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Developing a Slow Tourism Intention Research Framework Based on the Model of Goal-directed Behavior Factors

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Abstract

The study aimed to develop a framework for analyzing the factors that influence individuals' intention to choose slow tourism, based on the model of goal- directed model (MGB) approach. In addition to the initial components of the MGB model, this study added an independent variable, the perceived authenticity, as an extended component. The research framework and factors were adapted and adjusted to suit the context of slow tourism in Vietnam, and were developed through literature review, expert interviews, and focus group interviews, which helped to clarify the concept of slow tourism and authenticity. Finally, the study proposed a research model that is suitable for the context of slow tourism in general, as well as the specific context of slow tourism in Vietnam. This result can serve as a valuable reference for tourism studies, particularly those that focus on slow tourism.

Keywords: slow tourism, authenticity, Object-based authenticity, Existential authenticity, Model Goal-directed Behaviour (MGB)

1. Introduction

Research Introduction

Slowing down or decelerating refers to consumers seeking opportunities to escape the fast pace of life and engage in various forms of slow consumption (Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019). Consumers search for "deceleration zones" in geographic, cultural, and social environments that are not affected by full or partial acceleration (Berger-Remy, Dubreuil, Dion, & Albertini, 2020). The idea of "slow" originated in Italy in the 1970s when a local organization taught visitors how to enjoy local produce. Since then, this business concept has been established in the food industry, which, like all regular products, offers seasonal, traditional, and local products (Nosi & Zanni, 2004). The slow philosophy has been extended to all aspects of human life to preserve the cultural value of each locality in the face of globalization, technological advancement, and the internet. Slow tourism also describes a mental, psychological, and behavioral process (Oh, Assaf, & Baloglu, 2016). The authors suggest that managers and marketers should approach slow tourism by focusing on tourists' behavior rather than tourist types.

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Previously, (J. E. Dickinson, Lumsdon, & Robbins, 2011) showed that slow tourism represents a way of thinking about travel called slow tourism thinking or psychology. According to the World Tourism Organization, slow tourism has become increasingly popular worldwide, especially in countries such as the UK, France, the US, Australia, and the Netherlands, with many tours available for all ages. Slow tourism is predicted to change destination preferences, with an emphasis on environmental protection, longer stays, and a preference for homestays over hotels (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2020). Despite its importance, there has been limited research on this type of tourism (C.-K. Lee et al., 2020).

Slow tourism requires more in-depth and authentic experiences. Slow tourist are those who have a strong desire for authenticity in the destination and a willingness to engage in real activities (Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011; Shen, Guo, & Wu, 2014). In other words, people with a sense of genuine activity are particularly sensitive and potential customers of slow tourism. Tracking visitors' authentic search patterns and experiences helps researchers understand the slow tourist decision-making process. Although the topic of authenticity in tourism has been discussed and researched for many decades, its importance and contribution still hold a dominant role in tourism practice. The main features of authenticity are considered both in terms of shape and formless. From the perspective of customer experience, authenticity or the perceived of authenticity is reflected in the activities of tourists and people in general. This activity begins with a search and then continues through interaction and engagement with a specific audience. The essence of the authenticity of an object lies in the meaningful relevance expressed in the process of visitors interacting or performing activities with a particular object".

The current research focuses on slow tourism, factors affecting slow tourism intention, and proposes a suitable theoretical framework. Besides proposing a theoretical framework for slow tourism based on a MGB, the research also expands it by examining the role of perceived authenticity as a predictor of tourist's behavioral intentions.

Literature review

Slow tourism and slow tourist

Although previous definitions have identified a number of key components of slow tourism, there is no single definition that fully describes this emerging type of tourism or its important points ((Meng & Choi, 2016; Valls, Mota, Vieira, & Santos, 2019). There is no general consensus among tourism managers and scholars regarding the accuracy of the concept of slow tourism (Le Busque, Mingoia, & Litchfield, 2022; Serdane, Maccarrone-Eaglen, & Sharifi, 2020). Research by Dubois and Ceron (2006) refers to cruise travel as "slow tourism". J. E. Dickinson et al. (2011) define slow tourism as an emerging concept that provides an alternative to air and car travel, where travellers move to a destination more slowly, stay longer, and commute less. Similarly, Lumsdon and McGrath (2011) define slow tourism as an overall approach to tourism that encompasses the travel experience, journey, destination, and return to the place of origin.

At first glance, the previous definitions have in common that slow tourism encourages a leisurely vacation instead of a fast one (Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019; Oh et al., 2016). The process of "slowing down" the pace of the holiday offers more opportunities for visitors to interact and connect with locals and places on a deeper level (J. Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010; J. E. Dickinson et al., 2011). In the context of slow tourism, attitudes towards time and its utilization are

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important. Moreover, according to Matos (2004) to truly travel slowly, tourists must adhere to two essential principles: spending time and staying in a particular place.

Slow tourism allows visitors to choose between fast or slow tourism, depending on factors such as time pressure, destination, and tourist characteristics, as noted by J. E. Dickinson and Peeters (2014) and Lew and McKercher (2006). Modes of transport like airplanes, boats, or cars are commonly used to reach remote tourist sites, as explained by Conway and Timms (2012) and Serdane et al. (2020). However, the mode of transportation does not necessarily define slow tourism and can be separated from the other factors associated with it. This is also consistent with studies of Meng and Choi (2016); Oh et al. (2016); Le Busque et al. (2022).

Recently, slow tourism has shifted its focus from being solely environmentally sustainable to promoting healthy time and space practices. Slow tourism emphasizes the enjoyment of unique experiences in a destination, which should be a far departure from tourists' daily lives. Slow tourism creates conditions for relaxation, freedom, comfort, and independence during leisure travel (Fallon, 2012; Fullagar, 2012; Tiyce & Wilson, 2012). Slow tourism is closely related to ecotourism and sustainable tourism development (Yurtseven & Kaya, 2011). For instance, environmental consciousness is one of the driving forces that motivates tourists to engage in the slow concept, which does not emphasize the fast-paced media factor and ignores the accuracy of time. The amount of time spent at a destination depends on the visitor's perception. The concept of Manthiou, Klaus, and Luong (2022) is appropriately evaluated in the author's current study because tourists are inherently constrained by time, while developing countries' infrastructure, such as Vietnam's South, is often inadequate. Therefore, it is challenging for tourists to use environmentally friendly means of transportation to reach remote destinations.

Authenticity in slow tourism research

Authenticity refers to being genuine, substantial, trustworthy, and real (Chhabra, 2005; Frisvoll, 2013; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Ram, Björk, & Weidenfeld, 2016). In the context of tourism, authenticity is often associated with tourist objects, attractions, and experiences (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Authenticity has a significant impact on tourists' perceived value and level of satisfaction (Chen & Chen, 2010). However, in the heritage context, Chhabra, Healy, and Sills (2003) argue that satisfaction is not solely based on a sense of authenticity but also on tourist's perceived of authenticity. Therefore, authenticity is considered an essential factor that influences the overall evaluation of tourists and is an important premise of the destination image (Frost, 2006; Naoi, 2004).

Wang (1999) further explores the meaning of authenticity in tourist's experiences and suggests that authenticity is the result of predictions based on the beliefs, expectations, and preferences of tourists. Rickly-Boyd (2012) highlights the connection between object-based authenticity and travel experience, which is called existential authenticity. Authenticity arises from tourist's life experiences and is dependent on internal factors such as personal feelings and interpersonal connections like family ties and communication with others (Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Wang, 1999). Kolar and Zabkar (2010) also use the existential approach when defining aspects of the consumer experience. Object-based authenticity plays a more significant role than actual authenticity in tourists' assessment of travel experiences. Visitors perceive authenticity by establishing connections with places, spaces, objects, and subjects in tourism (Ram et al., 2016; Yi, Fu, Yu, & Jiang, 2018). Therefore, authenticity refers to the tourist's enjoyment and perceived of the

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authenticity of the destination, which is linked to either the objects (destination) or the visitor's existential experience (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Slow tourism's characteristics enable tourists to experience high degrees of authenticity, something that mass tourism cannot provide (J. Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010). As a result, the perceived of authenticity in slow tourism is a crucial factor in visitors' decision-making process.

In other words, existential authenticity is a subjective awareness, vision, and an attractive aspect for tourists. Table 1 presents the differences between object-based and existential authenticity from the perspective of input or experience.

Table 1. Differences between object-based and existential authenticity

Based on the subject	Authenticity as input to behavior	Authenticity from experience
Object- oriented	Desire to visit and see original artifacts, buy souvenirs	Experience, knowledge, and interest in genuine objects, art, and craftsmanship
Present- oriented	Enjoy escaping daily life through travel activities, like interacting with real people, self-realization	

In this study, the author's focus is on two types of authenticity, namely object-based and realistic authenticity, although there are various interpretations and concepts regarding authenticity. Perceived authenticity, which is a combination of these two types of authenticity, is considered and analyzed from the perspective of the visitor or consumer. This flexible conceptualization of authenticity takes into account the effects and outcomes of authentic experiences that are surveyed and investigated.

2. Research Methods

To achieve the research objective, a literature review related to perceived authenticity, slow tourism, and slow tourism motivation was conducted. The study also utilized expert methods and group interviews to clarify the nature of the factors and the impact of the variables in the model. For the expert interview, the author selected five experts who have expertise in tourism behavior research. Open-ended questions were sent to the experts focusing on three major issues: the need for slow tourism, travellers' motivations for slow tourism, and how authenticity in slow tourism is different from other types. Out of the five experts, four responded and stated that slow tourism is a suitable trend for the current context; however, it is essential to distinguish slow tourism from other types of tourism.

The in-depth interviews were conducted with ten people who lives in Hanoi city, Vietnam with varying ages and occupations. All participants had travel experience in slow tourism destinations such as Hoi An or Hue, where are two famous heritage tourist sites in Vietnam. The qualitative questionnaire focused on personal information of the respondents, their attitudes and feelings, subjective norms, behavioral control, and motivation in choosing the form and destination of slow tourism. Before presenting the questionnaire, the interviewer clarified concepts such as slow tourism and perceived authenticity in terms of two aspects - authenticity and object-based authenticity - by asking customers about the characteristics of the destination, interaction,

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connection, and exchange activities that they were attracted to. The listing of typical features and activities showed the visitors' interest and attention to the particular destination.

3. Research Results

Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) developed the model of goal-directed behavior (MGB) to address certain limitations of earlier behavioral models, including TRA and TPB, by incorporating additional factors such as emotions, past habits or actions, and desires. Subsequently, MGB has emerged as a useful tool for predicting tourist behavior in the domains of restaurant and hotel tourism (Han & Ryu, 2012), as well as tourist destination marketing (Han & Ryu, 2012; C.-F. Lee, 2016; C.-K. Lee et al., 2020; Song, Lee, Norman, & Han, 2012), among other studies. Moreover, MGB has been employed to investigate visitor behavior in the context of sustainable tourism and ecotourism, which share certain similarities with slow tourism, including ecofriendly activities and green hotels (Han & Yoon, 2015; Meng & Choi, 2016; Song et al., 2012) Consumer behavior is typically driven by goals, which may involve the purchase of goods for the purpose of production, sale, or consumption (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 1999). Goals are integral to the consumer decision-making process (Bettman, 1979; Higgins, 2002), and they encompass not only the final outcome but also the experiences and processes involved, including a series of interconnected events. Sirgy (2010) maintains that travel behavior reflects how consumers seek to achieve their goals, and vacation travel can comprise both leisure and experiential objectives, such as education, entertainment, communication, networking, and relationship building (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 1999). Once goals are established, consumers endeavor to attain them in the most efficient way possible by adapting their behavior and seeking out the most suitable means to achieve their aims in the shortest time frame.

Slow tourism generally involves engaging in activities that are geared towards providing a meaningful and immersive experience. For example, visitors may aim to immerse themselves in the natural environment to recover physically and mentally. Based on this goal, they create an action plan by selecting an appropriate destination and mode of transportation. The achievement of the goal will then determine the visitor's satisfaction with the trip and their future behavioral intentions (Oh et al., 2016). Moreover, MGB is also used to comprehend tourist behavior in the context of sustainable tourism and ecotourism, which have many similarities to slow tourism, such as engaging in environmentally friendly activities and choosing green hotels (Han & Yoon, 2015; Meng & Choi, 2016; Song et al., 2012).

In the field of tourism, authenticity has been found to influence tourist behavior (Sims, 2009). Authenticity is also recognized as an antecedent of behavioral intention in slow tourism (J. Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010; C.-K. Lee et al., 2020; Meng & Choi, 2016), heritage tourism (Chhabra et al., 2003), and marketing activities in cultural heritage tourism (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Additionally, Prados-Peña and del Barrio-García (2018) demonstrate that authenticity is positively related to attitude formation, while Shen et al. (2014) find that authenticity has a positive effect on behavioral control. C.-K. Lee et al. (2020), Prados-Peña and del Barrio-García (2018), and Shen et al. (2014) show the positive influence of authenticity on tourists' attitudes, subjective norm, behavioral control, and emotions. Other related studies also suggest that reality is considered a premise or input for tourist behavior since it is often viewed as a motivation, value, or important preference (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2003; Yeoman, Brass, & McMahon-Beattie, 2007).

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Based on the MGB model, the author builds a research model that includes two groups of factors: the first group belongs to the MGB model such as attitude, subjective norm, behavioral control, emotion, desire and intention behavior; the second group is the extension component that acts as an independent variable in the model, which is perceived authenticity. The inclusion of authenticity in the MGB model is aimed at investigating the influence of this factor on tourists' decision-making process regarding slow tourism.

The proposed author analysis framework is presented in figure 1 below.

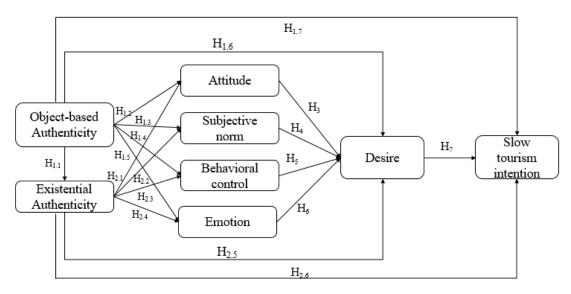


Figure 1 - Proposed research model

The factors mentioned in the research model and hypothesis:

- Dependent variables: Slow tourism intention

Behavior intention is a direct determinant of a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). When given the opportunity to act, intention leads to behavior, so if intention is measured correctly, it provides the best predictor of behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). In this study, intention is defined as a traveller's prediction of a slow tourism option in the future.

- Independent variables: Object-based authenticity, existential authenticity

Object-based authenticity has been found to be more significant than actual authenticity in shaping tourists' evaluation of travel experiences. Lu, Gursoy, and Lu (2015) measured authenticity using subjective perceptions of tourists. Existential authenticity refers to internal fulfilment, while object-based authenticity pertains to external factors such as expectations (Cook, 2010). Existential authenticity relates to individuals' perception of what makes them feel real (Wang, 1999). Wang (1999) proposed two aspects of existential authenticity: internal, which encompasses body sensations and self-creation, and interpersonal, which pertains to family relations and communication. Tourists perceive authenticity by forming connections with places, spaces, objects, and people in tourism (Ram et al., 2016; Yi et al., 2018). The search for authentic experiences leads to a preoccupation with feelings, emotions, relationships, and the self (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). In other words, authenticity is a subjective experience, a vision, and an attractive

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aspect for tourists.

Authenticity is the result of interaction, contact with a specific object or destination. Therefore, object- based authenticity has an impact on existential authenticity. This is also consistent with the research results of Kolar and Zabkar (2010); Meng and Choi (2016); Park, Choi, and Lee (2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1.1: Object-based authenticity has an impact on existential authenticity

As analyzed above, authenticity is considered a precursor of slow tourism behavior in the MGB model. The relationship between authenticity and the factors of the MGB is supported by studies such as Perugini and Bagozzi (2001), Malle (2001), Song et al. (2012), Meng and Choi (2016), and Davis (2018). Thus, the following hypotheses are formed:

 $H_{1,2}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the attitude of tourists.

 $H_{1.3}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the subjective norm of tourists.

 $H_{1,4}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the behavior control of tourists.

 $H_{1.5}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the emotions of tourists.

 $H_{1.6}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the slow tourism desires of tourists.

 $H_{1.7}$: The Object-based of authenticity has a positive effect on the slow tourism intention.

 $H_{2.1}$: The existential authenticity has a positive effect on the attitude of tourists.

 $H_{2,2}$: The existential authenticity has a positive effect on the subjective norm of tourists.

 $H_{2.3:}$ The existential authenticity has a positive effect on the behavior control of tourists.

 $H_{2.4}$: The existential authenticity has has a positive effect on the emotions of tourists.

 $H_{2.5}$: The existential authenticity has a positive effect on the slow tourism desires of tourists.

 $H_{2.6}$: The existential authenticity has a positive effect on the slow tourism intention.

- The mediating variables: Attitudes, subjective norms, behavioral control, emotion and desire Attitude towards a behavior refers to the extent to which an individual evaluates performing a particular behavior as favorable or unfavorable (Ajzen, 1991). A positive attitude is developed when the outcome of the behavior is deemed positive. Desire is an additional construct that is included to increase the predictive power of intention, as desire is a key motivator for action (Malle, 1999; Malle & Knobe, 1997).

Subjective norms are perceived as social pressures to perform or not perform a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). They are influenced by normative beliefs and compliance motivation. Normative beliefs refer to an individual's beliefs accepted by a specific person or group and determine whether behaving in a specific way is appropriate or not (Ajzen, 1991). In the MGB model, subjective norms are also considered an important factor in forming desires (Song et al., 2012). Related studies confirm that tourists' subjective norms can predict their desires or intentions to travel (C.-K. Lee et al., 2020; Meng & Choi, 2016; Untaru, Epuran, & Ispas, 2014).

Behavioral control refers to an individual's perception of whether performing a behavior is easy or difficult in a given environment. Behavioral control may reflect potential future experiences, difficulties, and obstacles (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived behavioral control affects behavior in two ways: first, it affects behavioral intention, and second, it can directly predict behavior. Related studies have also confirmed that controlling tourists' behavior predicts visitors' behavioral intentions and desires (Miller, Merrilees, & Coghlan, 2015; Untaru et al., 2014). This result suggests that behavioral control has an impact on desirability in the MGB model.

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In addition, Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) have emphasized the importance of emotional factors in understanding individual decision-making. Leone, Perugini, and Ercolani (2004) proposed an emotional structure comprising of negative and positive emotions, where positive emotions promote positive intentions and negative emotions promote negative intentions about a destination. Negative emotions often arise when individuals are unable to achieve their desired goals, which can positively impact their desire. Therefore, both positive and negative emotions play a significant role in shaping the desire to achieve goals in MGB. Studies on 'slow' behavior also reveal that emotions of slow tourist can influence their behavior (Han & Ryu, 2012; Han & Yoon, 2015). Therefore, the following hypotheses are further proposed to be tested:

H₃: Attitude has a positive effect on desire

H₄: Subjective norms have a positive effect on desire

H₅: Behavioral control has a positive effect on desire

H₆: Emotion has a positive effect on desire

- The effect of desire on slow tourism intention

The desire of tourists is formed when there are intrinsic motivations that drive or create the desire to satisfy the need to travel. Moreover, desire is the primary driving force that leads to intention or action (Weilbacher, 2001). In the MGB model, desire is defined as a motivating force of will and is the result of emotional, cognitive, and self-perceived assessments of decision-making (S. Lee, Song, Lee, & Petrick, 2018; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Song et al., 2012). Research suggests that when there is a desire for a particular action, individuals are more motivated to perform the related behavior (Song et al., 2012). Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) have demonstrated that desire is a crucial variable that has the most significant impact on behavioral intention, and without desire, thoughts about intention are not strongly formed. Additionally, the results of many studies highlight the importance of desire in exploring behavioral intention (Davis, 2018; Meng & Choi, 2016; Song et al., 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₇: Desire has a positive effect on the slow tourism intention

4. Conclusion

The study achieved the following objectives:

Firstly, by synthesizing and analyzing relevant studies on slow tourism, the author has clarified the concept and meaning of slow travel. Slow tourism is a comprehensive approach that encompasses travel itineraries, destinations, and travel experiences. Tourists are increasingly prioritizing planning before travel (Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, & Vingerhoets, 2010) and start with gathering information about the destination. However, post-holiday factors are more important to them, such as feelings and memories that cannot be obtained or consumed quickly. The concept of slowness manifests itself in the use of time, a feeling of well-being, relaxation, and a focus on quality over quantity. This is also the factor that distinguishes slow tourism from other forms of tourism. Slow tourism also emphasizes travel experiences that represent not only the route or means of transportation but also the amount of time spent at the destination. This includes periods of stillness when visitors are completely immersed in the space without any distractions or spend time interacting with locals during the trip or at the destination. However, due to time and health constraints, visitors may prioritize spending time at the destination rather

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than the journey experience. Therefore, in this study, the author focuses on analyzing the slow experience of tourists at the destination instead of the journey experience of tourists.

Secondly, research has explored the concept of authenticity and its perceived nature, which is based on the visitors' experiences. The results have revealed two types of authenticity: objectbased authenticity and existential authenticity. Object-based authenticity is viewed as a dynamic and evolving expression of facilities, places, and people. Authenticity is also felt through the process of interaction, connecting the human experience with the object. Therefore, from a management perspective, it is important to answer the question of how to make visitors feel connected to the destination and local culture. Existential authenticity is particularly important in relation to tourism marketing, tourists' motives, and experiences (Knudsen, Rickly, & Vidon, 2016). Moore, Buchmann, Månsson, and Fisher (2021) study also shows that authenticity is a negotiated process in various relationships, whether with an audience or social network. The goal of this process is to connect and engage tourists with the places, people, and objects they visit. It is noteworthy that analyzing and discussing the experience of authenticity in tourism reveals that, despite the short-lived experience, tourism provides a way for tourists to integrate with the surrounding community. Therefore, the concepts of authenticity are relevant and significant to tourism researchers, workers, and tourists. For tourists, the expression of authenticity implies quality experiences, encounters, and connections with themselves and the context of tourism.

Third, the study proposes an analytical framework to examine the role of perceived authenticity in the context of slow travel. The research model adopts an item-oriented approach, which considers perceived authenticity from two perspectives: object-based authenticity and existential authenticity. Drawing upon theories such as the model of goal-directed behavior and literature on slow tourism and authenticity, the author proposes a framework that can be tested and serves as a valuable reference for future research in this area.

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