

HUE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM



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**THE EFFECTS OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE ON
HERITAGE TOURISTS' STORYTELLING BEHAVIOR**

Major: Tourism
Major code: 9810101

**SUMMARY OF TOURISM DOCTORAL
DISSERTATION**

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School of Hospitality and Tourism – Hue University

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1. National library of Viet Nam
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PART I. INTRODUCTION

1. The rationale of the study

Heritage tourism research is rapidly growing, focusing on understanding the nature and psychological effects of these experiences. Studies have explored heritage tourism through economic (Jelinčić & Senkić, 2017), memorable (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2021), and marketing (Chen & Wu, 2022) lenses. These experiences significantly influence tourist satisfaction and behavior (Iversen et al., 2023). However, the relationship between experiences and communication behaviors of heritage tourists remains unclear (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2022).

Storytelling is an important way for tourists to process and share their experiences (Bayer & Hettinger, 2019). Tourists create stories based on memorable moments, such as cultural exchanges or challenges encountered during the trip (Moscardo, 2017). Understanding and encouraging tourists to share their stories is critical for businesses, but research on how this storytelling behavior works is limited.

Modern social media networks and digital platforms allow tourists to share their experiences in real time and with a larger audience. Online travel stories have become a significant influence on tourist decision-making (Du et al., 2022). While digital platforms provide more opportunities for connection, they have also expanded the research gap on this topic.

Vietnam, recently named "World's Leading Heritage Destination 2024" (VNAT, 2024), is home to numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites, especially in its central region. While tourism is growing, there are still challenges to maintaining competitiveness and sustainable development. The absence of studies on tourist behavior at these locations necessitates further investigation into the impact of tourism experiences on storytelling.

Based on the aforementioned points, the dissertation titled “*The effects of tourism experience on heritage tourists' storytelling behavior*” has been selected to address the concerns that have been raised.

2. Research objectives

The primary objective of this dissertation is to provide theoretical insights into the fundamental nature of heritage tourism experiences and their impact on tourists' storytelling behavior, using the Central Region of Vietnam as a case study. To achieve this objective, the dissertation focuses on the following specific tasks:

- To develop a measurement scale for heritage tourism experiences;
- To analyse the effects of heritage tourism experiences on tourist satisfaction, memorability, and the storytelling behavior;
- To propose implications and recommendations to improve experiences and encourage positive storytelling behaviors at heritage destinations in central Vietnam

3. Research subjects and survey participants

- *Research subjects*: this dissertation focuses on elucidating the effects of tourism experiences on memorability, trip satisfaction, and the storytelling behavior of heritage tourists.

- *Survey participants*: the author engages with tourists who have experienced heritage tourism at various destinations in central region of Vietnam.

4. Scope of the study

• **Scope of research content**: from the standpoint of visitors, the research focuses on examining tourists' perceptions of heritage tourism experiences and their consequences on storytelling behavior at heritage destinations.

- **Spatial scope**: the study is conducted in Thua Thien

Hue and Quang Nam province

- **Time scope:**

- Secondary data: The data contains reports from relevant departments at two locations spanning the years 2015 to 2022, along with insights derived from a review of additional relevant studies.

- Primary data: Collected through onsite interviews with tourists in the year 2022.

5. Proposed Research Methods

To fulfill the study objectives, this dissertation adopts a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, with a major emphasis on quantitative approaches.

For the first objective, qualitative methods such as literature review and document analysis will be used to synthesize theoretical foundations, operationalize related concepts, and develop measurement scales for the variables based on previously published studies. Additionally, expert discussions will be conducted to select appropriate scales for the variables in the context of heritage tourism.

For the second objective, the dissertation will apply factor analysis techniques to validate the measurement scales, followed by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the theoretical model and investigate the causal relationships between the measured variables, clarifying their impacts within the proposed theoretical framework.

6. New contribution of the study

➤ Theoretical contributions

First, this study is among the few to develop a measurement scale grounded in a multidimensional approach, utilizing a combination of research

methodologies to operationalize and quantify the concept of heritage experience.

Second, the dissertation provides empirical evidence strongly supporting the application of script theory and the S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) framework in elucidating tourists' behavioral intentions.

➤ ***Practical contributions***

First, The dissertation provides useful, scientifically validated insights that aid policymakers in developing sustainable tourism policies and managing heritage tourist destination in alignment with market demands.

Second, the research findings offer a comprehensive understanding of the heritage tourist market at prominent UNESCO World Heritage sites in Central Vietnam.

Third, the orientations derived from the study's results serve as a reference for tourism enterprises and other stakeholders in refining heritage tourism programs and products, as well as tourism destination products in general.

PART II. RESEARCH CONTENT
CHAPTER 1. SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF THE EFFECT
OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE ON STORYTELLING
BEHAVIOR

1.1. Fundamental Concepts

1.1.1. *Heritage tourism*

Scholars often view heritage tourism as an activity constructed around the consumption of unique resources that hold historical value and significance, collectively referred to as heritage (Timothy, 2018). Heritage tourism resources are diverse, encompassing historical sites, traditional crafts, folklore, festivals, languages, and cuisine (Timothy, 2011; Poria et al., 2003)

1.1.2. *Heritage tourism destination*

Heritage destinations are locations rich in cultural, historical, and traditional resources that have been recognized as heritage by both domestic and international organizations. These destinations offer tourism products focused on exploiting the values of heritage, with the involvement of stakeholders to create attractions that encourage visitors to stay for at least 24 hours. The primary goal of tourists visiting heritage destinations is to explore its unique cultural and historical values and to gain detailed insights into their stories and identities.

1.2. Heritage tourism experience

Heritage tourism experience refers to an individual's subjective perception and evaluation of the emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual aspects related to their interactions throughout the process before, during, and after their trip to a heritage destination.

1.3. Tourist's satisfaction

Oliver (2010, p. 8) defines satisfaction as *là “the consumer's fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a*

product/service feature, or the product or service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under- or overfulfillment”.

1.4. Memorability

Memorability is a highly complex psychological concept (Su et al., 2023). According to Merriam-Webster (2021, cited in Cao et al., 2024), memorability pertains to the capacity of an experience to be regarded as memorable and to be recalled in the future.

1.5. Tourist’s storytelling behavior

Keskin et al. (2016, p. 32) define storytelling behavior as “*sharing and combining of knowledge and experiences through narrative and anecdotes in order to communicate complex ideas, concepts, and causal connections and build connections and associations”.*

1.6. Theoretical Gaps

First, there is a need for measurement scales that reflect both the tangible and intangible values of heritage, linked to the cultural and historical elements of destinations in the modern era.

Second, psychological theories should be applied to better understand the root causes of the relationships between stimuli, perceptions, and outcomes during heritage trips within the "black box" of tourists' minds.

Third, research on interactive relationships as precursors to storytelling behavior remains limited.

CHAPTER 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Study sites

The two destinations of Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam are chosen as the research areas, as they both possess UNESCO World Heritage sites, along with rich natural and cultural tourism resources. These regions are also advancing digitalization efforts and play a significant role in promoting heritage tourism products, contributing to the development of a distinct identity for the Central Coastal region.

2.2. Research Process

The research begins with a qualitative approach to develop a theoretical framework and appropriate research hypotheses. Through a literature review, the theoretical framework, and hypotheses related to the relationships between variables, including heritage tourism experience, satisfaction, memorability, and storytelling behavior, are constructed. Six components of heritage tourism experience are identified based on the theoretical synthesis. Subsequently, the expert discussion method is applied to determine suitable measurement scales for the research variables.

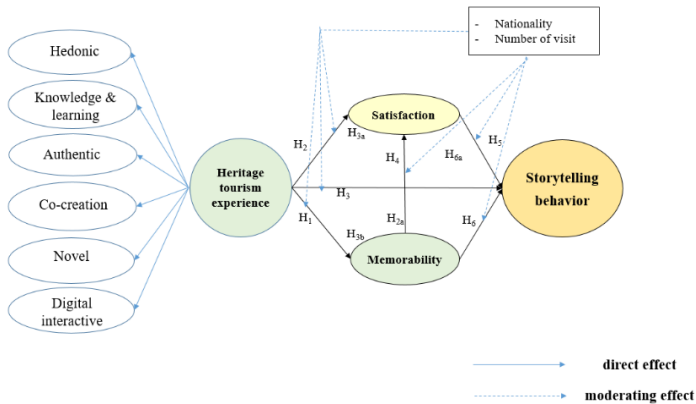


Figure 2.1 Proposed Research Model

In the second phase, with the measurement scales defined and the preliminary questionnaire designed, the next step of the research process focuses on testing to refine the questionnaire.

In the third phase, a survey of actual data is conducted at the two destinations.

2.3. Data collection method

The author aligns with the perspective of Nguyen & Cheung (2014), positing that any individual visiting a heritage area (at any level) is considered a heritage tourist. Accordingly, the subjects of this investigation include both domestic and international tourists visiting heritage sites within the study area. The selection of sample elements is conducted using a non-probability sampling method, employing a combination of purposive and convenience sampling techniques to ensure that the sample structure is adequately distributed across the two research locales.

With a total of 40 measurement variables and the use of factor analysis to evaluate the measurement model and SEM analysis, the minimum sample size is calculated to be no less than 400 samples. To account for potential invalid responses, the author surveys 540 questionnaires, comprising 190 samples from Quang Nam and 350 samples from Thua Thien Hue. The survey in Thua Thien Hue is conducted at the Imperial City of Hue and the tombs of Emperors Minh Mang, Tu Duc, and Khai Dinh. The ancient town of Hoi An is the survey area in Quang Nam province.

2.4. Data analysis method

Dissertation Integrating Multiple Data Analysis Methods Utilizing SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26 on Windows:

- Descriptive Statistical Methods
- Factor Analysis Methods: EFA and CFA
- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH RESULTS

3.1. Sample characteristics

Out of 440 questionnaires collected from 540 distributed, after data cleaning, 423 questionnaires were used for in-depth analysis, including 187 samples from Quang Nam and 236 samples from Thua Thien Hue.

Domestic tourists accounted for the majority, with females being the predominant group. Tourists were primarily concentrated in two age groups: 21-30 and 31-40, with high levels of education and income. Most visitors were first-time travelers to the two destinations, traveling with family and friends, with the purpose of sightseeing and recreation through self-organized trips..

3.2. Preliminary assessment of measurement scales

The results of the EFA analysis show that all measurement variables converge into the corresponding proposed factors. Nine factors were formed from 40 measurement variables, with no variables being excluded and no cross-loading issues identified. The Total Variance Explained for the nine factors was 68,13% (> 50%), indicating that the shared variance is greater than the unique variance and errors. The reliability test of the Cronbach's Alpha for the factor groups yielded values greater than 0.70 (ranging from 0,745 to 0,876), demonstrating high reliability of the measurement scale (Kline, 2011).

3.3. Assessment of the measurement model and reliability of the scales

3.3.1. Assessment of the first-order model

The results of the CFA analysis of the measurement scale for the research concepts show that most of the indices for evaluating reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity meet the acceptable thresholds. Only one variable, bau4, which belongs to the factor of experience authenticity, had a standardized factor loading

below 0,5 and was removed for the second round of analysis. The results of the second CFA analysis with the remaining 39 variables show that the model fits the research data well.

The CR for all factors ranged from 0,809 to 0,957, indicating high reliability in accordance with the criteria set forth by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Furthermore, the AVE for each construct exceeded 0,5, and the MSV for each factor was less than its corresponding AVE. Additionally, the square root of the AVE for each factor was greater than the correlations with other factors, further confirming adequate discriminant validity.

3.3.2. Assessment of the second-order model of heritage tourism experience

All observed variables of the heritage tourism experience components are significant in the model, with p-values smaller than 0,001. Additionally, all standardized factor loadings are greater than 0,5. Therefore, these observed variables show a high level of fit and were further tested in the second-order structural components (Hair et al., 2010).

The results of the CFA analysis for the second-order heritage tourism experience measurement model with 25 variables show that the model fits the research data well, with the following indices: CMIN/df = 1,732 (χ^2 /df = 450,362/260 and p = 0,000); GFI = 0,861; CFI = 0,920; TLI = 0,907; and RMSEA = 0,059. The standardized regression weights of all variables are greater than 0,50 (the smallest being 0,531).

3.3.3. Assessment of the overall structural model

The results of the CFA for the overall measurement model indicate that, with 677 degrees of freedom, the model demonstrates a good fit with the research data. The findings also reveal that the standardized factor loadings

for the majority of the measurement variables exceed 0,50.

The AVE values for most factors are above the threshold of 0,5, and the MSV values further confirm that the constructs are adequately distinguished from one another. Additionally, the results of the Pearson correlation analysis, conducted through the Fornell-Larcker matrix, indicate that all factors exhibit discriminant validity in relation to the other constructs.

3.4. Testing the research model and hypotheses

The results of the normality test show that the set of research variables proposed in the theoretical framework of the study is suitable for analysis using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique. The author then proceeds to test the proposed research hypotheses.

The research model has 671 degrees of freedom, and the fit indices indicate the effectiveness of the model, with a CMIN/df ratio of $[671] = 1,955$ ($\chi^2/df = 1311.511/671$ and $p = 0,000$); GFI = 0,864; CFI = 0,925; TLI = 0,918; and RMSEA = 0,048. Additionally, the model estimation results indicate that all relationships in the model have p-values less than 0,01, suggesting that these relationships are statistically significant and positively influence the research variables. These findings demonstrate that the research model achieves a good fit with the data.

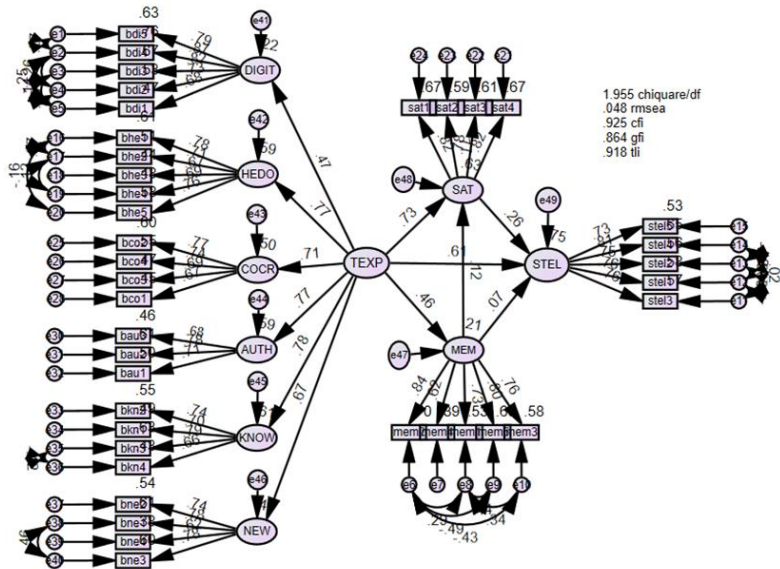


Figure 3.1: Estimated Model Results (Standardized)

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that 9 out of the 10 proposed research hypotheses are accepted (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). The only exception is the hypothesis regarding the direct relationship between memorability and storytelling behavior.

Table 3.1: Results of hypothesis testing for the relationship between heritage tourism experience and storytelling behavior

No.	Hypothesis	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effects	Results
1	H ₁ . MEM <-- TEXP	0,461 ^{***}	na	0,461 ^{***}	H ₁ Accept
2	H ₂ . SAT <-- TEXP	0,728 ^{***}	na	0,728 ^{***}	H ₂ Accept
3	H ₃ . STEL <-- TEXP	0,611 ^{***}	na	0,611 ^{***}	H ₃ Accept
4	H ₄ . SAT <-- MEM	0,121 [*]	na	0,121 [*]	H ₄ Accept
5	H ₅ . STEL <-- SAT	0,262 ^{***}	na	0,262 ^{***}	H ₅ Accept
6	H ₆ . STEL <-- MEM	0,067 ^{ns}	na	0,067 ^{ns}	H ₆ Reject
7	H _{2a} . SAT <-- MEM	0,728 ^{***}	0,056 [*]	0,784 ^{***}	H _{2a} Accept

	<-- TEXP				
8	H _{3a} . STEL <-- SAT<- - TEXP	0,611 ^{***}	0,236 ^{***}	0,848 ^{***}	H _{3a} Accept
9	H _{3b} . STEL <-- MEM<-- TEXP	0,611 ^{***}	0,236 ^{***}	0,848 ^{***}	H _{3b} Accept
10	H _{6a} . STEL <-- SAT<- - MEM	0,067 ^{ns}	0,032 ^{**}	0,099 ^{ns}	H _{6a} Accept

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

Table 3.2: Analysis of Mediating Effects

Hypothesis	Direct		Indirect		Type of mediating effect
	β	Sig.	β	Sig.	
H _{2a} . SAT <-- MEM <-- TEXP	0,728	0,003	0,056	0,053	Partial mediation
H _{3a} . STEL <-- SAT<-- TEXP	0,611	0,002	0,236	0,002	Partial mediation
H _{3b} . STEL <-- MEM<-- TEXP	0,611	0,002	0,236	0,002	Partial mediation
H _{6a} . STEL <-- SAT<-- MEM	0,067	0,106	0,032	0,049	Full mediation

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

The path analysis results indicate that heritage tourism experience serves as a significant precursor to storytelling behavior. Notably, overall satisfaction and memorability act as mediating factors in the relationship between heritage tourism experience and behaviors of tourists.

Subsequently, this study conducted an analysis of the impact of the aforementioned demographic variables as control variables. The specific results are summarized in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Influence of control variables on Tourism experience (TEXP), Memorability (MEM), Satisfaction (SAT), and Storytelling behavior (STEL)

Control variable	P value			
	TEXP	MEM	SAT	STEL
Gender	0,131	0,028**	0,476	0,923
Age	0,138	0,423	0,251	0,651
Level of education	0,785	0,008***	0,781	0,585
Destination (Hue - Hoi An)	0,494	0,087*	0,339	0,341

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

The results of the analysis indicate that most of the control variables do not have statistically significant effects. However, there are statistically significant differences between groups of tourists with varying educational backgrounds ($p \leq 0,01$) and between groups of tourists surveyed at the two different destinations ($p \leq 0,10$) regarding memorable experience. Similarly, there is a statistically significant difference at the mean level between male and female tourists concerning their tourism memories ($p \leq 0,05$).

3.5. The moderating effect of the 'Nationality'

The analysis reveals that 5 out of the 6 hypotheses regarding the moderating effect of 'nationality' on the direct relationships among the research variables are statistically significant. The only exception is the relationship between satisfaction (SAT) and storytelling behavior (STEL) (Hypothesis H_{7d}), which does not show a significant effect.

Table 3.4. The moderating effect of the 'Nationality'

No.	Hypothesis H ₇		Domestic			International		z-score
			β	P value		β	P value	
H _{7a}	SAT	<---	TEXP	0.823	0.000	0.789	0.000	1.949*
H _{7b}	MEM	<---	TEXP	0.181	0.244	0.459	0.023	1.795*
H _{7c}	MEM	<---	SAT	0.404	0.009	0.015	0.919	-1.797*
H _{7d}	STEL	<---	SAT	0.186	0.161	0.174	0.197	-0.205
H _{7e}	STEL	<---	TEXP	0.642	0.000	0.767	0.003	1.665*
H _{7f}	STEL	<---	MEM	0.141	0.037	-0.057	0.382	-2.166**

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

3.6. The moderating effect of the 'Number of visit'

The results of the analysis indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding the impact of tourism experience (TEXP) on tourist satisfaction (SAT).

Table 3.5 The moderating effect of the 'Number of visit'

No.	Hypothesis H ₈			First time		Revisit		z-score
				β	P value	β	P value	
H _{8a}	MEM	<---	TEXP	0.466	0.000	0.491	0.000	-1.567
H _{8b}	SAT	<---	TEXP	0.778	0.000	0.686	0.000	-2.278**
H _{8c}	SAT	<---	MEM	0.076	0.178	0.123	0.215	0.438
H _{8d}	STEL	<---	SAT	0.201	0.065	0.352	0.007	1.226
H _{8e}	STEL	<---	TEXP	0.670	0.000	0.563	0.000	-1.297
H _{8f}	STEL	<---	MEM	0.035	0.486	0.076	0.342	0.552

(Source: Data analysis, July-October 2022)

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

4.1. Discussion

4.1.1. Evaluation of the Heritage tourism experience scale

The study proposes a measurement scale for heritage tourism experience, consisting of 6 components. Theoretically, the proposed scale builds upon and enhances the values of previous scales, such as memorable tourism experience, experience marketing, and experience economy.

Through in-depth tests such as EFA and CFA, the measurement variables align with the proposed factor groups, and the scale demonstrates good fit with the survey data. The proposed experience components all contribute to the overall tourist experience. This indicates a strong alignment between the proposed theory and the actual perceptions of tourists

4.1.2. Direct effects of Heritage tourism experience on Memorability, Satisfaction, and Storytelling behavior

Heritage tourism experience has a direct impact on tourist satisfaction, memorability, and storytelling behavior at heritage sites in Central Vietnam (corresponding to hypotheses H₁, H₂, and H₃). These results align with previous studies that highlight the role of tourism experience as a strong predictor of outcomes.

It can be asserted that the more positive and memorable the experience, the greater the satisfaction tourists feel, which in turn stimulates their intention to share stories. This study provides evidence that supports the SOR theory, suggesting that for heritage tourism experiences, when tourists receive positive and memorable interactions during their journey, these

experiences trigger cognitive processing and positive emotional responses (satisfaction with the trip) and promote the intention to engage in storytelling behavior.

4.1.3. The effect of Memorability and Satisfaction on Storytelling behavior

Memorability is confirmed to have a positive direct effect on tourists' satisfaction with their trip (H_4). Given the context of visits to Thua Thien Hue and Hoi An, most tourists are first-time visitors who are often overwhelmed by the beauty of the heritage sites dating back centuries. They experience warm interactions with friendly locals and enjoy a transformation from their busy daily lives. These memories are vivid, easily recalled, and vividly resurfaced in the minds of tourists when asked about their experiences.

Additionally, satisfaction with the trip has a positive direct impact on storytelling behavior (H_5). Specifically, the higher the level of satisfaction regarding the tourism experience, the more pronounced the intention to engage in positive behaviors that benefit the destination.

However, the research results indicate that the memorability of the trip does not have a direct impact on heritage tourists' storytelling behavior regarding the destination, as hypothesis H_6 is rejected. This finding contrasts with the results of some previous studies. The memories of the tourist group in this dissertation may not be strong enough to create a similar impact. In fact, different demographic groups within the survey sample reflected varying views on the memories of the trip they wish to preserve.

4.1.4. The mediating role of Memorability and Satisfaction

The research findings indicate that the mediating role of memorability in the relationship between tourism

experience and satisfaction (H_{2a}) is accepted. Additionally, the validation of hypotheses H_{3a} and H_{3b} confirms the mediating effects of both satisfaction and memorability in the relationship between heritage tourism experience and storytelling behavior. These findings represent significant new contributions to the theoretical framework surrounding heritage tourism experiences, as no prior research has examined the roles of these independent and mediating variables in relation to storytelling behavior about heritage destinations.

Finally, the results validating the Hypothesis of the complete mediating effect of satisfaction in the relationship between memorability and storytelling behavior (H_{6a}) were accepted. This finding suggests that for tourists to effectively recount their tourism experiences, it is essential for them to feel genuinely satisfied and engaged within the context of their experiences, regardless of whether those memories are retained over time or whether the duration of their exploration of the destination is consistent.

4.1.5. The moderating effects of Nationality and Number of visits

The multi-group moderation analysis reveals statistically significant differences in the direct path relationships among TEXP, SAT, MEM, and STEL. This findings demonstrates the moderating role of nationality on these direct relationships. Specifically, in the context of heritage tourism in Central Vietnam, the tourism experiences of international tourists play a crucial role in shaping their memorability and, subsequently, their storytelling behavior about the destination, while unaffected by their satisfaction. Conversely, for domestic tourists, satisfaction is a key factor in this impact chain.

Interestingly, the results of the moderation analysis

regarding the variable "number of visits" indicate that it only significantly moderates the relationship between TEXP and SAT. Specifically, the experience of first-time visitors has a stronger impact on satisfaction compared to repeat visitors. This result can also be explained based on the value of novelty in the experience, as outlined in the framework of the SOR theory.

4.2. Implications and Recommendations

4.2.1. Basis for Proposing Implications and Recommendations

In addition to relying on the practical findings mentioned in the research results section, the implications and recommendations in this dissertation are developed based on the strategic documents for the development of tourism in Vietnam by the Prime Minister, as well as the tourism development plans for the destinations of Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam, and relevant departments and agencies.

The author uses Decision No. 147/QD-TTg by the Prime Minister of Vietnam on strategies for the development of Vietnam's tourism market until 2030 (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2020).

Additionally, the author refers to Resolution No. 1622/QD-UBND by the People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue Province (2013) on the master plan for tourism development during the period 2013-2030.

Finally, Resolution No. 13-NQ/TU, which outlines the development orientation for the service and tourism economy of Quang Nam Province until 2025, with a

vision for 2030 (Quang Nam Provincial Party Committee, 2021), is also consulted to supplement the foundation for building the implications.

4.2.2. Recommendations for enhancing Heritage tourism experiences

4.2.2.1 Enhancing novel experience

- Providing more interesting services for heritage exploration

- Developing heritage exploration activities at night

- Creating heritage and cultural spaces connected to attractions

4.2.1.2. Enhancing co-creation experience

- Improving the content and format of information provided to tourists before the trip

- Creating opportunities for tourist to interact with local residents

- Designing volunteer tourism activities linked to heritag

- Enhance staff's attitude and service quality at heritage sites

- Allow tourists to provide feedback on their experiences

4.2.1.3. Enhancing digital interactive experience

- Effectively utilizing 4.0 technology to develop smart destinations

- Applying technology to present content and information at heritage sites

- Increasing opportunities for tourists to utilize information technology amenities

- Increasing technological elements that positively impact tourists' emotions

4.2.3. Recommendations to enhance Storytelling behavior

4.2.3.1. Solutions for researching and updating information on heritage tourism markets

- Establishing the Market Information System (MIS) for data collection and processing
- Conducting specialized studies on market segmentation for heritage tourists
- Improving the quality of the market research department
- Investing appropriately in research and development activities for target markets of each destination

4.2.2.2. Solutions for refining and differentiating heritage tourism products in Central Vietnam

- Improving core service at heritage sites
- Enhancing augmented service at heritage sites
- Designing appropriate check-in spots
- Designing a mascot for the destination
- Strengthening collaboration in the service supply chain

4.2.2.3 Solutions for promoting destination

- Developing a strategy to promote information about the brand and image of the destination, linked to the values of heritage
- Designing communication campaigns tailored to the needs of different tourist groups
- Upgrading and operating effective E-Portal, mobile applications to support the exploration of the destination.
- Promote the heritage destination through cultural exchange events and national/international competitions

PART III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion

The study examining the influence of heritage tourism experiences on storytelling behavior represents a relatively novel area of inquiry. This study, despite certain limitations associated with data collection amidst the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, has made substantial contributions to both theoretical frameworks and practical management applications.

Theoretically, this dissertation makes three significant contributions. First, the author has broken down heritage tourism experience into six specific components. The results of the current study demonstrate that these six experience components not only align within the framework of theoretical concepts but also operate as a practical measure for evaluating the experiences of contemporary tourists, particularly in the context of the ongoing digitalization at heritage destinations. Second, the findings in the empirical study further expand the role of the scenario theory and SOR theory in the field of tourism science in general and heritage tourism in particular. Third, the research indicates that, beyond tourism experiences, both satisfaction and memorability are critical indicators of positive storytelling behavior among heritage tourists.

From a practical perspective, this dissertation has several practical implications. The study provides numerous suggestions for strategies and specific solutions to develop the heritage tourism market in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam, focusing on enhancing experiences, trip satisfaction, as well as positive memories and storytelling behavior of tourists in the future. The research findings

will contribute to increasing the ability to offer products that align with the needs and preferences of the tourism market through activities such as tourism product design and additional services at destinations, maximizing the value received by tourists.

2. Recommendations

To establish a sustainable competitive advantage for the destination, management agencies should prioritize the design of positive experiences over merely focusing on traditional product offerings. Consequently, tourism managers in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Nam, as well as in other similar heritage destinations, must underscore these elements by providing an array of experiential opportunities for visitors. In particular, there should be an emphasis on advancing digitization efforts, supported by comprehensive research to mitigate any potential adverse reactions from tourists, especially considering that the central tourism market has long been celebrated for its commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of preceding generations.

Training institutions are required to address the identified deficiencies in professional skills, cultural awareness, and the capacity to support information technology for tourists among tourism personnel. Furthermore, collaboration between educational entities and tourism operators is crucial to facilitate the instruction of new languages, thus enabling proactive engagement with emerging international tourism markets.

Lastly, the role of local residents is paramount. It is essential for the community to acknowledge that their presence extends beyond merely benefiting from the positive impacts of tourism; they serve as a vital connection in the functioning of the tourism economy.

3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

3.1. Limitations of the Dissertation

Firstly, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were significant limitations in sample collection, with several important tourist markets from the Central region missing. Additionally, due to data collection restrictions, tests such as EFA and CFA were conducted on the same data set.

Secondly, another limitation relates to the fact that the surveyed locations were all tangible heritage sites.

Finally, the moderating effects of demographic factors and trip characteristics, such as income levels, travel arrangements, and travel purposes, were not extensively explored.

3.2. Future Research Directions

Firstly, future studies could focus on exploring intangible heritage.

Furthermore, the research context could be expanded to consider other UNESCO-recognized World Heritage sites in Vietnam.

Additionally, to deepen the research on heritage tourism experiences, future studies should focus on new experiential components, such as co-creation and technology interaction.

Lastly, further investigation into the relationship between tourism experience and the brand of heritage destinations, and their impact on tourists' behaviors, is needed. Not only should positive experiences be explored, but also the negative, unintended experiences that may arise during the trip. The brand of heritage destinations will extend beyond World Heritage sites to include regions rich in historical and cultural resources recognized by national and regional authorities.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

1.1. Article in the journal of Hue University

1 **Nguyễn Hoàng Tuệ Quang** (2023). Các xu hướng nghiên cứu về du lịch di sản: Lý thuyết và vận dụng. Tạp chí khoa học Đại học Huế: Khoa học xã hội và nhân văn, 132(6A), 171-194. DOI: 10.26459/hueunijssh.v132i6A.6864

1.2. International conference proceedings with ISBN

2 **Nguyen Hoang Tue Quang**, Bui Thi Tam, & Le Ha Minh Nhat (2024). Exploring heritage tourist's experience with virtual reality applications: A study at Hue city. In Proceeding of the International Conference on Economics 2024. Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam. ISBN: 978-604-346-271-5

3 **Nguyen Hoang Tue Quang**, Bui Thi Tam, & Le Ha Minh Nhat (2024). Heritage tourist's experience with audio guide: The case of Hue city. In Proceeding of Smart tourism and sustainable development: potentials, opportunities and challenges 2024 (volume 1). Ha Noi, Vietnam. ISBN: 978-604-43-1608-6

4 **Nguyen Hoang Tue Quang** (2024). Augmented reality experience in the heritage tourism context: A review of literature from 2014 to 2023. In Proceeding of Sustainable development adapting to climate change in the context of globalization and the fourth industrialization. Can Tho, Vietnam. ISBN: 978-604-965-871-6

5 **Nguyen Hoang Tue Quang** & Tran Huu Tuan (2024). Heritage tourism research: A bibliometric overview. In Proceeding of ICE 2024 - 2nd International Conference on Economics. Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam. ISBN: 978-604-346-313-2