

## Relationships among novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention, and willingness to recommend of foreign tourists in Vietnam

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted with the overall purpose of examining the relationship between novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention, and willingness to recommend of international visitors in Vietnam. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used in this study. Research data were collected by direct interviews with 252 international visitors from different countries visiting at least two tourist attractions in Vietnam. The research's results indicated that novelty-seeking was made up of four factors (relaxation seeking, experience seeking, arousal seeking, and boredom alleviation). The research proved that novelty seeking positively affected satisfaction. Besides, satisfaction also contributed to high effects on two other factors, namely, return intention and willingness to recommend. Comprehensively, some recommendations were provided to improve destinations' attractiveness as well as to ameliorate Vietnamese tourism service quality.

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## 1. Introduction

Understanding visitor motivation is an important aspect for all stakeholders in the tourism industry. The novelty of destination is a motivating factor when visitors plan for holidays or vacation activities. Compared to domestic traveling, traveling abroad is more interesting because these destinations provide different experiences from daily activities in their country. Selected destinations may have special geographical characteristics, long-standing culture, bustling shopping districts, unique cuisine, and attractive recreational activities (Weaver et al., 2009). Experimental studies have demonstrated that novelty-seeking behavior is one of the factors having the strongest effect on visitor perception (Dann 1977, 1981; Crompton 1979; Leiper 1984). These empirical findings are confirmed and supported by many other authors over the years (Bello and Etzel, 1985; Cohen, 1972; McIntosh, 1977; Wahlers & Etzel, 1985). While playing an important role in visitor decisions, novelty seeking is poorly mentioned in studies (Bello and Etzel, 1985). Vietnam is an Asian country with lots of unique tourist destinations. The tourism industry holds an important position in the economy and brings a huge turnover. This is reflected with these following impressive numbers, according to the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, the number of foreign tourists visiting Vietnam in 2018 reached 15.5 million and increased by 20% compared to 2017. The tourist destinations stretch from the North to the South of the country and carry the characteristics of each region such as Ha Long Bay with a majestic natural landscape recognized by UNESCO as one of the 7 new world natural heritages (in 1994 and 2000); Hoi An Ancient Town is home to architectural and cultural features of Vietnam; and Mekong Delta with trading activities on floating markets, etc. However, the Vietnamese tourism industry is still facing difficulties when the proportion of overseas visitors not intending to return to Vietnam accounted for 60%. Comparing this figure with the rate of 82% of international visitors returning to Thailand more than 2 times and 89% to Singapore (Report of Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2017), this is a problem.

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Studies have been conducted to show the connection between novelty seeking and return intention (Assaker et al, 2011; Toyama and Yamada, 2012). The results have confirmed the positive relationship between novelty seeking and destination loyalty with satisfaction playing a role as an intermediary element. Research by Kim and Kim (2015) has shown that tourist novelty seeking had a positive effect on the relationship between tourist satisfaction and the intention to seek for an alternative destination, and the willingness to recommend the destination to friends and relatives. However, few studies showed the relationships among all four factors (novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention, and willingness to recommend). To fulfill this gap as well as propose solutions to attract overseas tourists to Vietnam, this study was implemented.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Novelty seeking

Novelty seeking is one of the elements of motivational behavior. In the tourism industry, novelty seeking was defined by Pearson (1970) as the difference between perception in the present and past experiences. Meanwhile, Bello and Etzel (1985) defined novelty seeking as a behavior of seeking a trip with new experiences. Crofts (1993) stated that novelty seeking helps increase visitor satisfaction. Many authors affirmed that researching tourist novelty seeking is a complex issue. Visitors can be satisfied with their hotels but the change in preferences for tourist destinations harms destination loyalty, leading to the intention of choosing another destination (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999).

Novelty seeking was explained by the Sensation seeking theory (Zuckerman, 1984) because, in the tourism industry, sensation seeking is known as novelty seeking. The theory was used by other authors such as Babu and Bibin (2004), Bello and Etzel (1985). Besides, other theories were used to explain tourist motivation such as Push and Pull Elements of Dann (1977) and Crompton (1977), and other theories. Kitouna and Kim (2007) identified four elements of novelty seeking, which are (1) novelty earning, (2) adventure, (3) relaxation, and (4) boredom relief. Lee and Crompton (1992) also hypothesized the same number of aspects in novelty seeking but different names. They are (1) change from routine, (2) thrill, (3) boredom alleviation, and (4) surprise. A study by Jang and Feng (2007) identified nine instead of four factors, (1) new cultural experience, (2) local cuisine, (3) local handicrafts, (4) friendliness of the local people, (5) opportunity to interact with ethnic minorities, (6) opportunity to interact with special groups of people, (7) opportunity to improve knowledge of places, people and other things, (8) many things to do and discover, and (9) opportunity for the trip to be mentioned when visitors return home.

Assaker et al. (2011) pointed out that novelty seeking positively affects tourist satisfaction. In this case, when tourists find the trip meets their expectations, they are satisfied. The authors have proved that the more novel the destination image, the higher the intention of returning in the long term. Novelty seeking was also related to cognitive processes (Ball and Zuckerman, 1992), physiological responses (Zuckerman, 1990; Smith et al., 1992), genetic factors (Zuckerman, 1993), and environmental factors (Zuckerman, 1979). In general, individuals with a high degree of novelty seeking have a high degree of autonomy, expressing their feelings openly, non-compliant, adventurous, acting independently from others (Bonilla et al., 2011). Zuckerman (1991) argued that those with high levels of novelty seeking can work well under conditions of excessive stimulation, although antisocial behavior may also occur. In contrast, those with low levels of novelty seeking better adapt to everyday situations, and they can be unbalanced when these situations become more serious.

Based on the aforementioned theoretical framework, four factors are given as elements of the novelty-seeking behavior of foreign visitors:

#### *Relaxation seeking*

Crompton (1977) defined relaxation as an escape from daily life. Relaxation is one of the typical elements of human behavioral motivation (Beard & Ragheb, 1983; Kozak, 2002). According to Krippendorf (1987), relaxation seeking and the desire to escape from daily habits are the first two reasons for traveling decisions. Relaxation is a term that is constantly used in tourism surveys, but the ways tourists define this term are contradictory. A part of tourists respond that they are feeling comfortable and relaxed at the present, but they also admit that when returning home, their physical condition is exhausted. Thus, the term relaxation is related to the mental state rather than the physical state (Crompton, 1979). In another study, Ritchie et al. (2003) concluded that visitors tend to travel to rest and relax both physically and mentally.

#### *Experience seeking*

The behavior of seeking experience includes expectations and needs related to activities bringing new experiences that visitors have never had before, such as living in a different style and making new friends (Schmidt et al, 2017). Another study by Smock and Holt (1962) emphasized that experience is the feeling caused by the difference between what one expects and the true experience of the trip. Berlyne (1960) argued that experience is one of the most important elements of novelty seeking behavior. The learning process when tourists visit a destination is different from learning in a formal environment, such as a school. Students in official educational institutions are considered as "captive audiences". In contrast, tourists are non-captive because they can choose to ignore information without being penalized or losing rewards (Ham, 1992). That is why people are increasingly interested in experiential travel. Modern tourism offers a variety of experiences for travelers who are interested in landscape diversity (Ritchie et al., 2011), local culture and lifestyle at different tourist attractions (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015). Destinations are considered tourism products that provide an integrated experience for travelers (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2015).

### *Arousal seeking*

Arousal seeking is seeking for feelings in which excitement is an important factor (Hornby, 1974). An experience is created through strange, dangerous, and unusual happenings; or, an undertaking with unknown risks are also definitions for arousal seeking behavior (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981).

Thomas (1964) has pointed out that many people try to seek adventure in their trips. In a study by Zuckerman (1991), he agreed that people who have a low level of novelty seeking felt comfortable with the familiar work environment. When arranging for their holiday, they plan the trip carefully so that no unexpected events occur. Choosing a destination, they often choose the same places for all trips every year. Meanwhile, those with a high level of novelty would rather travel to unique places and not worry about accommodation. They may change their itinerary during the trip.

### *Boredom alleviation*

Boredom alleviation is a behavior seeking for the way to reduce or eliminate the thoughts and perceptions that appear when tourists are at home (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990). Boredom alleviation is also understood as seeking stimulation to achieve a higher level of satisfaction, defined by Perkins and Hill (1985). Boredom is a human emotional state, especially in industrial societies, where life is constrained by arranged and repetitive habits. People become bored when they realize they are living in an environment with so many fixed and predictable things (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). According to Geiwitz (1966), boredom correlates with feelings of discomfort, coercion, and repetition. The desire to seek activities to relieve boredom is a basic human need (Berlyne, 1960).

### *2.2 Tourist satisfaction*

Baker and Crompton (2000) defined satisfaction as the emotional state of tourists after experiencing the trip. Evaluating tourist satisfaction is a post-purchase process. Customer satisfaction is an important factor to evaluate loyalty not only for a specific product (Andreassen & Lindestad, 1998), but also for the tourism industry when tourists intend to return a destination (Weber, 1997), or another destination within the same country (Kozak, 2002). In the Equity Theory by Oliver and Swan (1989), satisfaction occurs when consumers receive benefits or values corresponding to what they spent, such as price, time, and effort. Meanwhile, the Norm Theory by LaTour and Peat's (1979) used a "comparison standard" whereby consumers compare a purchased product with other products. For example, visitors compare the current destination with other destinations they have visited in the past.

According to Olsen and Johnson (2003), there are two approaches to measure satisfaction. They are the satisfaction based on a specific transaction and the overall satisfaction. The two authors argued that overall satisfaction is more appropriate to assess customer behavioral intention. Similarly, some empirical studies have confirmed the positive impact of satisfaction on loyalty destination (Chi & Qu, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005), if visitors are satisfied with the experience in the trip, they will return to that place and recommend to others.

### *2.3 Return intention*

In the world, there are many definitions of return intention which are based on human behavioral intention. The behavioral intention is simply understood as an intention to form a plan to perform a specific action (Oliver, 1999). According to Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), return intention is a future behavior that is intended or planned. It is the most useful tool for measuring social behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The behavioral intention is related to actual behavior, when an intention is given, a behavior is performed (Ajzen, 2002; Kuhl & Beckmann, 1985). In another study, Mai and Huynh (2014) pointed out that in tourism and entertainment sectors, tourist return intention is the behavior that shows their ability to return to a specific destination. Bowen and Chen (2001), concluded that the return intention and the willingness to recommend to others are two important factors constituting destination loyalty. Understanding and anticipating visitors' intention to return is a key element for managers and marketers because it not only helps increase profit, market share, positive word-of-mouth but also reduces advertising costs (Park & Yoon, 2009).

### *2.4 Willingness to recommend*

The willingness to recommend is one of the factors measuring destination loyalty because the recommend intention is affected by activities in the trip (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Word of mouth is defined as a direct dialogue between consumers about a product or service experience (Sen & Lerman, 2007). The relationship between them can be friends, relatives and other acquaintances (Büttner & Göritz, 2008). Besides, researchers have accepted another definition of word of mouth which is the electronic word of mouth. Electronic word of mouth is defined as any positive or negative message made by potential, current or former customers about a product or company, provided to others via the internet (Hennig Thurau et al., 2004).

Positive word of mouth (or willingness to recommend) is the result showing the satisfaction with a trip. The higher the satisfaction, the higher the willingness to introduce the trip to relatives and friends (Bigné et al., 2001). Shanka et al. (2002) demonstrated the positive impact of word-of-mouth behavior on destination choices. Recommendations from others are the most sought-after source of information for those who intend to travel (Chi & Qu, 2008). Word-of-mouth behavior is important in marketing because it is considered the most popular and most used way to seek for potential travelers (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Similarly, Wong and Kwong (2004) also pointed out that tourists returning to a certain destination have high word-of-mouth intentions and stronger impacts on potential tourists more than those who do not return to that destination. Hui et al.

(2007) stated that tourists who are satisfied with their trip will intend to recommend to others rather than intend to return. Another study by East et al. (2007, 2008) showed that the ratio of negative word-of-mouth message to positive one was 3:1. When customers are not satisfied with a product or service, they tend to carry out more word-of-mouth behavior. This proved that negative messages have a stronger impact than positive ones (Rozin & Royzman 2001).

### 2.5 The relationships among Novelty seeking, Tourist satisfaction, Return intention, and Willingness to recommend

In a study in 2012, Toyama and Yamada introduced a structural model showing the relationships among three concepts: novelty seeking, tourist satisfaction, and intention to revisit (novelty seeking → satisfaction → destination loyalty). The research results have confirmed a positive link between novelty seeking and return intention, through an intermediate element which is satisfaction. This means if visitors find the novelty of the destination meets their expectations, they intend to return to that place and want to experience the remaining parts of it. Similarly, Assaker et al. (2011) also identified that novelty seeking has a direct and indirect impact on visitors' intention to revisit through their satisfaction. Meanwhile, the study by Bigné et al. (2001) showed that novelty seeking has a higher level of influence on the return intention than on the satisfaction.

Research by Kim and Kim (2015) has shown that tourists' novelty seeking positively affects the relationship between satisfaction and the intention to seek an alternative destination, and the intention to introduce the place to others. Therefore, it helps form potential and positive word-of-mouth behavior. In addition to this, the two authors concluded that novelty seeking does not reduce the intention to recommend the destination they have visited to others.

Based on the aforementioned discussions, the hypotheses can be stated as follows:

**H1:** Novelty seeking has a positive impact on foreign tourists' satisfaction.

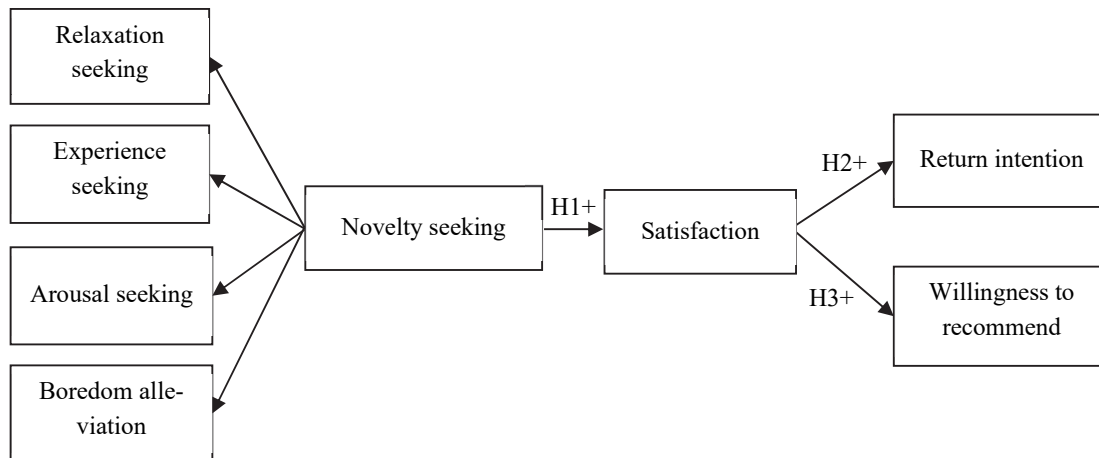
**H2:** Satisfaction has a positive impact on foreign tourists' return intention.

**H3:** Satisfaction has a positive impact on foreign tourists' willingness to recommend.

## 3. Research model and methodology

### 3.1 Proposed research model

Based on the literature review as well as related studies above, the research model on the relationships among novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention and willingness to recommend of foreign tourists in Vietnam is proposed as follows:



**Fig. 1.** Proposed research model  
Source: Author's proposal, 2019

**Table 1**  
Interpretation of observed variables in the research model

Factors	Observed variables	Sign	Scale	Reference
Relaxation seeking (RS)	I want to enjoy the natural atmosphere.	RS1	Likert 1-5	Kitouna and Kim (2017), Lee and Crompton (1992)
	I want to relax and experience peace.	RS2		
	I want to go back to nature because my life is associated with urban life.	RS3		
	I want to find myself in nature scenes where I explore new things.	RS4		
	I want to relax after stressful working days.	RS5		

**Table 1**  
Interpretation of observed variables in the research model (Continued)

Factors	Observed variables	Sign	Scale	Reference
Experience seeking (ES)	I want to explore new destinations.	ES1	Likert 1-5	Kitouna and Kim (2017), Lee and Crompton (1992), Assaker et al. (2011)
	I want to experience different cultures (for example local festivals and rituals).	ES2		
	I want to try local cuisine.	ES3		
	I want to widen my knowledge about people and the nature of these destinations.	ES4		
Arousal seeking (AS)	I seek adventure on my vacation.	AS1	Likert 1-5	Lee and Crompton (1992), Kitouna and Kim (2017), Kim and Kim (2015)
	I would like to take off on a trip with no preplanned or definite routes, or timetable.	AS2		
	I want to see the mysterious sceneries.	AS3		
	I feel a powerful urge to explore the unknown on vacation.	AS4		
	I enjoy the change of environment, which allows me to experience something new on vacation.	AS5		
Boredom alleviation (BA)	I want to travel to relieve boredom.	BA1	Likert 1-5	Kitouna and Kim (2017), Lee and Crompton (1992)
	I enjoy spending time in the familiar surroundings of home.	BA2		
	I like unexpected people/friends.	BA3		
	I go traveling because I don't want to repeat my daily routine.	BA4		
	I like to travel because the same routine work bores me.	BA5		
Satisfaction (SF)	I am satisfied with my decision to visit Vietnam.	SF1	Likert 1-5	Albaity and Melhem (2017)
	The trip to Vietnam gave me unique experiences that other trips did not.	SF2		
	This trip is what I need.	SF3		
	This is an interesting and worth trip to me.	SF4		
	I have a positive view of tourism in Vietnam.	SF5		
Return intention (RI)	I may return to these destinations in the future.	RI1	Likert 1-5	Kitouna and Kim (2017), Mai and Huynh (2014)
	These destinations are worth visiting again.	RI2		
	These destinations have special attractions.	RI3		
	Vietnam will be one of my first choices if I return to Southeast Asia again.	RI4		
	I will try other Vietnam tourist products and services in the future.	RI5		
Willingness to recommend (WTR)	I will give good reviews about these destinations (both online and offline).	WTR1	Likert 1-5	Kitouna and Kim (2017), Som et al. (2012)
	I am willing to suggest my relatives and friends these destinations for their holidays.	WTR2		
	If I am not satisfied with these destinations, I will not recommend them to anyone else.	WTR3		

Source: Author's compilation, 2019

### 3.2 Analytical method

To test research hypotheses, the analytical method was used in the following order, (1) Testing the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient; (2) Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA); (3) Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and (4) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In this study, the five-point Likert scale was used for evaluating observed variables, with 1 point = totally disagree and 5 points = totally agree.

### 3.3 Data collection method

The study used the convenience sampling method to collect data and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data. The SEM method requires a large sample size because it relies on the pattern distribution theory (Raykov and Widaman, 1995). To ensure the reliability of the SEM method, the sample size has to be between 100 and 200 (Hoyle, 1995). According to Hoelter (1983), the limited sample size in SEM is 200. Marsh et al (1988) ran 35,000 Monte Carlo simulations on LISREL CFA analysis, yielding data and suggested that:  $r = 3$  will require a sample size of at least 200 ( $r$  is the ratio of indicators to latent variables). In this study, the minimal ratio of indicators to latent variables ( $r$ ) is 3, which is the same as the simulation of Marsh. The study used a direct interview method to collect 252 observations. Respondents are tourists who are visiting Vietnam. The study area concentrated mainly in Can Tho City. Therefore, the sample size meets the requirement ensuring the reliability to test the research hypotheses.

## 4. Research results and discussions

To determine the relationships among novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention and willingness to recommend of foreign tourists in Vietnam, the study used SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 22 software for analyzing and estimating results. The results were presented as follows:

### Step 1: Cronbach's Alpha Analysis

This research used Cronbach's Alpha to test the strictness and correlation coefficients among variables in the research model. After eliminating BA3 because of having a "Corrected item-total Correlation" lower than 0.3 (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994;

Slater, 1995), the result displayed in Table 2 shows that all seven factors with 31 variables have relatively high-reliability coefficients (above 0.6) and all these variables have Corrected item-total Correlation higher than 0.3. This proves that all the variables can ensure reliability (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994; Slater, 1995) and can be used for the Exploratory Factor Analysis in the next step.

**Table 2**  
Results of Cronbach's Alpha analysis

No.	Scale	Number of variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Correlation	Item-Total
1	Relaxation seeking	5	0.836		0.593
2	Experience seeking	4	0.750		0.512
3	Arousal seeking	5	0.838		0.572
4	Boredom alleviation	4	0.747		0.518
5	Satisfaction	5	0.831		0.543
6	Return intention	5	0.817		0.540
7	Willingness to recommend	3	0.697		0.471

Source: Survey data from 252 foreign tourists in Vietnam

*Step 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)*

After testing the reliability of the scale, Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to assess the convergent validity and discriminant validity of variables in the model. The result of EFA with guaranteed tests: (1) Reliability of variables (Factor loading > 0.5) (Hair et al, 2010); (2) Research model's suitability test ( $0.5 < KMO = 0.825 < 1$ ) (Malhotra, 2010); (3) Bartlett's test for correlation of variables (Sig. =  $0.000 < 0.05$ ) (Hair et al., 2010); (4) Cumulative variance test = 62.342% > 50% (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The EFA results form 7 factors with 31 observed variables: Relaxation seeking (RS), Experience seeking (ES), Arousal seeking (AS), Boredom alleviation (BA), Satisfaction (SF), Return intention (RI), and Willingness to recommend (WTR). There is no variable disturbance among factors, so the factors' names have remained the same as in the original research model.

**Table 3**  
Component scales formed from EFA analysis

No.	Observed variable	Scale name
1	5 variables: RS1, RS2, RS3, RS4, RS5	Relaxation seeking
2	4 variables: ES1, ES2, ES3, ES4	Experience seeking
3	5 variables AS1, AS2, AS3, AS4, AS5	Arousal seeking
4	4 variables: BA1, BA2, BA4, BA5	Boredom alleviation
5	5 variables: SF1, SF2, SF3, RSF4, RSF5	Satisfaction
6	5 variables: RI1, RI2, RI3, RI4, RI5	Return intention
7	3 variables: WR1, WR3, WR3	Willingness to recommend

Source: Survey data from 252 foreign tourists in Vietnam

*Step 3: Confirmation Factor Analysis (CFA)*

After Exploratory Factor Analysis, the 7 factors mentioned above are put through the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The results of CFA show that, these conditions are guaranteed as follows: Chi-square/df =  $1.537 < 2$  with  $P = 0.000 \leq 0.05$  (Carmines and McIver, 1981); TLI and CFI are 0,912 and 0,922 respectively and both are > 0.9 (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003); RMSEA =  $0.046 < 0.08$  (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). This proves that the research model is suitable and in line with market data. Standardized coefficients of the scale are all greater than 0.5 and unstandardized coefficients are of statistical significance, thus, the concepts acquire convergent validity. Besides, correlation coefficients of factors are less than 1 and the standard deviations are less than 0.05, hence, research concepts acquire discriminant validity. The calculation results of Composite Reliability (Pc) and Average Variance Extracted (Pvc) displayed in Table 4 show that Composite Reliability suffice the requirement. However, the Average Variance Extracted from the Experience seeking, Return intention, and Willingness to recommend scale is slightly low (<0.5), but Average Variance Extracted can still be accepted at 0.4 or higher under the condition that Composite Reliability is greater than 0.6 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Fraering and Minor, 2006). Therefore, all the concepts in the model are of acceptable value and reliability, thus, these scales are appropriate for Structural Equation Analysis in the next step.

**Table 4**  
Results of reliability and convergent validity

Factors	Number of variables	Composite Reliability (Pc)	Average Variance Extracted (Pvc)
Relaxation seeking (RS)	4	0.84	0.51
Experience seeking (ES)	4	0.75	0.43
Arousal seeking (AS)	5	0.84	0.51
Boredom alleviation (BA)	4	0.80	0.50
Satisfaction (SF)	5	0.84	0.51
Return intention (RI)	5	0.82	0.48
Willingness to recommend (WTR)	3	0.71	0.45

Source: Survey data from 252 foreign tourists in Vietnam

#### Step 4: Verification of theoretical models and research hypotheses

After the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to test research hypotheses. The analytical results are presented in Table 5 as follows:

**Table 5**  
Results of hypotheses test

Relations	Unstandardized			Standardized Estimated value	P-value
	Estimated value	Standard Error S.E.	Critical Ratios C.R.		
<b>H1:</b> Novelty seeking → Satisfaction	0.129	0.196	0.050	2.572	0.010
<b>H2:</b> Satisfaction → Return intention	1.234	0.647	0.167	7.379	***
<b>H3:</b> Satisfaction → Willingness to recommend	0.682	0.600	0.116	5.871	***
Novelty seeking → Relaxation seeking	1.000			1.000	
Novelty seeking → Experience seeking	0.279	1.000	0.069	4.023	***
Novelty seeking → Arousal seeking	0.172	1.000	0.096	1.792	0.073
Novelty seeking → Boredom alleviation	0.261	1.000	0.130	2.004	0.045

Source: Survey data from 252 foreign tourists in Vietnam

Base on the analysis results in Table 5, the research hypotheses are accepted at a significant level of 1% and reach the initial expectations. The analytical results indicate that Novelty seeking positively affects Satisfaction; Satisfaction positively impacts on Return intention and the Willingness to recommend of overseas tourists in Vietnam. In particular, the impact of Satisfaction on Return Intention is the most powerful. Thereby, it is shown that foreign tourists who have a higher level of novelty seeking (namely, want to relax, experience new things, participate in risky activities, and relieve boredom at work) are satisfied with the decision to visit Vietnam. Besides, the more satisfaction foreign tourists have on the trip, the higher the intention to return to Vietnam and recommend the destinations to relatives and friends. Therefore, increasing the novelty of tourist destinations will help increase satisfaction and intention to return as well as the willingness to recommend. Similar research results have been demonstrated in studies by Toyama and Yamada (2012), Assaker et al. (2011). Besides, the results also point out that four elements of Novelty seeking include Relaxation seeking, Experience seeking, Arousal seeking, and Boredom alleviation. This is consistent with studies by Kitouna and Kim (2007), Lee and Crompton (1992), Zuckerman (1979), Hoyle et al. (2002).

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

The study has achieved the goal of studying the relationships among novelty seeking, satisfaction, return intention, and willingness to recommend of foreign tourists in Vietnam. Research results indicate that novelty seeking has a positive effect on satisfaction; satisfaction positively impacts the intention to return and willing to recommend of overseas visitors. In particular, the relationship between satisfaction and the intention to return has the strongest correlation. Besides, the study has identified four elements that constitute visitors' novelty-seeking behavior: relaxation seeking, experience seeking, arousal seeking, and boredom alleviation.

### 5.2 Recommendations

This research proposes some implications to help improve the Vietnamese tourism industry and the novelty of tourist destinations, as well as increase satisfaction, encourage tourists to revisit and introduce Vietnam to others. Firstly, improve the novelty and attractiveness of tourist attractions. Most tourists choose Vietnam for their holidays to relax, experience culture and reduce work pressure, so creating an attractive destination image and a special culture is a necessary strategy. The beauty of breath-taking natural landscapes, traditional villages, unique heritage, and long-term cuisine should be utilized to be included in the promotion strategies, bringing a beautiful and attractive image about Vietnam to international friends. Moreover, cultural events and traditional festivals should also be improved in terms of scale, the content of activities, length of events, etc. Also, travel agencies should connect with local authorities to offer more tourist services at tourist sites to avoid boredom for visitors. The appropriate combination of local government and travel agencies will make it easier to enhance the novelty of the destination image of Vietnam. Secondly, the issue of regulations on street vending, infrastructure, and environmental pollution should also be paid attention to increase the satisfaction of overseas visitors when visiting Vietnam. That street vendors drag and rip off foreign tourists' tarnishes Vietnam's image, it is essential to have appropriate policies to improve this situation. Also, the research results point out the lack of accurate information about Vietnam tourist attractions, which makes it difficult for tourists to find accommodation or public transportation. Since then, tourism information centers need to be expanded in public locations such as airports, bus stations, and major tourist destinations in large cities. Websites that

provide online travel information also need to be improved and updated continuously so that visitors can easily find any information. Local authorities should issue policies on environment protection for tourism service providers to ensure that beautiful tourist sites will not be affected by the pollution. Last but not least, Vietnamese tourism needs to be improved in terms of human resources training both in management and direct labor. Problems with service quality, deception, and overcharging are the causes of tourist dissatisfaction towards Vietnamese tourism. It may lead to the intention not to revisit in the future as well as not willing to recommend Vietnam to others. Popular services such as restaurants, hotels, and sightseeing services need to be improved in both quantity and quality. The staff has to meet not only basic requirements such as language skills, tourism knowledge but also a positive and professional attitude in service style. Besides the beautiful scenery and long-standing culture, the image of friendly Vietnamese people is also one of the most important tools that help increase the revisit rate as well as positive word of mouth.

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