



# An Investigation into the Factors Influencing Travelers' Motivation to Visit Ha Long Bay as a Holiday Destination

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## Abstract

In recent years, traveling has become a crucial part of the tourism industry and worldwide destination which influence motivational domestic and international visitors to travel and experience thus creating their customers' value and satisfaction attached to the destination. This research seeks to investigate the factors impacting the motivation of travelers in the case study of Ha Long Bay, Vietnam during holiday season. Moreover, understanding the connection between destination image and value of travelers will help the destination develop and innovate their service quality and market situation to meet the requirements of environment. A qualitative research approach has been identified as appropriate in order to understand the effect of destination image related to the motivational tourists and examine their behaviour with attitude towards Ha Long Bay city. Bring out a methodological approach by applying in-depth interviews and focus group sampling to support the study having a variety of perspectives and analytics. In conclusion, The study illustrates numerous factors that influence travelers' motivation elements while traveling to a specific destination. In particular, emphasis is placed on subjective and objective criteria of motivation in order to evaluate customers' opinions and satisfaction concerning Ha Long Bay.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Background information

Ha Long Bay - one of the recognized significant attractions in Vietnam which is situated and recognized in Quang Ninh province - Vietnam's North Eastern region provides a variety of natural landscapes and beautiful scenery with an exclusive ecosystem and biodiversity. Moreover, the destination became popular for myths and legends of Vietnamese culture and has been specified as a World Natural Heritage site by UNESCO for its spectacular geomorphology and scenery in 1994 and 2000. Ha Long Bay plays an important role in the contribution of growth of international tourism and this destination is a

major location for both economy and culture of the country. According to Ha Long (2012) in 2011, there were over four million tourists with 50% of foreigners coming to the destination with the motivation of exploring the biodiversity and landscape of Ha Long Bay which made the number of tourists increase annually. Moreover, the tourism industry in Ha Long Bay increased due to the hospitality of the local people helping to develop the tourism industry in Ha Long Bay, creating many images in the perception of tourists. Therefore, the author's research paper's purpose is to clarify the understanding of customers' satisfaction and expand the evidence to explore and contribute to destination tourism in not only Ha Long Bay as a destination image but also as a holiday destination by applying three

main concepts: destination image, motivation and customers' behaviour and satisfaction.

Each of every single concept has its own crucial characteristics that can be associated with. Destination image exposure a wide range of knowledge, wonderful landscape and recreational experiences that attract the intrinsic motivation of travelers when motivation is related to their perception and behaviour. Thereby, visitors' value and behaviour are influenced by high level of motivation to analyse their satisfaction regarding destination.

In this paper, the author's study work is to reveal and deeply understand customer satisfaction and also contribute to the growth of the tourist industry in Ha Long Bay. The purpose of this research is to fully investigate three essential concepts: destination image, motivation, customer behaviour and satisfaction. Throughout this topic, the research aims to develop awareness of Ha Long Bay as a destination image or holiday location. Therefore, understanding customer's satisfaction is a valued factor that will support the appearance and position of Ha Long Bay in the tourism industry.

### 1.2. *Rationale of the study*

There were many previous types of research discussing the destination image and traveling motivation, however, these studies still do not show the recommendation or contribution in the view of customers. According to research (Birgit, 2001, Bigné et al., 2001, Gallarza et al., 2002, Beerli and Martín, 2004; Castro, Armario, and Ruiz, 2007; Chen and Tsai, 2007;) the destination image is often regarded as the main reason in visitor decisions, and tourists are more motivated to evaluate a destination if they have a generally good picture or experience of it (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993, Alhemoud and Armstrong, 1996; Birgit, 2001;). In general, the destination image is influenced by vacationers' beliefs and knowledge before making a decision to experience their destination. Therefore, it is very difficult to have a clear definition of the destination image itself as many authors have come up with their own definitions. Linked to the study of Ragheb and Tate. (1993) the perspective of travelers can be the main element to approach general support and satisfaction while Ajzen. (1985) stated that interpersonal performance, social principles and awareness of controlling performances toward attitude are formed to behavioral expectation. Given the elaborations of previous studies and the gaps recognized, this research will therefore emphasize the investigation of the factors that influence travelers' motivation to visit Ha Long Bay as a holiday destination in order to have a clear understanding of Ha Long Bay's destination image and investigate the customers' motivations and their behaviour towards the destination. The

research will give Ha Long Bay's tourism organizations or authorities recognition of the international destination and will help this destination to improve its economic strategy and cultural definition is given tourists' perspectives of Ha Long Bay as their holiday destination. In addition, researchers will have a further understanding of the model concepts of motivation and behaviour satisfaction while other tourist destinations will perceive how to apply these concepts to the destination image and cultural experiences.

### 1.3. *Research aim and objectives*

The paper aims to analyze factors influencing travelers' motivation to visit Ha Long Bay as a holiday destination.

Objectives:

- To explore the perceptions of visitors traveling to Ha Long Bay as a destination image.
- To investigate the objective and subjective motivation elements that impact the tourists' awareness of the destination.
- To identify travelers' potential behavioral values that may affect the travelers' attachment to the destination

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### 2.1 *Introduction*

To clarify the motivation of tourists the author will focus on the destination image to have an objective view of travelers concerning Vietnam. Motivation to travel or travel motivation take a major part in tourism research and is essential in the aspect of tourism marketing (Crompton, 1979). Thus, the author will apply the destination image, traveling motivation and consumers' behaviour to investigate the factors influencing Ha Long Bay destination.

### 2.2. *Theoretical background*

#### 2.2.1. *Destination image*

According to Crompton (1979), Fakeye & Crompton (1991), destination images are beliefs, feelings, and awareness of the specific choice of destination. It plays an important role in making decisions, participation, and evaluation about future destinations (Ashworth and Goodall, 1988; Mansfeld, 1992, Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, and Wanhill, 1993; Bigne et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2005). Moreover, Stern and Krakover (1993) state destination images can be influenced by these different sources and characteristics of both individuals and information related to the awareness of the environment and create a whole

new image. Additionally, Crompton (1979) and Fakeye (1991) had a similar view in characteristics and sources influencing destination image, for instance, beliefs, feelings, and awareness of a destination choice. Therefore throughout these factors travelers can have a wise option in the image of the destination.

Moreover, information sources are regarded as a motivating factor (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999) or a tool of forming images (Gartner 1993) that affect the knowledge creation process and the evaluation of destination image, they mention the numbers and the variety of information sources throughout the experienced tourists in specific destinations. The secondary images are modeled by organic, inspiration, and individual information which is raised before experiencing the destination (Phelps, 1986), and this information plays an important and essential role in the decision formation process. According to Mansfield (1992), these secondary images respond to three basic functions: reducing risks in making decisions, creating the image of the destination and being evidence of future decisions. Following (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999) information sources is the key tool for destination images that using knowledge and preferences to reduce the risk of making decisions, create the inspiration to the destination. In contrast, according to Crompton (1979), Fakeye (1991), Gartner (1993), Hunt (1975), and Dan (1996), the distance could be another factor that influences the destination images because of the length of stay, repeated work or visit that makes the tourists pay attention to a specific destination. Furthermore, the distance variable has received little attention in research. These mostly focus on contrasting studies of appliances from various countries in specific to determine the link between geographic area and destination picture (Crompton 1979). On the other hand, the model of Yoon and Uysal (2005) emphasized two research subjects: international visitors and domestic visitors that have a tendency to justify and reappear to the destination. Different departments of destination behaviour such as trip arrangements, recreations, activities, experiences, distances, culture and length of stay are some factors that impact tourists' behaviour (Yuksel, 2004). In comparison to those arguments, international visitors and domestic tourists (Yoon and Uysal, 2005) can make a decision through the information or depend on distances by their personal preferences and experience and based on these factors the travelers can bring out the authentic decision which gives them benefits when choosing a destination. Equally important, "An individual's personal characteristics, or internal factors, also affect the formation of an image" (Crompton, 1979, p.18-23) by status, beliefs about a destination in external influences. Therefore, tourists can develop their own

imagination with images, needs, factors, knowledge and hobbies that create an individual image awareness (Ashworth and Voogd 1990; Bramwell and Rawding 1996; Gartner, 1993). With the connection between the characters and the information sources tourists can have choices of destination image in an attempt to satisfy their personal preferences (Baloglu, 1997; Dann, 1996 and Gartner, 1993).

### *2.2.2. Motivation*

Pizam and Mansfield (1999) reveal motivation is the needs of consumers that lead them to travel and tourists are also affected by objective and thoughtful factors for example environment, personal needs, self-esteem (Kim, Timothy, and Hwang, 2011). Travel motivation is considered the fundamental factor and a decisive tool for tourism development, for example; destination choice, transportation, activities and shopping (Wahab, 1975). Crompton (1979) has established a model for travel motivation called the push-pull model, which revealed the push-and-pull that affects visitors' destination decisions and their expectations. The push-pull model of Crompton (1979) had created the premise for the motivation to travel. This also made a connection between the travelers' motivation of Kerstetter (2004) and destination motivation. In conclusion, the push-pull model gives people an opportunity to find the motivation to travel by internal force and external forces and with the needs they want: adventure, education and social interaction in order to encourage themselves to travel.

Additionally, researchers pay attention to the motivation of travelers' in order to determine their travel reasons and whether one specific destination can fulfill their expectations (Uysal and Hagan, 1993, Dolnicar, 2008; Park and Yoon, 2009; Park et al., 2009). Several researchers proved that tourists' motivation is encouraged by internal and external reasons (Crompton, 1979, Yuan and McDonald, 1990, Uysal and Jurowski, 1994, Park and Yoon, 2009; Tkaczynski et al., 2009;). The external force (pull motivation) will pull them to the destination because of the weather, accommodation, attractions, accessibility, marketing and promotion. While the internal force (push motivation) comes from travelers' feelings such as the desire to escape, relaxation, prestige and social interrelationships (Andreu et al., 2005; Park and Yoon, 2009; Seo, et al., 2009).

Moreover, Kerstetter et al. (2004) emphasized a study that has three main factors that cause the customers' motivation: adventure, education, overview assessment. And this motivation is referred to as nature, physical, educational, daily routine, social interaction, positions (Mehmetoglu, 2007). Furthermore, cultural exploration, balanced recovery, group

socialization, and external contact are believed to be part of tourist motivation in general. (Chang, 2006; Crompton and McKay, 1997; Lee, 2000). In contrast, Age and gender can be other factors of motivation for tourists. According to Huang and Tsai (2003) they claimed that retirees are influenced by stunning scenery, outstanding landscapes, spectacular events, and high-quality infrastructure, while the elders including women are amazed by the quality of service in specific destinations (Jang and Wu, 2006). Meanwhile, youngsters pay attention to the temperature and availability of events or attractions (Norman et al., 2001). Sang Pikul (2008) stated that younger travelers tend to focus on destinations that provide historical interests, natural landscapes, events, easy traffic, safety, quality of life, reasonable prices, commercial malls, and a fresh environment. Age and gender will affect the motivation to travel depending on the adventure, education, and overview assessment that people use to explore, experience, and encourage themselves in relation to the destination.

### *2.2.3. Customers' behavior and satisfaction*

Zaltman and Burger (1975) identified the organizational and meaningful model and this model focuses on key elements: consumers' beliefs, attitudes, situational factors, purchasing and the relationship between these elements. Throughout the research, they found out the tourists' behaviour models can affect the coordination and tourism plans. Furthermore, when visitors participate in particular actions, their psychological preferences are represented by their positive or negative judgments (Ajzen, 1991; Schiffman and Kanuk, 1994). Tourist attitudes consist of the combination of cognitive and affective images and satisfactoriness: The cognitive response is the evaluation created by attitude development, an effective acknowledgment is a mental reaction that reveals the option of tourists for the particular event when they visit or experience (Unger and Wandermman, 1985; Vincent and Thompson, 2002). Tourist attitude is a positive measure of involvement and pleasure among visitors (Ragheb and Tate, 1993). Zaltman and Burger (1975) have brought out a model: consumer's beliefs, attitudes, situation factors which are similar and have a connection to other authors' statements (Ajzen, 1991; Schiffman and Kanuk, 1994), (Pham and Ahammad, 2017). Customers' behaviour can be used to test their attitudes in order to understand their choice of destination, hunting intention and behaviour on occasion. Thus, tourists' satisfaction will be evaluated by attitudes and behaviour intentions. However, this structure model connecting visitor attitude, satisfaction and behaviour has not been proven yet.

There are some factors that change tourists' behaviour: website, service encounters, loyalty, safety, mature customers. The development of the Internet has brought out the new products' knowledge and changed buying behaviour (Gursoy, 2003). The diversity of assessment in information, helps customers in making decisions. (Louviers et al., 2003). Consumers' loyalty is a core of their behaviour, with the combination of cognitive and affective theories which affect the commitments. (Shoemaker and Bowen, 2003). In addition, this satisfaction is a major key to decision-making in buying behaviour (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). Customers who are impressed with the service will tend to return and increase their usage. (Henkel et al., 2006). Nevertheless, Chon (1990) and Hunt (1975) declared that there is a connection between tourist behaviour and the image which results in "satisfaction" and "destination choice". Tourists' motivation can be referred to as the main reason explaining the tourists' behaviour (Eagles, 1992; Fodness, 1994). According to Charters & Ali-Knight (2002), a study shows that there was a relationship between customers' needs and their motivations. The needs of tourists are related to the higher standards, self-esteem, personal satisfaction and social needs (Maslow's, 1943). The gender gap is a crucial factor that evaluates the website, each generation will make a different choice of websites but there still are some similarities in the satisfaction of the generation.

## *2.3. Empirical research*

### *2.3.1. Destination Image of Ha Long Bay*

Tourists focus on service infrastructure and authentic experiences which affect their satisfaction and intention while visiting Ha Long Bay and the study shows that international visitors prefer higher standards in the satisfaction of destination than domestic ones (Bonn et al., 2005). Following the four-page questionnaire, the first section emphasizes the arrangement of tourists throughout the organization, length of stay, schedule, intention and travel partners. Secondly, the travel services are also researched, for example, accommodation, transportation and destination attraction. Coming up as the third section is travelers' satisfaction which includes natural and landscape features, atmosphere, climate, sources, pricing, cultural offerings, dining, and shopping by using the satisfaction level and also the author wants to research the recommendations of the destination for the evaluation. Some studies coming up with the results showed that a balance can be seen between the percentage of tourists traveling to Ha Long Bay such as the ratio of domestic and international travelers in the similar age group

from 24 to 44 years old. While the number of first-time international and domestic tourists witnessed a fluctuation, however, both features accounted for almost the full percentage when experiencing the destination. In sum, travelers' satisfaction was discovered in positive affection through various types of research (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Chi and Qu, 2008; Petrick, 2004). Additionally, service infrastructure and tourists satisfaction are the two crucial factors that make travelers tend to return and seek out new experiences, according to Lin, Morais, Kerstetter, and Hou (2007), destination image consists of the components of effective and cognitive, the tourist's emotions about a location are represented in the affective image components while the cognitive ones emphasize the tangible aspect of the destination which has beliefs and awareness (Pike and Ryan, 2004). The cognitive aspect is formed on the research of the functional aspects of the destination image, however, this cognitive component also includes the contribution of the destination image. Therefore, the study focuses on and emphasizes the travelers' feelings in order to develop an efficient picture of the destination which also shows the significance of tourism satisfaction. Thus this study has enough shreds of evidence and information to support the topic that the author wants to emphasize and it comes up with the augmented attributes to allow marketing and management professionals to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the destination between international and domestic travelers, however, it should concentrate more on the destination image than the tourists' expectations in order to evaluate in an exact way.

### *2.3.2. The Motivation behind travel*

In the motivation of customers, "both the principal purpose of the trip ('push' factor) and the attractiveness of the destination attributes ('pull' factor)" for vacationers range widely, for instance, age, sex, education degree, salary, health, employment status and family structure (Blazey, 1992; Norman et al., 2001; Collins and Tisdell, 2002a, 2002b; Huang and Tsai, 2003; Jang and Wu, 2006; Sang Pikul, 2008). By using the quantitative method and the telephone survey, real data was branched into three categories. The first significant segment of the survey covered questions about age, gender, education level, work position, family system and income, and self-reported health. Secondly, the study is based on issues related to push and pull models and characteristics, motivation elements: holidays, visiting family and friends, and the health of consumers. The final department is travel characteristics: accommodation, type of travel, activities in destination and year for traveling. The respondents came up with almost half of the

percentage in the age between 55 and 65 while the younger age group took just around a quarter. In addition, there are some segments such as retired employees, nuclear households, health conditions and dependent members are divided separately and all of them account for over 50 percent of the total. Overall, this study found that five different departments in tourism built on "socio-demographic" characteristics, travel motivation and characteristics leaders but still have to focus and clarify the motivation of seniors in particular and customers, in general, to bring out the fulfillment of the motivation to travel to the direct satisfaction. Furthermore, some studies in those papers focus on motivation and customer satisfaction in the topic.

Tourist satisfaction is defined as a positive feeling or awareness that is developed and created by the participation of customers in entertainment activities and is revealed by the level of pleasure through realistic and memorable exposures (Beard and Ragheb, 1980). "Tourist satisfaction also is important to tourism management because it influences destination choice" (Cole and Crompton, 2003; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000, Veasna et al., 2013) and "future behaviors" (Bigné et al., 2001; Cole et al., 2002; Cole and Scott, 2004; Lee et al., 2007; Lee, 2006, 2007; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). This study is based on the questionnaire which is surveyed by the tourists who are visiting Cigu, Sihcan, and Haomeiliao wetlands. All the categories such as motivation, satisfaction, destination image and future behaviour are collected at Cigu Wetland. Over a hundred surveys were obtained that may have been used to enhance the quality of the study by analogy, comments, feedback from vacationers. The adaptation of the basic function represented by Fodness (1994) to the research of wetlands in Taiwan is being used to measure the tourists' motivation throughout the level of responses. They also accessed twelve items to research the satisfaction level, one to measure the overall satisfaction and the other 11 were used to engage tourists in multi-aspects. Based on the research of Manning (1986) and Lee (2005), authors can calculate between satisfaction and natural landscape, service and recreational types of equipment by using the same method which is mentioned before. The result shows that travelers visiting the wetlands had the highest level of satisfaction and the percentage of affection and tourism experiences climbed half of the total scores. In general, the connection between destination image, tourist motivation and satisfaction and alternative behaviour was investigated to support the topic. Some of the factors have been discussed but there was no previous research that shows the relationship between these segments and it is worth it when coming up with a new category that is the future behaviour of tourists.

## 2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the author is trying to figure out deeply in the research paper by adopting the combination of destination image, motivation, and the customers' behaviour throughout the cognitive and affective components (Lin, Morais, Kerstetter, & Hou, 2007) and the tourism satisfaction influences the destination choice and the future behaviour (Veasna et al., 2013) to have an overview of the Ha Long Bay as much as the motivation of tourists behind this destination which can be a holiday destination.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1. Aim and Objectives

The paper aims to analyze factors influencing travelers' motivation to visit Ha Long Bay as a holiday destination.

Objectives:

- To explore the perceptions of visitors traveling to Ha Long Bay as a destination image.
- To investigate the objective and subjective motivation elements that impact the tourists' awareness of the destination.
- To identify travelers' potential behavioral values that may affect the travelers' attachment to the destination.

### 3.2. Research design

To clarify the motivation of tourists the author will focus on the destination image to have an objective view of travelers in relation to Vietnam. Ernest (1994) has recognized the interpretive paradigm as an alternative method that includes humanistic, constructivist, naturalistic and anti-positivist. Applying the interpretive methodology helps identify the ideology, value and interpretation of social experiences (Heshsius, 1986). In ontological terms, Cohen et al. (2007) and Ernest (1994) emphasize that phenomenology is designed and clarified throughout the theory and cultural perspective that leads to the objects' existence of how people and viewers see them.

Looking at the aim of this research paper, the author will focus on the interpretive paradigm to clarify the motivation that influences travelers to choose and visit Vietnam by inductive approach. The inductive approach is to create the theories from the perspective of participants and compare the theories with the original theories in chapter two. By using the inductive method the author can access the travelers' motivation provided by collected data through open-ended questionnaires and interviews in order to analyze and come up with the scientific evaluation for the research paper. Furthermore, the inductive

approach is related to the qualitative methods of research, which is adopted as a methodological tool to achieve the aim of the paper. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the qualitative approach is defined as an interpretive and naturalistic path in order to understand or attach to the information given by phenomena in the world. The qualitative method achieves phenomena by open-ended and natural responses, observations, interviews, secondary data, focus groups and surveys to collect a wide range of data from participants.

As mentioned above, this paper will be designed as a phenomenological study. Crotty (2003) stated phenomenology examines participants' perspectives or simple circumstances. It emphasizes the similarities of individuals in how they involve and interact with other aspects or events. The author will focus on the suggested phenomenological study in order to evaluate individuals' experiences and behaviour toward the destination image.

### 3.3. Sampling

The research paper will be conducted by applying the random sampling technique when each participant will be chosen equally with an equivalent probability from the population (Cresswell, 2014). In addition, Cresswell (2014) stated that selecting participants randomly will determine the potential to generalize to a population contributed by a representative sample from the population. Meanwhile, Fowler (2009) referred that the efficiency of a systematic model can be comparable to random sampling when researchers use this method to select and decide the participants on the list they have made. The random sampling technique will be an effective tool and applicable to the qualitative method. It will support the author to have a deeper understanding of travelers' motivation and satisfaction in order to evaluate this behaviour and satisfaction towards Ha Long Bay. There will be 15 experienced individuals between the age of 20 to 40 and have an equal portion of both genders in total investigated by the author including 8 domestic to evaluate various wide perspectives from the local side and 7 returned international visitors experiencing over 3 years to Ha Long Bay to emphasize their different opinions regarding this destination for the research paper.

### 3.4. Data collection

To explore a deeper understanding of the visitors' behaviour coming to Ha Long Bay, a semi-structured qualitative interview will be overseeded by the author. Qu and Dumay (2011) showed that this method is related to the planned questions

that include recognized topics and well-designed sub-questions to elaborate wider and more flexible answers from the participants. Therefore, the responses will be broadened and support the investigator to collect more active and useful answers from the interviewees' perspectives.

The domestic group will be considered to conduct this research with 15 to 25 minutes of interviewing. There were few open-ended questions were raised in order to excavate the quality of responses and to understand the deeper perspective from the participants in Ha Long Bay as a domestic travel community.

According to Rabiee (2004), a focus group is a method using a clarified group depending on the purpose of the interview and this group is related to specific questions. Furthermore, Rabiee (1999) stated that the focus group method would reveal the opinions and perspectives of individuals towards the phenomenon as well as highlight the viewpoints of other social groups. With the international group, the phenomenon will be investigated by the experts who have experience by applying the focus group method conducive to evaluating interviewees' points of view and experience toward Ha Long Bay.

### *3.5. Data analysis*

According to Charmaz (2001), coding is mainly revealed as an essential connection between gathering information and meaning clarification; furthermore, a code is developed in qualitative data examination to help researchers describe the meaning of separate databases and support pattern theories. In addition, simultaneous coding plays an important role in forming the coding for patterns, therefore minimizing a disturbing characteristic in building categories in qualitative research (Tesch, 1990). The combination of coding methods is applied to support researchers in investigating approaching methods towards participants (Adler and Adler, 1987). Codify is seen as an organized system for questions from the researchers and responses from the interviewers to be categorized and more detailed for their survey (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 2011). Madden (2010) stated that in reality, the analytic method does not weaken but instead contributes a huge amount to the assessment of coding data. Thematic networks are based on various amounts of assessment in qualitative methods as it has a similar foundation of theoretical framework and theory arguments that are emphasized in analytics studies (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Ritchie and Spencer, 1994; Toulmin, 1958). According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), the main achievement of thematic network analysis is to investigate and understand the purpose of an event or phenomenon and has been adapted and innovated based on the

construction of basic theories: concepts, categories and topics which is developed throughout "Basic Themes", "Organizing Themes" and "Global Themes".

The researcher decided to implement the narrative coding technique which can support qualitative studies in investigating and understanding individuals' perspectives and personal experiences by using a story, therefore, the paper will be more trustworthy and valid (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). According to Riessman (2008), there are a number of methods that can be used belonging to narrative coding such as thematic analysis, structural and dialectic that assist investigators in recognising deeply about the human experience and their value characteristic towards Ha Long Bay as a motivational destination.

Additionally, the author's opinion to combine both content analysis and theme analysis appears to have the same goal of analyzing narrative coding elements from life experiences by separating the text into relatively tiny content units and subjecting them to descriptive analysis thus bringing out the question for participants and figuring out their experience and motivation with Ha Long Bay (Sparker, 2005; Ayres, 2007b).

### *3.6. Trustworthiness*

In qualitative research, legality and creditworthiness are taken into the concern in all studies which are considered as quality, rigor and trustworthiness depending on the three main included aspects: a collection of particular databases (triangulation), gathering the reviews from other professionals and cross-checking between investigators and interviewers to improve the validity and credibility (David and Dodd, 2002; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Seale, 1999; Stenbacka, 2001). Patton (1990) mentioned that triangulation is a combination of analysis techniques or a variety of information, supporting understanding and validity of the situation through these diverse sources. Moreover, triangulation is organized and developed into four specific categories: "(a) method triangulation, (b) investigator triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) data source triangulation". Method triangulation in the first stage includes interviews and observations by applying different information collection techniques (Polit and Beck, 2012) investigator triangulation in the second stage contributes to different perspectives from audiences and presents further observations and conclusions (Denzin, 1978). In addition, Denzin (1978) illustrated theory triangulation is built with a large number of theories and information sources to support academic research along with data source triangulation in approaching groups, individuals, communities

and society to get a wider perspective and validity. The author will choose to apply the triangulation method by emphasizing the in-depth individual interview (IDI) as an effective alternative to analyze the characteristics of people and their in-depth experiences (Fontana and Frey, 2000) thus helping the researcher combine and evaluate the aim of the topic towards customer satisfaction and their motivation.

Additionally, member checking is considered the most important aspect that contributes to triangulation because it determines the validity of the study by integrating individuals to observe, cross-check and confirm with certainty with an interview or dialogue between the supervisor and the research participant (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Stake, 1995). It is mentioned that when collaborating member-check and IDI also provide a broader perspective from the interviewees and vice versa individuals can understand themselves which can lead to the development of personality and characteristics (Ortiz, 2001).

### *3.7. Ethical issues*

The ethical issue is one of the more important criteria that researchers need to pay attention to when conducting a research paper (Berg, 2001; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Punch, 2005; Sieber, 1998). According to Israel and Hay (2006) understanding, the present ethical issues will support the controversy and the topic of the study, moreover, the information of interviewed individuals needs to be secured and protected. In addition, the investigator should create trustworthiness between him and the participants, develop the fulfillment of the study and avoid misbehaviors and inappropriateness towards the author's paper (Israel & Hay, 2006). Creswell (2013) stated that the issues of ethics in research are being noticed nowadays especially when this predicted topic is more broadened and can affect the elaborate process.

There are 2 ethical issues that the author will emphasize during the research procedure: avoiding the exploitation of participants and avoiding collecting harmful information. According to Creswell (2013), "avoid exploitation of participants" means the individuals who participate in the research should be given compensation as a reward at the end of the study and will show respect to the participants who bring more valuable information. Furthermore, "avoid collecting harmful information" is defined so that the risk of disadvantageous and toxic information can be publicized by the examiner during the research (Creswell, 2013). The responsibility of the researcher is to ensure that the privacy of candidates will be respected and make sure that this issue will be shared with other

participating individuals. Indeed, the consent form will be created with rights and obligations that involve the signatures of both participants and researchers. For example, this consent form will guarantee the participant's freedom to leave the investigation at any time and without justification or breaking the terms of the agreement.

### *3.8. Limitations*

When conducting qualitative research, there is the possibility of inhibition, for example, that deeper exploration of individual perspectives and motivations would take a lot of time and effort. Long and ongoing interviews make the information redundant and do not capture the purpose of the article. Furthermore, due to geographical limitations, it will be necessary to use media to communicate such as sending appointment letters, emails and Skype interviews and this can cause problems with the network, wasting time, time and money.

When using the direct interview method along with using questions, the investigator may ask questions that cause the interviewee to misunderstand the meaning of the question, thereby giving opinions and questions. Inaccurate response to research paper. Additionally, some questions may violate the participant's privacy and this has ethical implications. The investigation of the Ha Long Bay location may also not be supported and provide authentic information for the research investigation due to government privacy issues.

Moreover, the data that the author wants to collect may not be efficient when the participants lack the time and budget to be interviewed in the focus group which leads to a gap in information and can not be developed and the interviews will have less support and willingness from interviewees. Because of the composition of the primary research method, it will make it difficult for the information to be included in thoroughly capturing the nature of the site of Ha Long Bay and at the same time the perspective of the participants and their experiences.

## **Chapter 4: Discussion**

### *4.1. Introduction*

It is mentioned that there has been a significant growth in the number of both domestic and international tourists coming to Ha Long Bay in recent years (Bui et al., 2015). Furthermore, Fodness (1994) and Mansfeld (1992) emphasize that the decision-making process and customers' perception of the destination are influenced by internal and external motivational aspects which have been investigated in several previous studies. However, there are only a few articles researching



tourists' travel motivations and their behavioral values in relation to the image of Ha Long Bay. Therefore, this chapter will evaluate further the elements of travel motivation and visitors' perception and value based on literature reviews and data information since the primary research has not been carried out.

#### *4.2. To explore the perceptions of visitors traveling to Ha Long Bay as a destination image*

A study by Bonn et al. (2005) has revealed that international travelers are more influenced by service infrastructure and real-life experiences than domestic tourists due to the high quality of service can bring huge satisfaction to the destination, which may suggest the potential of exploring and experiencing from the international visitors when Ha Long Bay has a various of recreational attractions, cultural heritage, well-equipped infrastructure. Moreover, it is recommended that the city bring in a large source of revenue and become widely known when the city focuses on building more construction projects related to the hotel tourism industry to attract more domestic and foreign tourists, while increasing and improving the quality of life of tourists and domestic residents, expanding more tours related to field exploration of limestone islands and practical experiences such as yachting, kayaking, rock climbing, diving and hiking will help customers have different views and experiences, thereby helping them preserve the image of Ha Long Bay as a beautiful in the landscape and diverse in experience.

Lin, Morais, Kerstetter, and Hou (2007) have researched and emphasized the turnover of international tourists tends to increase in the number of individuals wanting to visit, explore and seek out innovative experiences which are all impacted by the two most important elements: service infrastructure and travelers' satisfaction, it can be assumed that the Bay City, thanks to the increase of tourists, can develop and expand in order to interest more international and domestic tourists and get their attention with the value of Ha Long Bay as a natural UNESCO heritage and cultural development destination that can bring out a wide knowledge and memorable experiences to its customers and make them satisfied. Indeed, an empirical study by Pike and Ryan (2004) supports the perception of visitors coming to Ha Long Bay when the destination image creates an effective and cognitive image that brings the affective image to the travelers' emotions and behaviour. It can be advised that local people can introduce and convey awareness of the majestic image of Ha Long Bay and propagate the conservation and respect of UNESCO cultural heritage to international tourists, besides, improving communication to be able to convey culture and customs to tourists,

thereby helping to create many new relationships and new cultural exchanges between people thus highlight the customers' feeling and satisfactions.

#### *4.3. To investigate the objective and subjective motivation elements that impact the tourists' awareness of the destination*

In the context of tourists' motivation and satisfaction toward the destination, two main key roles influence visitors when traveling, the 'push' factor includes both the important purpose of the trip planning and the 'pull' factor which comes from the engagement of the destination and the 'push'-pull factor can be emphasized on the variety of vacationers, for example, education, health, degree, salary, employment status, age and family structure (Blazey, 1992; Norman et al., 2001; Collins and Tisdell, 2002a, 2002b; Huang and Tsai, 2003; Jang and Wu, 2006; Sang Pikul, 2008). Furthermore, Ha Long Bay may, when it comes to the motivation of customers, focus more on its image, create accommodation and employment opportunities and introduce types of travel and activities in order to improve the objective factor (pull factor) to attract tourists a principle purpose before traveling to Ha Long Bay to create their own subjective factor (push factor), for example, people will come to Ha Long Bay to perceive the wonderful image of the Bay city or they can develop their own education or experience which is also benefits for them. It is assumed that the objective factors coming from Ha Long Bay may influence and encourage the subjective factors from the visitors whether Ha Long Bay can bring out the fulfillment of the motivation to travel to the direct satisfaction of customers therefore introduce the image to worldwide and interest both domestic and international tourists.

#### *4.4. To identify travelers' potential behavioral values that may affect the travelers' attachment to the destination*

An empirical study by Beard and Ragheb (1980) mentioned that tourist satisfaction is an optimistic feeling or development of awareness and formed by the engagement of visitors towards the destination that provides entertainment activities and memorable experiences in order to influence destination choices (Cole and Crompton, 2002; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000, Veasna et al., 2013) and "future behaviors" (Bigné et al., 2001; Cole et al., 2002; Cole and Scott, 2004; Lee et al., 2007; Lee, 2006, 2007; Yoon and Uysal, 2005). Hence, the explanation Beard and Ragheb may evaluate correctly about the customers who travel to Ha Long Bay due to their own values, beliefs, understanding, and experience will also affect their decision-making and attachment to the destination with their own perspective. Moreover, it is assumed that customers who come to Ha

Long Bay for educational and recreational experiences might develop behavior values that create a sure connection to the destination therefore increasing the attachment between tourists and Ha Long Bay. Hence, it is recommended that there will be a large number of loyal customers returning to the destination seeking for the satisfaction of leisure provided due to previous positive experiences and Ha Long Bay might be an important impact on how future clients improve their behaviour and receive value provided by the Bay City.

A supportive evidence from the survey of tourists who are visiting Cigu, Sihcan, and Haomeiliao wetlands by Manning (1986) and Lee (2005), results revealed that the level of satisfaction increased significantly along with the percentage of tourism experiences contributed to the destination image. The argument of Manning and Lee may suggest that the influence of customers' behaviour and satisfaction will affect Ha Long Bay's image and the development of the city's tourism sector. Indeed, Ha Long Bay is suggested to attract visitors with new experiences such as recreational and adventurous activities, cultural exchange and education combined with the extraordinary landscape and scenes thus may influence their behavior value and perspective of choices towards the Bay city.

#### *4.5. Conclusion*

In conclusion, the paper has mentioned and emphasized various factors that influence the motivation of travelers when coming to Ha Long Bay as a holiday destination. Moreover, these elements are investigated and examined carefully to determine the motivational factors that affect travelers' behaviour, for example, service infrastructure and real-life experiences (Bon et al., 2005), perception of visitors (Pyke and Ryan, 2004), 'push' and 'pull' factors (Blazey, 1992; Norman et al., 2001; Collins and Tisdell, 2002a, 2002b; Huang and Tsai, 2003; Jang and Wu, 2006; Sang Pikul, 2008) and tourist satisfaction (Beard and Ragheb, 1980). Therefore, this study discovered the complexity of motivations when it comes to customer decision-making and perception to evaluate the destination, plus the push and pull factors play a pivotal role in both the destination side and visitor sides. On the other hand, the researcher recommends future studies about paying deeper attention to consumers' value, satisfaction and behavior to understand their critical point of view and feelings to improve Ha Long Bay as a promising holiday destination.

### **Chapter 5: Conclusion & Recommendation**

The research paper proposed a variety of factors that influence travelers' motivation and their behaviour values in the decision-making process

when choosing Ha Long Bay as a holiday destination. Consequently, based on the linkage between effective theoretical findings and secondary data, the author has successfully reached his aforementioned objectives. First of all, the vital role of understanding the value and image of the destination image in developing the destination's service quality is thoroughly discussed to support the local Bay City residents in maintaining and preserving their natural and cultural heritages and raising the knowledge and consciousness of foreigner visitors particularly. Specifically, in the case of Bay City, international tourists are proven to be positively affected and the turnover of external tourists by its service infrastructure and quality of real-life experience. Secondly, the perception of tourists is implied as an essential tool to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the image and service of Ha Long Bay, which is the foundation for destination marketing and its presence of historical and cultural attraction, in terms of gaining a foothold in international tourism market. Therefore, the related authorities of Ha Long Bay are suggested to involve local communities to collect different angles of perspectives and opinions to effectively advance their service standards, hence, emphasizing and optimizing the opportunities for new lifestyle activities and experiences for various tourism targets. Through the positive experience and perspective from tourists, Ha Long Bay and its potential and motivational tourists are believed to have a steady long-term relationship, which supports the formation of future loyal tourist groups. Indeed, there exist huge opportunities for Ha Long's tourism board to utilize the city's natural landscape and beauty and, at the same time, develop the city towards mainly focusing on indigenous communities, such as enhancing education and training, improving the quality of life and publicly preserve and promote their traditions and cultures.

Last but not least, it is recommended that further researchers significantly consider the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of motivation which can lead to the understanding of customers' decision-making procedure and their inner perception. Nonetheless, consumers' perceptions can substantially affect their personalities and motivation which may change their awareness and decision depending on the positive motivation or negative motivation. In addition, 'push' and 'pull' factors should be considered critically to enhance optimizing the objectives elements of Ha Long Bay thus attracting subjective customers, developing their satisfaction and experience.

The paper also contributes to the knowledge of the travel motivation aspects when discussing further research studies by investigating the gap related to motivation when a few studies focus on motivational visitors and their perception value.

This study brings out recommendations for researchers to take into consideration the intrinsic and extrinsic of motivated visitors and utilize the resources from images and culture to present the customers with a very high level of satisfaction and emotional attachment to a particular destination such as Ha Long Bay for the leisure holiday.

It is recommended that other studies carry out new findings and approaches that this study might not be suitable for and different results and explorations will help to clarify and define various elements that influence motivational travelers. The study's findings advocate for further research that will focus on deepening the investigation of the tourism industry and the social interaction between the perspectives of domestic and foreign tourists, from which researchers can evaluate whether the factors mentioned in the theory still affect tourist motivation or whether new trending factors must be explored by researchers. Moreover, in-depth interviews is suggested to be included to analyze deeply the tourists' values, beliefs and experiences that affect their attitude behaviour in terms of destination awareness and experience value they want to achieve from the destination.

The education sector is a critical issue that the government must address in order to educate visitors and locals and promote the image of Ha Long Bay as a holiday tourism destination. In addition, creating employment opportunities and educational training courses will help people in general and tourism industry employees, in particular, to be able to bring valuable experiences to improve the perception of customers towards destination image and satisfy their demands.

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