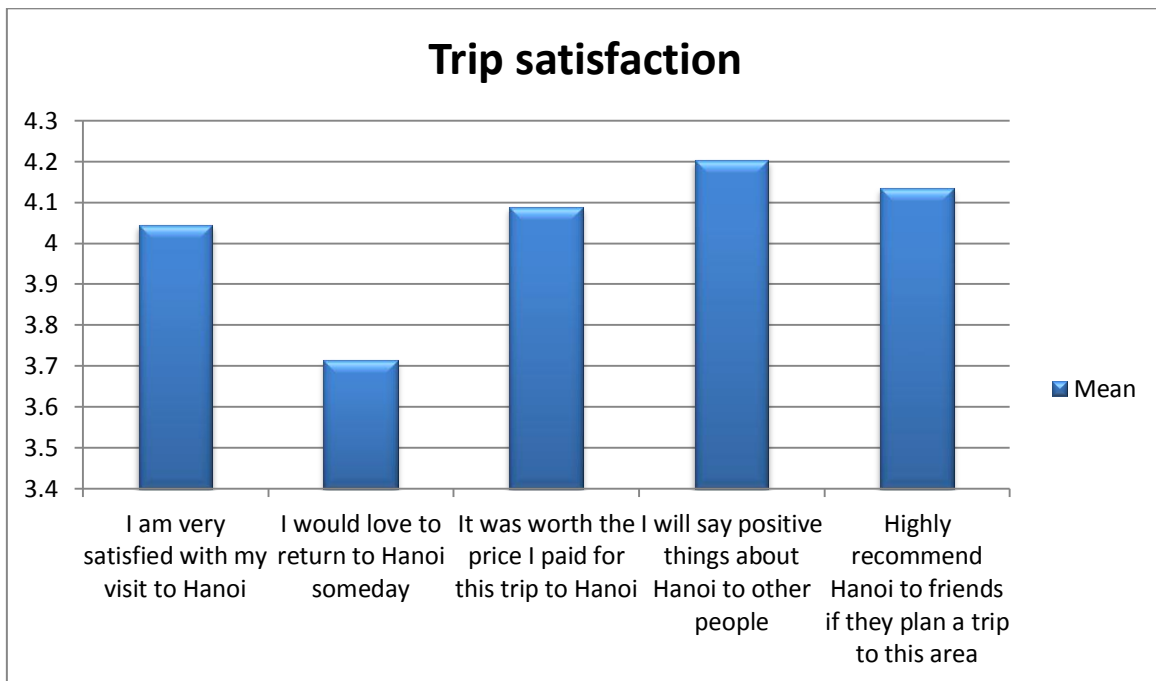


Figure 23: Hanoi's trip satisfaction

General speaking, respondents were fairly satisfied with their visit to Hanoi and were willing to recommend Hanoi to their friend if they plan a visit to the area. This was evidenced by their rating of over 4.0 for four out of five trip satisfaction factors. However, their score was lower when they were asked if they wanted to revisit Hanoi. The reasons for that have been clearly reflected in the above analysis. Therefore, Hanoi tourism urgently needs some improvements to attract return visitors.

b. Overall Tourists' Opinion on Hanoi Tourism

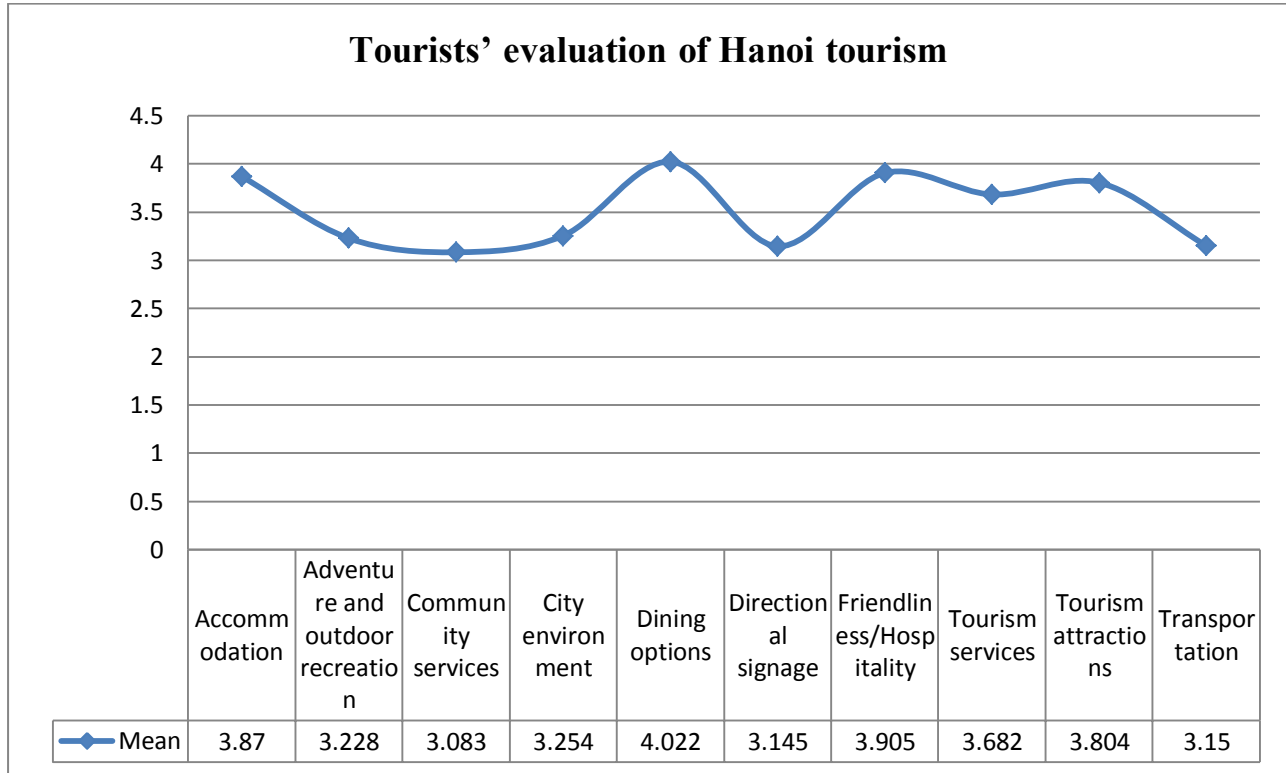


Figure 24: Tourists' evaluation of Hanoi tourism

Figure 24 presents tourists evaluation of Hanoi tourism over ten categories based on the survey results. The overall result is positive with the mean scores ranging from 3.08 to 4.00. The dining options reach the highest mean of 4.00 due to the number of Vietnamese cuisines, their delicacies and reasonable prices, followed by the hospitability of Hanoians. Accommodation and tourism attractions came on the third place at 3.87 and 3.80 respectively. The lowest mean contribute belongs to the directional signage which is only rated at 3.145. The rests, such as city environment, adventure and outdoor recreation along with tourism services are at fair level. Having no factors scored under the mean of 3, Hanoi tourism shows that it has progressively advanced.

In overall, Hanoi tourism has witnessed a great deal of satisfaction coming from the visitors when they visit the city. It has proved how much the tourism has been upgraded, and the only thing that should be focused on is to figure out the way to increase returning visitors. This, in my opinion, should remain as the number one priority.

c. Recommendations to improve Hanoi tourism

In this part, there are many interesting ideas given by respondents to improve the current situation of Hanoi tourism. There are six significant problems that need to improve to make Hanoi an attractive destination to tourists as the followings:

- Having some specific strategies to improve the sanitation situation in Hanoi to reduce the air and dust pollution.
- Strictly punishing the scammers and pickpockets
- Setting a law for food safety in the street food stalls and street vendors
- Establishing more public restrooms around the city.
- Offering a mean of transportation for tourists from place to others
- Offering attractive performance each of tourist sites for visitors to spend more time there.

5.2 Face-to-face interview

According to the Ministry of Justice of Vietnam (1999), tour operators are for-profit legal entities whose sole purposes are to provide tourist services including transportation, accommodation, and tour packages. International travel companies operating in Vietnam are responsible for developing and selling tour packages to their clients. They often operate as their clients' agents to fulfill their request their request while vacationing to maintain and expand the client base. These companies bring foreign tourists to Vietnam and offer tourist packages to Vietnamese and other foreign nationals living in Vietnam. As part of their operation, these companies offer a variety of

services including but not limited to the hotel and restaurant reservation, transportation booking, sightseeing and local attraction arrangements, shopping and cooking tours, and so on. The companies help tackling and solving the imbalance between supply and demand in tourism in order to connect visitors (especially international visitors) to the destination. They work to connect the tourism sector service facilities with the potential customer. Therefore, the study focuses on examining the perception of tour operators on the current situation of Hanoi tourism and collecting information about their foreign tourists' feedback while visiting Hanoi.

In this section, the face-to-face interviews were conducted at the tour operators' office of the seven chosen tour agencies in Hanoi. The semi-structured interviews were based on an eight open-ended question discussions, where participants were asked to share their opinions, experiences, thoughts and perspectives. Therefore, in semi-structured interviews, the researcher (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2005, p.132) can have an in-depth interview and guide respondents with discussion topic without any limitation of the communicated discussion area. Below are results of face-to-face interviews:

5.2.1 Back ground information

During the summer of 2012, the author requested permission to interview seven tour operators at their offices in Hanoi. All operators are currently working for popular Hanoi travel companies which are well-known in both domestic and international market. Here is some basic information about these companies and the seven tour operators:

Vietnamtourism-Hanoi Joinstock Company is an international and domestic travel company which was established in 1960 in Hanoi. The company specializes in travel and transport business, hotel and restaurant (not including karaoke, discos, bars) business, ticket management, entertainment services, and education consultancy. The company has been a key contributor to the tourism development of the city and has become one of the most favorite travel companies voted by local newspapers and their customers. Especially, it is the only tour company in northern Vietnam who was awarded the Top-Ten International Tour Operators Award from 1990 to 2009 by Vietnam Tourism Association and Vietnam National Administration of Tourism. The

researcher interviewed Ms. Tu Nguyen, a tourism promotion manager of the company. She is responsible for promoting tour packages through promotional campaigns and advertising. Her duties are to contact and work with international travel partners to design tours for foreigners in Vietnam in general and in Hanoi in particular.

Hanoi City Tourism Association is previously known as Hanoi Tourism club which was established in 1997. The association currently has 300 members from most travel and hotel businesses in Hanoi. The role of the association is to support the development of the tourism market of Vietnam as well as Hanoi tourism. It also helps enterprises to find direction and solution to overcome their difficulties or to solve their problems in tourism business and brand development. The researcher interviewed Ms. Nghe Trinh, an association vice chairman. Ms. Nghe Trinh has over 10 years' experience in the travel and tourism industry in Hanoi. She is also a deputy director of International Travel Company, a professional travel agency in inventing and organizing tours for foreigners in all areas of Vietnam. She spends most of her working time on expanding tourism market, seeking new market, and building special tourism product for foreign customers.

Hanoitourist Travel Company was established in 1998 as a sup of Hanoitourist Copperation which is currently a holding company of twelve travel companies in Vietnam and different travel agencies abroad (e.g. in German, in United States). Mostly, the company customers are Vietnamese who want to book inbound or outbound tours. However, there are also foreigners who would like to book a trip to Vietnam through the company. The author interviewed with Mr Binh Tran, a deputy manager of inbound department of Hanoitourist Travel Company. He is in charge of inbound and returns process to ensure customer satisfaction and is managing inbound team members.

Vinatour is a traditional and top quality company which started their operation in 1960. It was considered the first state-owned International Tour Operator in Vietnam in 1982. There are variety service offerings of the company toward both domestic and foreign customers, such as inbound and outbound tourism, M.I.C.E, hotel and restaurant reservations, tour guide and interpreters, air ticketing, tourist consultation, and other services. The author interviewed Ms. Nga Nguyen, an executive officer, who has many experiences in directing and managing vacation packages in inbound market.

Smileviet Joint Stock Company was founded in 2005 with a slogan of “LIVE the culture, LOVE the flexibility and DO what excites you”. The company boasts itself as one of the best known travel agents which organizes inbound tours to Vietnam and Indochina as well as offers best services to foreign clients, corporate and business travelers. A manager of Smileviet Company, Ms. Ha Dam, openly and warmly shares her experiences throughout the interview.

Destination Asia Vietnam is a subsidiary of Destination Asia group which was set up in 1996. With eleven operating offices in Asia, Destination Asia is known as the first destination management company focusing on Indochina operations as well as the first Asian based travel company held by its employees. The group provides various products and services of both comprehensive management services (e.g. incentive houses, cruise lines, tour wholesalers and operators) and high class client-focused services (sightseeing tours, excursions, city tours). The researcher contacted and interviewed Ms. Huong Bui, a senior tour consultant of Destination Asia Vietnam in Hanoi. Working at the company since its establishment, Ms. Huong Bui shared much fruitful information toward the interview questions.

Last but not least, it would have been missing if the research had not mentioned Hanoikids club, a voluntary English club and a student-run organization for taking free city tours in Hanoi. The club was formed in 2006 with the aim to introduce Vietnamese culture to foreign visitors. The interview was conducted with Ms. Nhung Nguyen, a head of tour operation department. She has an overall responsibility for planning, creating, and arranging city tour programs for foreign tourists who have applied tours on Hanoikids' webpage.

5.2.2 Perceptions of Hanoi tourism current situation

Possessing extensive experiences in the tourism field, all respondents have shared their perceptions toward the current situation of Hanoi tourism both positively and negatively.

a. Positive aspects

Hanoi as capital of Vietnam has many advantages and potential materials for developing tourism in both global and domestic market. For the last ten years, Hanoi tourism has been developing and contributing towards local economic growth. As the first arrival gate for tourists visiting Vietnam, many international tourists chose Hanoi to be their first destination to discover Vietnam. In addition, all respondents agreed that Hanoi has created a good impression of a city's tourism with its rich culture, historical and traditional values. Not only is Hanoi known as a safe destination, but it also boasts a peaceful status that promises to bring tourists peace of mind and enjoyment to explore the city.

b. Negative aspects

However, the city's tourism development has still not matched with its potential. Here are a few problems facing the existing Hanoi tourism development:

- Awareness about tourism has not really been synchronized between all levels of government and the private sectors
- The tours around Hanoi and its surrounding areas are monotonous and low service quality. Actually, the price is not commensurate with the quality of almost tourism services and products in Hanoi. Foreign visitors are always become targets of unsettled accident.
- The natural resource has not been upgraded or restored to serve tourists.
- The road system and infrastructure to tourist sites has not kept pace with the transportation needs of tourism. The service system in tourism is still primitive.

5.2.3 Tour itineraries for foreign tourists

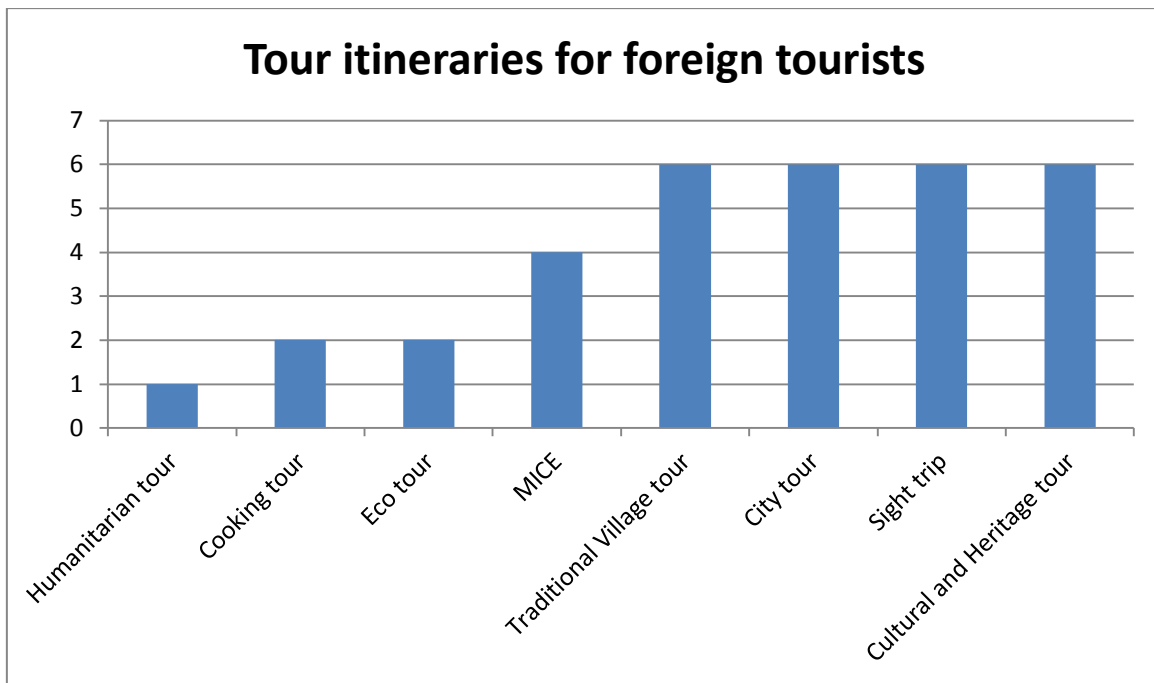


Figure 25: Tour itineraries for foreign tourists

As can be seen, the Figure 25 indicates how variety the tours offered for international visitors in Hanoi are, and also which tour is popular, which one is not, based on the research of the seven travel companies. There are eight kinds of tours for tourists to choose, which offer travelers more choices to choose. Leading in the chart is the Traditional Village tour, along with a city tour, sight trip and Cultural and Heritage tour. These four are picked by 6 out of 7 companies. Undoubtedly, visitors are very interested and fascinated with these tours. The second most-chosen tour is MICE, with 4 companies in total. Tie up with each other, cooking tour and eco tour are picked by one third of seven companies, making it the third popular tour. Lastly, humanitarian tour is the least-chosen; with only one firm has its offer.

5.2.4 Promoting tourism campaign in the global market

The interviewed companies deployed completely different advertising and marketing campaigns to promote Hanoi tours as the followings:

Vietnamtourism-Hanoi Join Stock Company promoted the development of international tourism by the ongoing deployment of diverse activities, specializing in promotion and branding Vietnamtourism-Hanoi JSC in particular and tourism in Vietnam in general toward international markets. Not only does it provide fascinating official webpage, but it also has vivid brochures, posters, CDs to attract customers. The company has many representative offices in different countries including Germany, United States. By being a member of many international travel organizations (e.g. Pacific Asia Travel Association- PATA, American Society of Travel Agents- ASTA, Japan Association of Travel Agents- JATA, and United States Tour Operators Association – USTOA), the company itself has broadened its brand name into the international market toward travel partners and foreign tourists. In addition, Vietnamtourism-Hanoi JSC has been participating in many local and international exhibitions, such as ITB Asia- the Trade Show for the Asian Travel Market in Singapore in 2012, World Travel Market in London and Vietnam International Travel Mart in Hanoi in 2013. The information of the company and its tour are also available in many international webpages including the Nibbler in Australia and the TripAdvisor.

In order to create highly competition and efficiently integrate with the development of international economic, Hanoitourist Travel Company has boosted its brand by advertising, marketing or introducing its products and services in various forms. The company utilizes mass media advertising, the electronic newspapers (e.g. newspaper, web development); trade fairs participation (e.g. in Europe, America, Australia, China, Thailand), farm trip participation, the annual market participation in Vietnam and abroad.

Vinatour Company deploys its own websites and brochure to advertise its products and services to international clients. This company has been so active in mass media advertising or exhibitions. Every year, Vinatour joins at least three international exhibitions including the International Tourism Bourse- ITB in Berlin, travel trade show in Thailand, travel trade show in Russia or Singapore. However, the Vinatour Company typically uses indirect distribution and

sales methods throughout its international travel partners namely Jet Tours- a tour operator in France, Sai travel agency in Japan, and so on. The company has two representative offices in Bangkok and Moscow.

As small enterprises, the International Travel Company and Smileviet Joint Stock Company are on a tight budget for sales and marketing campaigns. These company's marketing activities are based on its main webpage which is available in different languages (e.g. English, Chinese). There is an annual farm trip cooperated with other international partners to examine a new tour or services in Vietnam or abroad. It is obviously a chance for these agencies to strengthen their relationship with other companions as well as to learn new or fruitful knowledge of their current offerings to apply back to the companies' products and services. In Smileviet JSC, the marketing campaign also appears on the official websites of its foreign partner. When customers log on those websites, they can easily see and click on the logo of Smileviet in order to find more information about travelling to Vietnam. Unlike Smileviet JSC, the International Travel Company has made the company's souvenirs for its customers, such as postcard, CDs, books. By taking the souvenirs to home and sharing trip memories to friends and family members, customers indirectly become good marketers for the company.

In other words, Destination Asia Vietnam does not have its own marketing or advertising plan because it is completely depending on its mother company, Destination Asia group. The group is already an establishment as leading destination management for Asia's travel connoisseurs so it has many international travels partners. All advertisements of Destination Asia Vietnam are available in the official webpage of Destination Asia group. Adding to this, most of the customers are upper class so they often contact and book tour to Vietnam from other operating offices of Destination Asia which then transfer to Destination Asia Vietnam.

Hanoikids as a voluntary club, it has no budget for advertising and marketing campaigns. Actually, the club is well-known by a web-based service, TripAdvisor, which awarded it for a certification of excellence. Most of the TripAdvisor's online reviews have ranked it as the excellent way to discover Hanoi. From TripAdvisor's, customer may address to the official website of Hanoikids or its Facebook where they can get all the detailed information of booking a city tour.

5.2.5 Numbers of foreign tourists

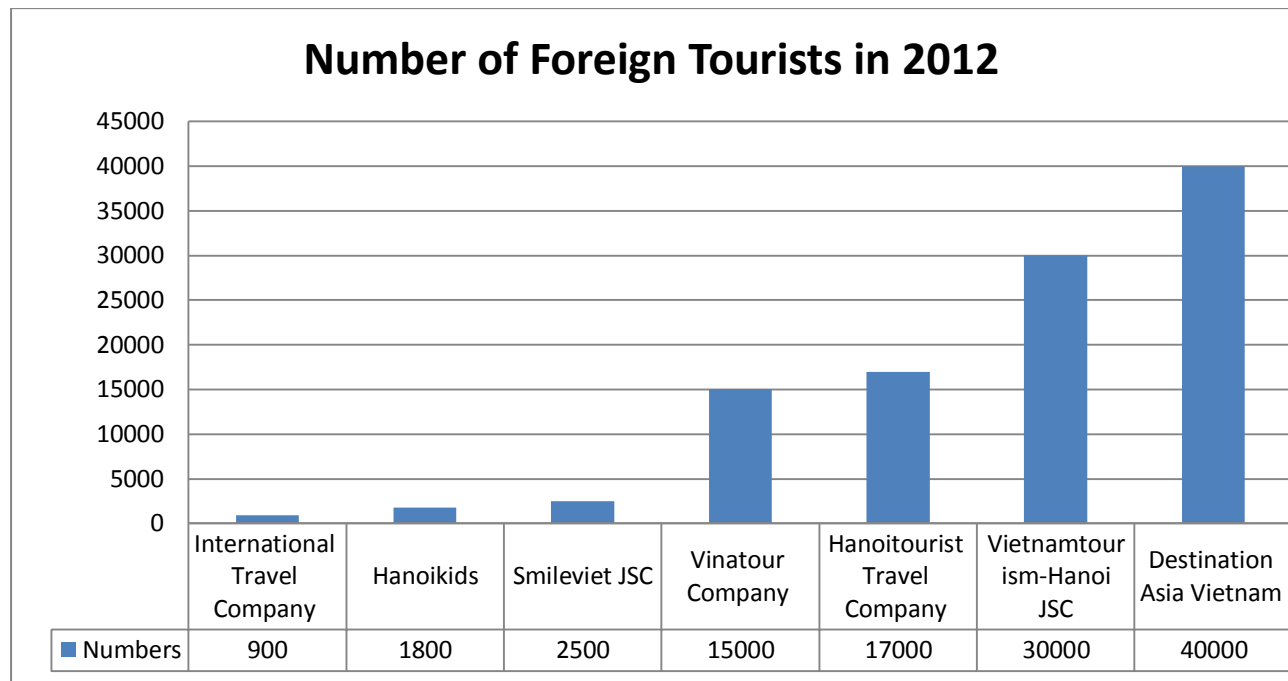


Figure 26: The number of foreign tourists using Hanoi tour package at seven tour operators

According to the chart, Destination Asia Vietnam hosts the highest number of tourist (40.000) whereas International Travel Company has the lowest number of tourists (900). Corresponding to their small-size company, Hanoikids and Smileviet JSC also have relatively small number of visitors, 1.800 and 2.500 respectively.

Among top 4 companies in the chart, Vinatour Company and Hanoitourist travel Company have a roughly equal number of customers (15.000- 17.000) while we witness a drastic increase to 30.000 visitors registering via Vietnamtourism-Hanoi JSC.

There is a coherent and obvious correlation between the Vietnam-based tourists and strategic campaign of each company. We could see the intensive investment in marketing and communication of Destination Asia Vietnam in the past couple of years has yielded significant return on investment. In contrast, the presence of such new tourism companies as International Travel Company and Hanoikids may present a sign of fiercely competitive tourism market in Hanoi.

5.2.6 Positive feedback toward Hanoi tourism of foreign customers

Overall, foreign visitors to Hanoi have a good impression in the city tourism. Most elements of the tourist attraction of Hanoi tourists are highly appreciated, such as a variety of cultural values, historic sites, delicious and distinctive food, safe and peaceful place, and hospitality of the people. For example, some tourists were excited about using chopsticks to have a meal whereas some were addicted with local fresh beer and street food.

5.2.7 Negative feedback toward Hanoi tourism of foreign customers

However, the four most pressing issues in the opinion of customers were sanitary issues, infrastructure, traffic jams, and impolite attitudes of some sales persons. Some have complained about the poor amenities at Noi Bai international airport, public toilets, and transportation systems. What's more, some ideas have been taken from the respondents that many tourists do not like the local food. The specialization of Vietnamese food contains such a strong smell and flavor that many foreigners have had some problem of eating local food. Adding to this, the image of using cyclo has caused many human right arguments because it is a human-powered vehicle with a seat at the front for passage and the driver at back. This is much of an inconvenience for some tourists to sit down when they may think about slavery.

5.2.8 Evaluate the quality of Hanoi services and products

a. Image of Hanoi

As the capital of Vietnam, Hanoi is well-known for the city spiritual and historical values for more than a thousand years. The city boasts itself as a safe tourist destination and local hospitality that attracts many foreigners to visit. However, three of seven tour operators state that

international tourists only know about Hanoi and its image of tourism by searching from some unofficial webpages. Currently there is no official webpage for Hanoi tourism, logo as well as its brochure. One travel agency has to make their own logo and brochure to advertise Hanoi tourism to the tourism partners or tourists. The only official website of Hanoi belongs to the Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism which provides very poor image and information of Hanoi tourism which may barely cover all tourists' queries. In fact, there are many conferences of tourism promotion by other cities organized in Hanoi whereas none of the conferences of Hanoi tourism has been promoted in other cities. For example, the Tourism Promotion Center of Da Nang has organized a roadshow program to promote Da Nang tourism with the theme "Colors of Da Nang" in 2012 in Hanoi. The event was aimed to introduce and support information connected Da Nang business to over 100 tourism businesses in Hanoi. It was also an opportunity for tour operators and hotels in Da Nang to introduce and exchange their travel packages to partners in the north. Come back to the case of Hanoi, all interviewees stated that the image of Hanoi tourism is still poor because the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism has not had any official tourism campaign for promoting the Hanoi's image in both local and international tourism market. Mostly the current tourism campaigns of the city's image have been launched by local sectors.

b. Main elements of tourist attractions

As mentioned above, Hanoi has dozens of sightseeing attractions to attract foreign tourists to visit the city. Each tour operator has his or her own idea about the natural charm of tourist sites in Hanoi. Some think that the combination of traditional Hanoi's culture and modern Hanoi vitality has made the city a tourist city in the foreigners' eyes. Some assume that the low-cost tourism and easy tourist visa have motivated international visitors to choose their trip to this city. Some argue that the perception of safe destination and peaceful status has brought customers to Hanoi. Moreover, there is one thing for certain that the hospitality of local people has made very strong impressions of tourists toward the city attractions.

c. Attributes and factors of Hanoi Tourism

City Environment

According to three respondents, Hanoi has been rated in the group of below average in green city list in the Asian Green City Index because of its low air quality and waste categories. Too many vehicles have caused traffic jams which are the main reason for the air pollution in the city. Due to the inefficient air quality management, Hanoi is seriously threatened of degrading ambient air quality. Many tourists have complained about Hanoi's sanitation to the travel agencies.

In addition, some interviewees mention that Hanoi is polluted by the discharges of untreated wastewater disposal and storm water management. All city rivers have been polluted because people throw rubbish such as bottles and nylon bags back into rivers. Another example is that the drainage system in Hanoi is always in trouble in the rainy season which brings a flood with dreaded images of stuck vehicles. After each flood, the city is very dirty with full of garbage and dead leaves.

For these reasons, the city's unclean environment has influenced on tourists' decision making of visiting or revisiting Vietnam which may affect the revenues of those travel agencies so far.

City Experience

There is no doubt that Hanoi can market itself successfully toward tourists' experience. Tourists may truly experience the local life of Hanoians by walking around or joining some event or celebrations of the city. They also can visit Duong Lam ancient village to explore the original architecture of typical traditional old village and its local life in rural Vietnam. In spite of the numerous opportunities to discover the city, it's easy to recognize that Hanoi tourism currently offers a short-term tourist experience which may only keep tourists staying a few days.

On the other hand, some ideas have been taken from the respondents that Hanoi tourism is such a quite new field that it is still lack of experience in developing tourism products and services as well as a high-quality human resource in services of tourism unlike other cities in Vietnam, such as Ho Chi Minh and Da Nang.

Range of Attractions

As it mentioned in the third chapter, all respondents have agreed that Hanoi has numerous charming attractions and sightseeing that no one should miss. On the contrary, there are also some problems facing the narrow range of tourist attractions in Hanoi. Most of the tourist sites are located in three main districts, namely Hoan Kiem, Ba Dinh, Dong Da. In these districts, the roads are quite small that there may cause traffic jams at any time which seem inconvenient for travelers. There are only two shopping malls located in centre of Hanoi whereas others are on the outskirts of the city. It is quite difficult to meet the demand for shopping of some travelers.

Tourism Services

In recent years, Hanoi has offered a various kind of services with suitable prices in order to serve its visitors. It is easy to visit tourist sites from 8am to 6pm. The tourist information, souvenirs and restrooms are available at any attraction. Additionally, there are numerous travel agencies and local service providers who are willing to meet unlimited demand of customers. For example, tourists can order a taxi, rent private scooter or bicycle to discover the beauty local life of Hanoi.

Although tourism services in Hanoi have been improved to catch up with customer demand, there are still some issues. The tourist information is only provided at some main tourists attractions such as Hoan Kiem Lake, Ho Chi Minh mausoleum. There is no typical tourism product which is specialized for local Hanoi. Additionally, so many tour operators in Hanoi confuse visitors because they do not know and/ or have much time to explore available services in order to choose better ones. Therefore, some tourists have a very bad experience in paying a high price but receiving poor services in the city.

Transportation

In tourism, there are different means of transportation to transfer travelers from place of residence to the tourist destination, from tourist site to others, or within a big tourist attraction. There have recently had many positive changes in the innovation of transportation services to support tourist travel to Hanoi. Firstly, the aviation industry has been renovated and upgraded to improve the quality of the runway as well as to welcome new domestic and international routes. In recent years, many cheap flight companies (e.g. AirAsia, Jestar Pacific) have offered many promotions

to attract international customers to book a fly to visit Hanoi. Secondly, the railway industry also has some significant innovations. Train's quality and service have been improved to get better customer service. From Hanoi, tourists can visit all areas of Vietnam by train with a suitable price. Lastly, the road system has been also developed rapidly in both quantity and quality. There are many auto transport companies with high quality vehicles and reasonable price which are available from time to time. Currently, those tour operations have offered two kinds of city tours for foreign tourists by using green transportation namely electronic car and cyclo (or rickshaw).

However, the organizational restructuring of the force transport services also need to set so that reasonable and civilized. Innovation to improve the quality of facilities and tourist attractions of the river route is not high thus this needs attention in the future. Also, many tourist buses are not allowed to run inside the city during peak hours. If a big travel group has a trip to the outskirts area of the city, the participants are divided into small groups and gone by different mini buses to be back or have to wait after rush hours to go by a big bus.

Food and Beverage

Many tour operators have identified food and beverage as a crucial task to meet the needs of tourists. Along with the growth in visitors' numbers and the increase in accommodation facilities, dining facilities in Hanoi are also increasing rapidly. Most of hotels and motels have a restaurant or a dining room, and bar to serve both inside and outside guests. In general, guests can enjoy a full range of international dishes with excellent quality and hygiene made by the skilled chefs. In creating leisure mood or local atmosphere, the hotels and motels often play traditional Vietnamese music to attract customers. Additionally, there is a variety of drinks which are available to service guests. All are with tourist price so they are often higher 2 to 3 times than other local places. Obviously, these prices are only suitable for high-income tourists or travelers with tour package.

Besides the dining facilities in the hotel, there are numerous places for eating outside which are invested by the local people. These places offer a plenty of food and drinks with suitable prices for residents and for any kind of tourists. However, it also comes with some problems of food safety issues and hygiene drinks. Compared with other hotels and restaurants, small eating places seem to be careless about hand hygiene and quality of food ingredients. They may buy

ingredients in some unknown market where guarantees of food quality are indefinite. Therefore, food safety may threaten the health of both local and international customers.

Accommodation

In general, the tour operators have a good impression of hotels and its services in Hanoi. They always choose three-star hotels to serve their foreign tourists. These hotels provide all basic amenities and services for a comfortable stay of tourist. Especially, they are often located in the center area which is convenient and flexible for organizing city sightseeing tours. From the tourists' feedback, they are very satisfied with the location and facilities of the hotel. However, the tour operator of Destination Asia Vietnam mentioned that there are only a few hotels with luxurious facilities to serve high class tourists. Although many hotels are upgrading on relatively modern facilities but additional system services are poor, monotonous and recreation services have not been adequate attention to all requirement and entertainment. Consequently, the accommodation has not met the needs of customers as well as to create a memorable experience for guests. For instance, The Hilton Opera is located next to the Opera House which is in one of the best location in Hanoi. Unfortunately, the four-star hotel only offers standard rooms without any quality services toward its customer. It does not design its services toward Vietnamese culture so customers are not able to know or experience the local life during their stays.

Entertainment

Entertainment is an indispensable demand for tourists to spend time in a day or to strengthen their health after long travelling day. Hanoi has several options for entertainment which includes: theatres, cinemas, clubs, and galleries. Tourists can go to see the performance of the Thang Long water puppet theatre or visit some art galleries exhibiting Vietnamese art (e.g. the Apricot Gallery). However, all respondents have commented that Hanoi is seriously lack of entertainment and recreation activities for tourists. The scope of tourist facilities is offered in a small scale within Hanoi. Still some organized tours are provided with poor quality, such as cycling trip, climbing tour. Additionally, tourists only can stay in bars and discos until 12 a.m. and they need to pay a high price for drinks. Thus, many visitors to Hanoi often wondered where to enjoy entertainment, especially at night due to the provisions of all city recreation activities must end at 12 a.m.

5.2.9 Recommendation

During the interview, many suggestions to improve Hanoi tourism to become an attracting tourist destination by tour operators have been collected. First, the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism should establish a close relationship with travel agencies and other local service providers in order to provide better products and services of Hanoi to its customers. Not only does the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism have a tight relationship with private sectors, but it also need to cooperate with other departments such as Department of Transportation, City Police Department, and Department of Nature Resource and Environment, to have a better plan for improving Hanoi image as a safe and friendly destination to tourists. The tourism services in Hanoi should be cooperated and connected to other areas to offer various options in term of satisfying customers' need. Second, it can be said that the construction and maintenance of the infrastructure facilities such as the road system, water supply and sewage disposal, urgently need reconstructing and renovating to create a better image and life quality for Hanoi. Finally, service attitude should be improved because it is the dominant element to decide the quality services in a strategy to attract customers. The unsettled problems, forcing customers, raising prices, or tourist scams have still existed for many years in Hanoi. The government should take strict action against these crimes.

5.3 Summary on findings

As a student of tourism, the researcher has an opportunity to gain knowledge of tourism and its attributes toward tourists' satisfaction in order to develop a city tourism product. The measurement of tourists' satisfaction is based on the relationship between their expectation before the trip and their perception or experience during the trip. Obviously, the researcher got enlightenment of knowledge through theoretical concepts of tourism, tourists, and tourism destination attributes attracting and satisfying its customers.

What the (dis-)satisfaction level of international tourists is in Hanoi tourism was clearly presented by the measurement between level of their expectation and experience among 246

random tourists. The study found that foreigners expected to gain a lot of difference experiences on their trip to this city and they were quite satisfied with their trip. Not only do tourists have a good impression of Hanoi's image, but they also gain many positive experiences during their visit. Generally, most elements of the Hanoi tourism attributes are appreciated. The main reason tourists choose Hanoi as a tourist destination was the diversity of its cultural and historical values, the various elements of its tourism products and services, the hospitality of locals, and so on. For example, the guests were very impressed and pleased with the local performances which make them better understand the Vietnam culture. However, visitors encountered some issues during their visit making their triples satisfactory. Four most critical issues that received negative comments from the tourists are personal safety and security, sanitation issues, infrastructure and transportation, and taxi driver and sales staff attitudes that do not live up to their expectation. In addition, the public signposts (e.g. road sign, tourist information board) were insufficient. The public restrooms were unclean and were only available on some main streets in the city centre.

The face-to-face interviews conducted with seven popular tour operators revealed some interesting insights. In general, the tour operators have built various tour programs with full service packages so as to create entertaining and attracting trips for their foreign customers. Nonetheless, there is lack of synchronization between the government sector and private sectors in Hanoi tourism development to attract foreign visitors. Many travel companies have to make tour discount and find new markets in order to attract tourists to visit Vietnam in general and Hanoi in particular. Also, unsafe and insecure situation including pick pocketing, purse snatching, bag slashing, which have negatively impacted on even full package tourists.

6. SUGGESTIONS

6.1 Hanoi as a city product

As a blessed location with an overwhelming beauty and rich natural resources, Hanoi clearly have a great potential for its tourism development to turn it into a spearhead economic sector. Not only does the city have many famous relics (e.g. Hanoi Imperial Citadel, Duong Lam Ancient Village), but it also has beautiful natural surroundings with numerous tree-lined boulevards. The challenge is how to effectively expand Hanoi tourism while support preserving the current natural wonders. Below are some proposals to develop Hanoi as a city product in general and to improve foreign tourists' satisfaction:

- First, Hanoi needs to establish its tourism logo and slogan to promote its brand to the international market. These factors support to convey the sector's message as well as to bring quick perception and positive feelings for visitors toward Hanoi tourism. The tourism logo and slogan of Hanoi should be carefully considered to select and use as trademarks for Hanoi in the international tourism market.
- Second, the city's infrastructures (e.g. transportation system, condition of transportation facilities) need significant improvement. The State should provide some programs to improve the transportation system from and to the different tourist destinations, to upgrade travel vehicles to be convenient for customers to visit these places. Accommodation is also an essential matter that needs regulation from the authorities including adding requirements of standard level of the room and room services as well as restricting arbitrarily increase rates by private businesses. The enterprise owners also need to focus on quality of products and service attitudes toward their customers whereas the restaurant managers should pay more attention to the quality monitoring of stores and eating places.
- Third, Hanoi is famous for its street food which brings tourists a unique experience to truly enjoy local life. What worries the foreigners most are food hygiene and safety. In the survey, many respondents agreed that Hanoi has variety and delicious food but the hygiene standard was not too high. Thus, the city government should have some solutions

to reinforce and certify food hygiene and issue a formal rating for each restaurant, vendor to gain tourists' trust on the healthy quality of local street cuisine. The street food vendors and food stall owners need to participate in some food hygiene training courses to understand food safety concerns and food handling practices and establish quality process and control to ensure that their food products meet required hygiene standards. Not only does the successful food hygiene and safety training bring the opportunities for the participants to make a safety food, but it also contributes to promote the Hanoi's image of hygiene street food, making tourists feel less reluctant trying street food.

- Next, the other facilities need reconstructing or building such as restaurants, cafes, and entertainment places to meet the demands of customers. It is evident that Hanoi lacks attractive products. To attract international tourists to Hanoi, the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism should focus on supporting local investor and tour operators to create and develop potential products and services while improving its current quality to attract visitors and bring them comfortable stay at the city.
- Together with developing tourism, improving the environment in the destinations should also be emphasized. By regularly implementing sanitary requirements in tourist areas and even making heavy fines and strict penalties for littering behavior, it supports create a clean environment and raise awareness of hygiene to both locals and visitors. Additionally, a special attention should be given to make public restrooms clean and sanitary.
- Then, travel agencies should design attractive tours with its own particular characteristics, each of which is unique and different with a detailed description to keep tourists interested and less confused while choosing suitable tours. Besides, the tour guides should be well-trained and able to share their experience and stories to make a good impression of Hanoi to foreigners. They are considered as an “ambassadors” who are very close to tourists and indirectly impacts on how tourists view a destination. The guides should be in the look for their customers to prevent any merchants from taking advantage of the visitor by offering scams and unfair prices.
- Last but not least, the Hanoi Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism should establish an office providing travel services and its related problems to support foreign visitors in Vietnam in general, and in Hanoi in particular. The office aims to answer tourists'

questions, directly provide information assist visitors at any time via phone or the tool guide in order to create convenient conditions for tourists to find some needed information before, during, and even after their trip.

6.2 Price management

Price management should commensurate with the quality of products and services at the destination. During the low season, there should be some promotion or discount campaign to stimulate demand and attract more visitors to travel to Hanoi. However, discount or promotion should always ensure the quality of services and goods. In the high season, there should be a good management to avoid arbitrarily pricing inflation. Because of the seasonality in tourism, tourism providers should give a fair price for their services (e.g. not too high or not too low) so as to prevent visitors from being discontent. Especially, the tour operators should pay attention to their existing price by referring to the price of a few other tour operators in the region to learn from their experience and to offer competitive and reasonable prices with a better quality of service.

6.3 Distribution

In order to bring the image of Hanoi and its unique culture closer to foreigners, the State and local travel agencies in Hanoi should create a good relationship with other overseas partners to take advantages of their resources to find customers. Especially, it should focus on some key markets such as France, Japan, China, Australia, and so on. Here are some suggestions to create distribution networks:

- Using different media channels to promote Hanoi's image: The State can set up a website and use social media tool as Facebook, Twitter, on which includes an image gallery of Hanoi life and its people, a music box of all popular songs, videos and flash files of the city, and so on. All the website content need to be edited carefully and professionally. By combining the contribution of content from many sources (e.g. artists, photographers,

students) to work together to create the true quality of Hanoi. There is no doubt about how quickly internet transfer information by connecting people. By using the internet, the pictures and messages of Hanoi and its people will be naturally, rapidly transferred from users to their friends all over the world via email, short message service, blog, and forum.

- Participating in world tourism trade fairs: Each overseas festivals or exhibitions will be an opportunity to introduce Hanoi image and its tourism to foreigners. All activities related to Vietnam in the international market are also become a factor to strengthen the position of Hanoi as a thousand-year capital.
- Organizing or hosting international events to promote the image of Hanoi tourism: The city can make an investment plan on holding and hosting some significant events at international level or Southeast region level to broaden its image abroad.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Hanoi has many beautiful landscapes and tourist relics which are promising conditions to develop tourism into a spearhead economic sector. However, due to the inappropriate management and exploitation of tourism, the city has not been promoting its existing potential characteristics to be a key economic sector in Vietnam generally, and in Hanoi particularly. In fact, the revenue from tourism is still lower than in other sectors and the amount of returning visitor is decreasing. Therefore, the study was to find out what foreign tourists expected their trip to Hanoi and reflected to what they truly perceived at the destination as well as to examine how satisfied and dissatisfied they were with the current tourism offerings in the city. In addition, Hanoi is currently a place for visitors to stop off for a night or two before their trip to other tourist places in Vietnam. Inviting visitors for long-term stay is actually a difficult problem for tourism in the capital. The study as well gives some suggestions to for marketing management to improve the quality of tourism in Hanoi today to attract visitors to stay longer.

In the theoretical term, the study provided the author a wider understanding on tourism, tourist, destination attributes and their role towards the level of tourists' satisfaction. It is obvious that tourists' overall satisfaction plays a vital role in the survival and further development of any tourist destination because it is a reliable standard to evaluate the performance of both tangible and intangible elements of tourism products and services at the same time with correlating with a customer's willingness to return. A negative expectation, a passive experience, or just a unpleasant feeling of a tourist can lead him or her to the depression of the whole trip which yields negative impact on the level of satisfaction and revisits a tourist destination.

In the empirical term, the analysis of the research was conducted by using mixed-methods research which includes both qualitative and quantitative research. The data collected from the survey questionnaire supported to investigate opinions and advice from 246 of 258 random foreign tourists whereas the face-to-face interviews were made with seven tour operators to examine their views and tour offerings toward tourists' satisfaction. Moreover, the SPSS program and Excel was applied as useful tools for the data transfers and computer analysis whereas the HOLSAT model was implemented to measure the different relationship between the expectation

and the perception of tourists so as to verify their (dis-) satisfaction with the current tourism's offerings in Hanoi.

In order to make recommendations for developing Hanoi tourism toward tourists' satisfaction and intention to revisit, the city needs to have specific strategies to improve and upgrade its current conditions at the same time with offering new attractive products and comparative services to become a strong tourism destination in both local and international level. There should be a unified direction from the government level to the local level, the close guidance of the leaders of the concerned departments, and the cooperation of local authorities. Especially, in planning and developing Hanoi tourism, the city government should collect consult some authentic experiences from professional tourism experts and tourists' satisfaction survey. The investment in tourism is to contribute to economic development and social sustainability which should be an appropriate policy incentives and groundbreaking projects so as to create efficient society with the initial capital by the State. The market-oriented, sociological investigation is needed to implement and develop right investments in tourism activities. In addition, building a specialized team, which dedicated to marketing and promotional activities and to implement advertising campaigns, to build a brand image with strong slogan and impressive logo, will help the city to enhance its image and spearhead its tourism offerings to attract foreigners and motivate them to choose Hanoi as a next tourist destination or must-to-go place.

Although the current study has yielded some preliminary findings, the design is not without flaws. Obviously, there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged and addressed regarding to the research. During the survey time, it was not easy for the researcher to invite tourists to answer the questionnaire because many of them did not have enough time to spend on this. There was also a problem when respondents answered part of a survey but not all of it, or they might miss or skip some questions. Missing data from any of these causes could partly bias results of the data analyses. In addition, there were many questions in the survey that respondents might answer superficially, especially when it took them quite long to complete. Moreover, some respondents were not willing to answer the questions because they might not wish to share their information. For example, the survey was as well asked some private information (e.g. email address) that some people might not want to reveal. Additionally, the search was conducted in only three weeks during summer 2012. It would be better if it was done long before. In the face-

to-face interview, the population of the experimental group is quite small, only seven tour operators in the total amount of hundreds of travel agencies in Hanoi. Some interviewees did not focus in-depth on the content of the given question so the interviewer had to give some extra questions to collect suitable answers.

In a nutshell, the author expects the endeavors and recommendations of the study can be a useful source for the State, business tourism sector, and policy makers to identify the strength and weakness of Hanoi tourism in foreigners' views. It also offers ways to reduce, eliminate the negative feedback and shortcomings facing Hanoi tourism

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Interview Questionnaire

Travel agency's name:

Date:

Address:

Tel.

1. What kind of tours for foreign tourists does your company offer in Hanoi?

2. What is the average number of tourists choosing your tour?

Per month:

Per year:

3. How do you see the current situation of Hanoi tourism?

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4. What have you done to promote Hanoi tour to foreign tourist?

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5. What are positive comments of foreign tourists about Hanoi tourism?

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6. What are negative comments of foreign tourists about Hanoi tourism?

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7. In your management side, how do you think about those elements below:

- Image of Hanoi tourism

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- Elements of Tourist Destination

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- Attributes and factors of Hanoi Tourism:

- City Environment

- City Experience

- Range of Attractions

- Tourism Services

- Transportation

- Food and Beverage

- Accommodation

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- Adventure and Outdoor recreation

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8. What do you recommend to improve Hanoi as a tourist destination?

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Foreign Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire

Dear tourist,

I am conducting an academic survey regarding on your satisfaction of Hanoi tourism. Your comment is highly important to this academic survey research. Please indicate the answer if each statement according to your real perception. The survey date will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore, please feel ease on the answer of questionnaire.

Giang Quach
MA student at Lapland University, Finland

Part I. Travel Behavior Characteristic

1. Have you ever been to Hanoi before?
☐ No ☐ Yes
Number of times: _____
2. How far in advance did you begin planning your trip to Hanoi?
☐ Less than three months
☐ Three to six month
☐ Over six months
3. How many days are you planning to spend in Hanoi? _____ days
4. Which of the following best describes your travel party?
☐ Alone
☐ A couple
☐ Family members
☐ Friends and relatives
☐ Organized groups
5. In what types of sources did you use to find information of Hanoi?
☐ Magazine/ Newspaper/ Books/Guides
☐ Internet
☐ Words of Mouth (friends, etc.)
☐ Media (T.V, etc)
☐ Fairs and/or exhibitions
6. Type of visit:
☐ Own ☐ Tour
7. Type of Accommodation:
☐ Motel
☐ Apartment
☐ Backpacker/Hostel
☐ Hotel
☐ Service Apartment
☐ Homestay
☐ Other _____
8. What are the main reasons for your visit to Hanoi?
☐ Holiday
☐ The attractions
☐ Visit friends & relatives
☐ Educational reasons
☐ Special event/festival
☐ Sightseeing/ General interests
☐ Business/ conference
☐ Health
☐ Religious reasons
☐ Other, what? _____

Part II: Tourist expectation vs. Tourist Perception within Hanoi Tourism

1. Below are listed some elements that might be considered when you choose a destination. It is necessary for you to evaluate them twice. First, please indicate HOW IMPORTANT each of these elements is to you when you chose any tourist destination (in general) (rate them on a scale from 1 - 'completely unimportant' to 5 – 'completely important'). Then we expect you to indicate on a scale 1 – 5 (1 means 'I complexly disagree' to 5 means 'I completely agree') to what extent do you agree with the statement.

HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS ELEMENT ?						➔ ELEMENTS OF TOURIST DESTINATION	➔ IN HANOI, WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE?					
Completely unimportant			Completely important		I don't know		Completely disagree			Completely agree		I don't know
1	2	3	4	5		C1. Personal safety and security.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C2. The easily reached destination	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C3. Cleanliness of the destination.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C4. Unspoiled nature.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C5. Climate conditions.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C6. Diversity of cultural/historical attractions	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C7. The quality of the accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C8. Friendliness and hospitality of the local people.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C9. Convenience of the local transportation services.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C10. The variety of local cuisine.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C11. Possibilities for shopping.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C12. Availability of sport and recreational activities.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C13. Availability of cultural and other events.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C14. Nightlife and entertainment.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C15. Wellness and spa services.	1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	3	4	5		C16. Conference services.	1	2	3	4	5	

2. May I ask your opinion concerning factors of importance in viewing your experience with Hanoi tourism? How important do you view the following attributes and factors?

Please indicate the importance of expectation to your selection of Hanoi as a place to visit	Attributes and factors of Hanoi Tourism (Please circle one number on the left side and one letter on the right side for each statement)	Please indicate to what describe your perception in Hanoi during your visit.
--	---	--

1 = Not important at all, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Neither important nor unimportant (Neutral), 4 = Important, and 5 = Very important						A = Strongly disagree, B = Disagree, C = Neither agree nor disagree (Neutral), D = Agree and E = Strongly agree				
CITY ENVIRONMENT										
1	2	3	4	5	C17. Cleanliness	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C18. Good weather	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C19. Old/historic visual appeal	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C20. Modern/visual appeal	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C21. Variety of recreational spaces	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C22. Dense built environment	A	B	C	D	E
CITY EXPERIENCE										
1	2	3	4	5	C23. No language barriers	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C24. Lively nighttime	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C25. Opportunity to experience local life	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C26. Family friendly environment	A	B	C	D	E

1	2	3	4	5	C27. Friendly and Hospitable local people	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C28. Vibrant urban atmosphere	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C29. Easy to walk around	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C30. Easy to follow the directional signs	A	B	C	D	E
RANGE OF ATTRACTIONS										
1	2	3	4	5	C31. Variety of museums and galleries	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C32. Variety of music and performance	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C33. Unique history	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C34. Variety of historical sites and cultural attractions	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C35. Variety of special events and festivals	A	B	C	D	E
TOURISM SERVICES										
1	2	3	4	5	C36. Rich variety of tourism information	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C37. Convenient opening hours	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C38. Good availability of tourist attractions signs	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C39. Good availability of service signs	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C40. Reasonable price of local services	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C41. Various types of local product and service	A	B	C	D	E
TRANSPORTATION										
1	2	3	4	5	C43. Easy to understand and use local transport	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C44. Safe transportation to and from places	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C45. Accurate timetables	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C46. Good condition of transportation technology	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C47. Reasonable prices	A	B	C	D	E

FOOD AND BERVERAGE										
1	2	3	4	5	C48. Reasonable prices	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C49. Rich variety of restaurants and cafeterias	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C.50. Diversity of food and beverage	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C51. High quality food and beverage	A	B	C	D	E
ACCOMMODATION										
1	2	3	4	5	C52. Reasonable prices	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C53. Efficient Booking services	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C54. Effective Management and Customer services	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C55. Pleasant hospitality environment	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C56. Standard of cleanliness property	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C57. Standard of furnishing property	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C58.Good location	A	B	C	D	E
ADVENTURE AND OUTDOOR RECREATION										
1	2	3	4	5	C59. Variety of adventurous, challenging and exciting outdoor trips	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C60. Opportunity to be closeness to nature	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5	C61.Opportunity to join sport and recreational activities	A	B	C	D	E

Section Three: (Dis-) Satisfaction and Loyalty

1. HOW HAPPY ARE YOU WITH YOUR VISIT TO HANOI? Please indicate to what extents do you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling one number for each statement:

STATEMENTS	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5
• This trip has a special meaning to me	1	2	3	4	5
• Generally, I am very satisfied with my visitation	1	2	3	4	5
• I would love to return to Hanoi some day	1	2	3	4	5
• It was worth the price I paid for this trip	1	2	3	4	5
• I will say positive things about Hanoi to other people	1	2	3	4	5
• I will highly recommend Hanoi to those who want to take a trip to this city	1	2	3	4	5

2. May we ask your opinion based on how well you feel each has been developed? Rate each on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= poor, 2 = needs improvement, 3 = fair, 4 = good, 5 = excellent)

Suggestion for Improvement

- ____ Accommodation Options
- ____ Adventure and Outdoor Recreation
- ____ Community services
- ____ City environment
- ____ Dining Options
- ____ Directional Signage
- ____ Friendliness/ Hosting
- ____ Tourism Services
- ____ Tourist Attractions
- ____ Transportation

3. What are your recommendations concerning your visit to Hanoi?

.....

.....

.....

Section Four: Tourist's Demographic Characteristics

1. Nationality: _____

2. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Year of birth: _____

4. E-mail address (if possible):

5. Highest Education attained:

☐ Primary school

☐ University, Master's degree or upper

☐ Secondary school

☐ Polytechnic/University of Applied Sciences

☐ High school

☐ University, Bachelor's degree

☐ Vocational school or course

6. What is your employment status? (mark the appropriate answer)

☐ Employed

☐ Student / Pupil

☐ Unemployed

☐ Other, what: _____.

☐ Retired

8. What is your approximate total income before taxes?

☐ Less \$19,999

☐ \$40,000-\$59,999

☐ \$20,000-\$39,999

☐ \$60,000-\$79,999

☐ \$ 80,000 or more.

Place and Date: _____

Sincerely thank you for your time and thoughtfulness!

Appendix 5: Some pictures of Face-to-face interviews



Ms. Tu Nguyen (Vietnamtourism)



Ms. Nghe Trinh (ITC)



Ms. Huong Bui (Destination Asia Vietnam)



Ms. Nhung Nguyen (Hanoikids)

Contact information of Interviewees



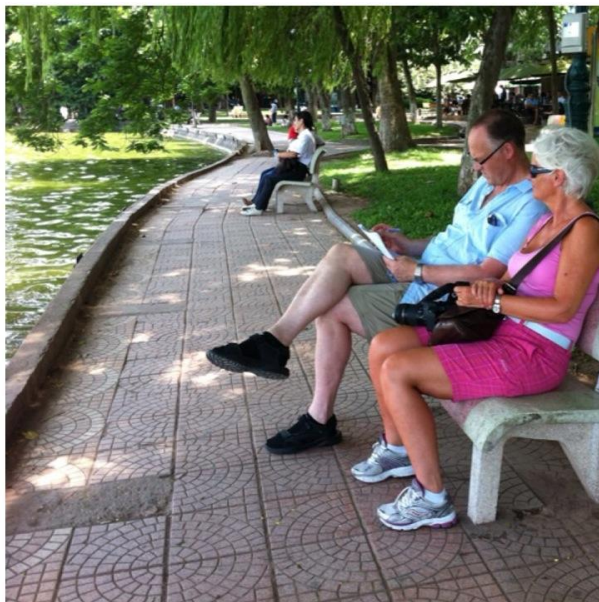
Appendix 6: Some pictures of the survey questionnaire



In Van Mieu Temple – Summer, 2012



In Van Mieu Temple – Summer, 2012



In Hoan Kiem Lake –Summer, 2012