

Factors affecting the selection of domestic hotels with 3/4 star ratings: The case of Da Nang City, Vietnam

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Abstract

This study aimed to measure the influence of various factors on the intention of guests in choosing 3-4 star hotels as domestic tourists coming to Da Nang. Survey data from 405 domestic tourists who stayed at 25 typical 3-4 star hotels in Da Nang city were analysed. The proposed research model was based on the results of qualitative research methods (through previous studies and expert interview methods). The reliability and value of the scale were tested by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and regression analysis. The results show that all factors considered have more or less influenced the decision of local visitors to choose a 3-4 star hotel when coming to Da Nang. Three key factors are location, service personnel quality service and safety and security which have the largest impact, while the remaining factors have a negligible impact on guest intentions to make a reservation. From the results of the study, a number of implications are provided to help 3-4 star hotel managers in Da Nang improve the attraction of their properties for especially domestic tourists.

Keywords: Hotel selection, domestic tourists, 3-4 star hotels, Da Nang, Vietnam.

Introduction

Hotels are some of the most important organizations in the travel service industry. Therefore, the hotels play a full role in improving and expanding the tourism industry, and in contributing to the economic development of countries around the world. The hotel business in Vietnam is still relatively young when compared to other developed countries in the world. After joining the World Trade Organization - WTO, the hoteliers in Vietnam are facing new challenges. This greatly affects the situation of hotel business in Vietnam in general, and in the city of Da Nang in particular. Recently, tourist satisfaction has been the main concern of hotel managers and this is something which essential to consider on an ongoing basis and greater market penetration is vital for a hotel as the depth of sales of a product or service in a particular market as this enhances the bottom-line and constantly affects sustainability. (Nicolaides, 2018; 2016; 2008).

Visitor satisfaction is seen as the key to success in today's fiercely competitive business environment and service quality has become an important factor and mission in every hotel's business. When traveling, travellers have a lot of options for staying at various accommodation properties that they deem appropriate for their apparent value for money. Thus, how to retain loyal customers in hotels is an urgent issue for hotel managers and one which is globally significant (Nicolaides, 2008).

In 2017, the city tourism industry has been endowed with many new and international tourism products, gradually turning Da Nang into an attractive destination for domestic and international tourists alike. The city has welcomed about 6.6 million visitors, tourism thus has an increase of 19% over the same period in 2016; in which international visitors were about



2.3 million visitors, up by 11.3% when compared to 2016, domestic visitors were about 4.3 million, up by 11.3% over the same period in 2016.

Total tourism revenue is estimated to be reaching VND 19,403 billion, an increase of 20.6% compared to 2016. This shows that the attraction from domestic tourists to Da Nang is still very large, paying attention to the characteristics of accommodation selection for these objects is then really necessary and unavoidable.

Literature Review

Recognizing the importance of the service industry in the national economy, since the 1980s, many researchers around the world have focused on research on service quality (for example: Oliver 1980, Parasuraman, Berry and Zethaml 1983, Gronroos 1984, Nicolaides, 2008, 2016). Until 1989, the first barometer (measure) of satisfaction was launched in Sweden (Swedish Customer Satisfaction Barometer (SCSB) to establish a customer satisfaction index for the purchase and consumption of products - domestic services. In the following years, this index was developed and widely applied in developed countries such as the US - ACSI, Norway - NCSI, Denmark - DCSI and EU countries - ECSI (1998). This index can be used on the national level (how businesses and industries will be satisfied with their customers) or from an industry perspective (comparing the satisfaction of enterprises in the industry and the scope of an industry) and can be compared between different times in order to see any change.

The pioneers in this field of study abroad have had different views on identifying the factors that influence tourists' intention to choose hotels. First of all, Atkinson (1988) considers that "the cleanliness of the accommodation", the "safety and security", "reasonable room rates", and "the enthusiastic staff" are the factors. Determining the impact on tourists in choosing hotels. In another study, De Micco et al. (1992) surveyed 510 tourists, asking them to rate the importance of 57 hotel properties that influence hotel choice; The result is that price and quality are the most important attributes, followed by "security" and " location". In addition, many studies have been conducted comparing the intention to choose a hotel between the group of business travellers and the group of vacationers. An aspect which is vital to consider is that "Many hotels are not looking at the consequences of their unethical actions in aspects such as advertising. There should however be an approach to advertising in which hotels strive to reach consumers in an honest way without subjectively embellishing and making blatant untruths about their offerings" (Nicolaides, 2018).

These studies have shown that the key factors influencing hotel choices by business travellers are: "cleanliness" and "location" (Lewis & Chambers, 1989; Nicolaides, 2008; McCleary et al. (1993, Taninecz, 1990; as cited in Chu & Choi, 2000). Meanwhile, "security", "personal interaction", and "room rates" are considered to be important for holiday travellers (Clow, Garretson & Kurtz, 1994; Lewis, 1985; Nicolaides, 2016; Marshall, 1993; Parasuraman et al., 1988; quoted in Chu & Choi, 2000). However, a number of studies have also pointed out some factors that are important for both business travellers and vacationers in the hotel selection process, namely: "clean, comfortable rooms., fully equipped"; "Convenient location"; "Timely and courteous service"; "Safe and secure environment"; "Friendly and polite staff" (Knutson, 1988). Lewis (1984, 1985) and Nicolaides (2008), have shown that "location" and "price" are the determining factors for hotel choice by both business and leisure travellers. Barsky and Labagh (1992) pointed out three influencing factors that both business travellers and vacationers consider important when selecting a hotel, namely: "attitude of staff"; "location"; and "room". Applying IPA (Importance - Performance Analysis) analysis, according to Raymond K.S. Chu, Tat Choi (1999), gives and



important performance analysis of hotel selection factors in Hong Kong's hotel industry when comparing business travellers and tourists.

Using the Critical Performance Analysis (IPA), this paper examined the importance and awareness of tourists and businesses of the six hotel selection factors in the hotel industry in Hong Kong. Six hotel selection factors were identified: Service Quality, Business Facilities, Value, Room and Front, Food and Entertainment and Security. Both business travellers and travellers have the same awareness of all six hotel choice factors. The IPA grid illustrates that the Value element falls into the quarter of the Concentrate Here; Quality service, room and front desk and security in keeping the quadrant working well; and Business and Food and Entertainment Facilities at the quadrant of Low Priority. Room and front desk and security were found to be the deciding factor for business and leisure travellers, respectively, in their hotel selection options. The significance for Hong Kong hoteliers and researchers was also discussed.

According to Espinet et al (2003) there is an effect on prices depending on the attributes of Holiday Hotels: A Hedonic Prices Approach. His article examines the effect of pricing on the various characteristics of resort hotels in the sun and beach segments. Price effects are estimated from the hedonic function perspective through random effects models, also known as mixed models or control panels. About 82,000 prices were collected from 1991 to 1998 from the tour operator catalogue. The research shows that there is a big difference in prices between 4-star hotels and the rest, combined with the fact that there is no difference between 1-star and 2-star hotels. Other attributes that significantly affect the price are town, hotel size, distance to the beach and available parking. The result can assist hotel managers in shaping pricing and investment strategies.

In recent studies, Choosrichom (2011) has identified the factors that influence the choice of hotels / resorts in Lanta Yai, Thailand by international tourists, including: "safe security", "Value", "quality of service staff", "location", "quality of bedrooms and facilities". The study of Barsky (2013) through the survey of 40,000 American, European and Asian travellers has also shown the factors affecting hotel choice of tourists in the world today, including: "Location", "price", "experience of the past", "introduction from friends", "brand reputation", "promotion", "programs dedicated to loyal customers", and "customer reviews on the Internet". This concurs with Nicolaides (2008) findings.

Many studies have looked at the comparison between businessmen and tourists in their hotel selection criteria. These studies indicate that the important contributions that influence business hotel choice are cleanliness and location (Lewis & Chambers, 1989; Ramphal & Nicolaides, 2013; McCleary et al., 1993; Taninecz, 1990), while security, personal interaction and room rates are considered important by their entertainment partners (Clow, Garretson & Kurtz, 1994; Lewis, 1985; Marshall, 1993; Parasura-man et al., 1988). Taninecz (1990) found that cleanliness, the three attributes that both business and leisure travellers consider important in a hotel choice. These are: (1) the attitude of the staff, (2) Location and (3) room. To assess customer performance from a customer's point of view, potentially improve customer satisfaction under customer management and may eventually lead to repeat business (Atkinson, 1988).

In Vietnam, the issues of satisfaction research as well as the parameters of service quality or customer response about the service are still at an early stage or are being objectively evaluated. Tourism services as well as issues related to this area are of interest to many researchers. Some empirical studies such as Chau Thi Le Duyen (2007) studied the satisfaction level of domestic tourists with the service quality of the hotel and restaurant system of Can Tho and Le Huu Trang (2007), and studied customer satisfaction about hotel



services of An Giang Tourist Joint Stock Company. Besides, a number of studies such as Dinh Cong Thanh, Pham Le Hong Nhung and Truong Quoc Dung (2011), assessed the level of satisfaction of domestic tourists for tourism in Soc Trang province. Vu Van Dong (2012), surveyed factors affecting tourist satisfaction when traveling to Ba Ria - Vung Tau. The content of his thesis focused on the factors that affect customer satisfaction, determining the level of visitors' satisfaction, thereby offering solutions to improve customer satisfaction in order to develop the travel service business.

Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014) researched the factors influencing the decision in choosing a 2-star hotel by domestic tourists when coming to Hue. Survey results of 204 domestic tourists identified 07 factors influencing the decision to choose a 2-star hotel by domestic tourists coming to Hue, including: (1) product, (2) price, (3) location, (4) promotion, (5) safety and security, (6) service personnel, (7) social influence. Each of these 7 factors have a positive impact on the decision to choose a hotel in descending order: price, product, location, safety, service staff, social influence, promotion. Le Thanh Hong (2016),

In researching factors affecting online hotel reservation intention of Vietnamese people research in Da Nang a number of aspects are considered. According to the statistics of the General Department of Tourism, the number of domestic tourists has increased over the years and especially the growth rates in 2014 and 2015 were 10% and 48% respectively. This creates favorable conditions for the tourism industry, especially the hotel industry, to develop in. Besides, the development of the internet and e-commerce has also opened a new direction for the tourism industry, which is online tourism. Online hotel booking is growing strongly in Vietnam, where more than 1/3 of the population use the internet every day. The percentage of websites with online ordering is 58%, of which the percentage of websites with online payment is 15%. According to a 2014 survey by the Department of E-Commerce and Information Technology, the value of a person who buys online is estimated to be around US \$ 145 and B2C e-commerce revenue will reach about 2, 97 billion USD - accounting for 2.12% of the total retail sales of goods in the country.

Research methodology

This study accedes to previous studies in five core factors that influence tourists' hotel choice, including: (1) room quality, (2) price, (3) location of hotel, (4) security and order, and (5) quality of service personnel. In addition, as reported by Nielsen (2013), up to 68% of Vietnamese consumers agree that commercial advertising increases brand interest, which exceeds the global average (55%), and 66% of Vietnamese are always attracted to products and services with promotions. On the other hand, the consumption behaviour of Vietnamese people is always affected by opinions, support or opposition from family, relatives, friends, the surrounding community.

On that basis, the author proposes to include one new factor to test their influence on the intention of choosing a 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when visiting Da Nang, which is advertising and tactics of marketing. Therefore, the proposed research model will include 6 factors affecting the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when coming to Da Nang, which are: (1) Room quality, (2) Price, (3) Location, (4) Advertising, (5) Security and (6) Service staff. The research model is shown in Figure 1.



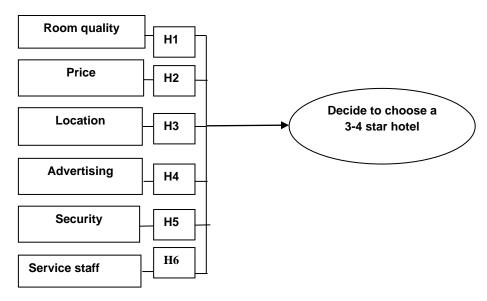


Figure 1. Proposed research model

Research hypothesis

Hypothesis H1: Room quality has a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when coming to Da Nang. (+)

The quality of the hotel room includes the quality of the bedroom, the bathroom and the toilet, the hotel's facilities, catering services, additional services, the natural environment, and the hotel's brand. Some authors (Lewis & Chambers, 1989; McCleary et al., 1993; Taninecz, 1990; Chu & Choi, 2000) argue that it is the product or service characteristics that lead consumers to choose a product or brand. Chau Thi Le Duyen (2007) and Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014) also verified that room cleanliness was a necessary aspect for a guest to select a hotel again.

Hypothesis H2: Prices have a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when visiting Da Nang. (+)

Price is an issue where consumers have to pay some money to get the desired product or service. Jammaree Choosrichom (2011) and also Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014) believe that price is an important factor influencing tourists' intention to choose hotels. Espinet et al. (2003) also found that prices must be consistent with the quality of products and services that tourists choose.

Hypothesis H3: Location has a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when coming to Da Nang. (+)

Hotel location is a factor that, through interviews with the experts mentioned quite a lot, they believe is a very important factor in choosing accommodation depending on the purpose and interests of customer. Barsky (2013), Choosrichom (2011), Lewis & Chambers, (1989), McCleary et al., (1993) and Taninecz, (1990), have all verified this and their research results were completely in agreement with this factor.



Hypothesis H4: Advertising and promotion have a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when coming to Da Nang. (+)

Advertising and marketing are all activities of the business to inform, introduce, guide, encourage or persuade customers to be interested, buy or use products / services. In the study of Jonathan Barsky (2013), promotions with customer-specific programs influence the intention and decision to select hotels of tourists in the world today. Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014) have shown that this factor influences a customer's room selection.

Hypothesis H5: Security have a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when visiting Da Nang (+)

Security is a situation in which there is no danger or threat of danger, the implementation of measures to prevent espionage, vandalism and criminal matters. Each security problem has a weakness that leads to increased danger, and reduces safety Many authors (Clow, Garretson & Kurtz, 1994; Lewis, 1985; Marshall, 1993; Parasuraman et al., 1988) all assert that personal safety is one of the most important criteria when choosing a hotel.

Hypothesis H6: Service staff have a positive impact on the intention of choosing 3-4 star hotel of domestic tourists when coming to Danang

Service staff in the hotel accommodation business is important and the service staff is considered to be the accommodation service department for visitors, as well as the image and face of the hotel. They always directly affect the quality of accommodation. Knutson (1988), Parasuraman et al. (1988), and Chu and Choi (2000) all agree that service staff have a significant influence on tourists' intention to choose hotels and to revisit.

Selection decision according to Ajzen (2006), is a sign of a person's willingness to perform a certain behaviour, and it is considered a direct premise of the behaviour. Accordingly, for customers, the intention to choose indicates the trend of customers in the purchase or consumption behaviour of a product, service, or a brand (Tho & Trang, 2004). Intention Selection is a very important concept in consumer behaviour research. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), the intention to choose a product, service or a brand is a determinant of the consumption behaviour of that product, service or brand. Therefore, the measurement of "choice decision" has been proved to be a key factor, accurately predicting the actual consumption behaviour of customers (Ajzen, 1991).

Quantitative aspects

The number of votes issued was 500, collecting 450 votes (90% rate), eliminating 45 invalid votes. So the final sample size was 405 including 196 males and 209 females.

Table 1. Results of reliability analysis of variable groups by Cronbach Alpha coefficient

No	Group variables	Number of observation variables	Cronbach's Alpha	
1	Room quality	4	0.804	
2	Price	3	0.810	
3	Location	4	0.829	
4	Advertising	4	0.756	
5	Security	3	0.762	
6	Service staff	4	0.754	
7	Decision to choose	4	0.849	

Source: Author synthesis



Based on the analysis results of Cronbach Alpha coefficients, we see that the 6 components of the evaluation of factors affecting the selection and dependent variables all have reliability greater than 0.6, so it is reliable to use. This shows that the scale was built significantly in statistics and reached the necessary confidence coefficients. Should be further included in the EFA discovery factor analysis.

Table 2. KMO Coefficients and Bartlett's Test of Independent Factors

KMO coefficient	0.882	
	Approx. Chi-Square	2036.853
Bartlett's test	Df	353
	Sig.	0.000

Based on Table 2, the KMO value is 0.882> 0.5 and the Bart value of Bartlett's test is 0.000 <0.05, indicating that the variables are correlated with each other so the model is suitable for inclusion in discovery factor analysis.

The extraction method in factor analysis requires that Eigenvalue extract values be greater than 1 to be retained in the analytical model. The 6 extracted factors have an Eigenvalue value greater than 1 and the stopping point when extracting the elements at the fourth factor having the Eigenvalue is 1,010> 1. The total extracted variance of 6 factors is 70,789%> 50% of this. This suggests that the ability to use these 6 components explains 70.789% of the variability of the observed variables.

Factor analysis reveals EFA factor satisfaction

The result of factor analysis of EFA with KMO is 0.802> 0.5 and Bartlett's test has a significance of 0.000 <0.05, so it is possible to confirm appropriate data for factor analysis. (Table 3).

Table 3. KMO Coefficients and Bartlett's Test of Choice Factors

KMO coefficient	0.802	
	Approx. Chi-Square	537.686
Bartlett's test	Df	156
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Author synthesis

The analysis extracted from 4 variables evaluating the response into a major factor with Eigenvalue equal to 2,753 and the total variance extracted was 68,836%> 50%. (Table 4)

Table 4. Total variance of the factor of choice

	Eigenvalues			Squared load factor			
STT	Total	% variance	% cumulative error	Total	% variance	% cumulative error	
1	2.753	68.836	68.836	2.753	68.836	68.836	
2	.527	13.169	82.005				
3	.432	10.807	92.812				
4	.288	7.188	100.000				



Analysis of regression models

After extracting factors from exploratory factor analysis, we conduct regression analysis to determine the factors affecting first year student accommodation choice. Regression analysis will be performed with 6 independent factors: room quality, price, location, promotion, security and service staff. The value of each factor used to run the regression is the average of the observed variables of that factor. The multivariate linear regression equation of this study has the form:

$$SULC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CHLP + \beta_2 GICA + \beta_3 VITR + \beta_4 QCCT + \beta_5 ANTT + \beta_6 NVPV + U_i$$

Sample regression function:

$$SULC = \beta^{\hat{}}_{0} + \beta^{\hat{}}_{1}CHLP + \beta^{\hat{}}_{2}GICA + \beta^{\hat{}}_{3}VITR + \beta^{\hat{}}_{4}QCCT + \beta^{\hat{}}_{5}ANTT + \beta^{\hat{}}_{6}NVPV$$

Inside:

SULC: Hotel room choice CHLP: Room quality

GICA: Price

VITR: Hotel location QCCT: Advertising ANTT: Security NVPV: Service staff

The regression model would ascertain the independent factors that affect the dependent factors. At the same time, the model also describes how the impact will help us predict the value of the dependent factor.

A regression was carried out with new variables and results as shown in the following Table:

Table 5. Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.697ª	.669	.620	.36453	2.007	
a. Predictors: (C	a. Predictors: (Constant), CHLPs, GICAs, VITRs, QCCTs, ANTTs, NVPVs					
b. Dependent V						

Table 6. ANOVAb

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	38.508	5	6.374	41.044	.000a
1 Residual	51.491	306	.250		
Total	90.289	317			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Cl	QCCTs, ANTT	s, NVPVs			
b. Dependent Variable: SULCs					

Table 7. Coefficients^a

Table 7. Coefficients							
Madal	Unstandardi	zed Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	т	Sig.		
Model	В	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	.5983	.146		3.893	.000		
CHLPs	.068	.039	.132	3.051	.001		
GICAs	.215	.047	.187	3.279	.002		



	VITRs	.179	.038	.242	5.178	.001	
	QCCTs	.142	.041	.168	3.098	.000	
	ANTTs	.209	.051	.197	3.498	.000	
	NVPVs	.148	.056	.201	4.976	.000	
a. Dependent Variable: SULCs							

Source: Author synthesis

The determination coefficient is 0.620; Durbin-Watson statistics are 2,007 and F = 41,044 (Sig. = 0,000). Thus, the model exists and with d = 2,007~2,0, it is possible to conclude that the model does not exist positive or negative autocorrelation.

With this result, we compute bj = cj with j > 0 and b0 = c0 / (1-r), so the estimated model will be:

The non-standard regression will be:

SULC = 0.5983+ 0.068CHLP + 0.215GICA + 0.179VITR + 0.142QCCT + 0.209ANTT +0.148NVPV + e.

Normalized regression would be:

 $SULC^* = 0.132CHLP^* + 0.187GICA^* + 0.242VITRI^* + 0.168QCCT^* + 0.197ANTT + 0.201NVPV$

Based on the results of the ANOVA table, the value Sig = 0,000 < 0.05 should reject the H0 hypothesis, admit the H1 hypothesis. That is, the model exists, or in other words, with a 5% significance level, it can be concluded that hotel room choice is influenced by at least one of the 6 factors including room quality, price, location, advertisements, order security and service personnel.

Conclusion

The results of this study once again confirm that the factors that the author has inherited from the previous studies have more or less influenced the choice of hotel in the same way as the results of those of researchers such as Lewis & Chambers, 1989; McCleary et al., 1993; Taninecz, 1990 and also Chu & Choi, 2000.

Firstly, among the factors influencing the choice of 3-4 star hotels by domestic tourists in Da Nang, the position of the hotel is the most influential. This is easy to understand because the number of 3-4 star hotels in Da Nang is large and has the central area, sea, and natural features like Ba Na Hill. Therefore, tourists will prioritize the first position to Da Nang and choose it according to the purpose of their trip as well as their preferences. Hotels, if in an unfavourable position need to have links with transport and travel companies so as to improve any likely drawback occurring.

Second, the employee factors are important, and the results are similar to those in previous studies by Knutson (1988), Parasuraman et al. (1988), and Chu and Choi (2000). Most of the hotel service staff hold intermediate and primary qualifications, or are overtime students, due to the overheating of the tourism industry in Danang. In part, the staff has not kept up with the growth in the number of passengers and the number of newly built hotels. Hotels should have a relationship with the hotel and restaurant tourism training schools in the area to accept potential students, receive and train them from the 2nd or 3rd years to give them a



foundation so as to be able to receive them into work when they have enough skills and good attitudes when they graduate.

Third, order security is a factor that authors (Clow, Garretson & Kurtz, 1994; Lewis, 1985; Marshall, 1993; Parasuraman et al., 1988) have included workers in their research. This is the point that hotels need to pay attention to improve avoidance of stolen property of guests when they stay over, and also fire protection needs thorough attention, ensuring safety for travelers. Regular training is required for staff to be proficient in fire prevention and first aid skills.

Fourthly, price has a negligible influence on the choice of hotel because the market segment of 3-4 star hotels are those with high income in any case. They often do not pay much attention to the price when choosing hotel rooms, the hotels on this list have quite similar prices. But this research result still shows that it is similar to the results of previous studies of Jammaree Choosrichom (2011) and also Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014).

Fifth, advertising is a factor that authors Jonathan Barsky (2013), and also Hoang Thi Anh Thu (2014) have given as vital in their research results. The results of this research reaffirm this hypothesis to the context in Da Nang, due to the power of technological development (booking through websites, mobile applications, etc.). This shows that not only foreign tourists but also domestic tourists are also interested in marketing issues. Hotel management needs to be sensitive in linking with websites, booking applications such as Traveloka, booking.

Sixth, room quality is the lowest influence on hotel room selection. This is in contrast to previous studies (Lewis & Chambers, 1989; McCleary et al., 1993; Taninecz, 1990; Chu & Choi, 2000). Not because of that, the hotel is not interested in this factor, maybe in the scope of this study the quality of hotel room services is not much different (since most hotels are newly built). Hotel management must pay attention to the accompanying services such as buffet breakfast availability, cleaner and more modern toilets, etc. to satisfy the tourists needs and wants.

Thus, in addition to the above contributions, this study is still limited in research time and space, the number of hotels surveyed is low, the survey time is short, the survey subjects are domestic tourists only. These are some issues that can help future research develop further in this field.

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