

## Application of The Extended European Customer Satisfaction Index to Evaluate Tourist Loyalty

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### Abstract

The study applies the extended European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) model and emphasis the quality of the relationships and their relevance to domestic tourist loyalty. A survey questionnaire is designed consisting of measurement of domestic's tourist loyalty gathered mainly from previous related studies. Data are collected through a direct survey of 572 domestic tourists. The major findings revealed that the extension ECSI model with destination image and trust constructs has a comprehensive explanation of tourist loyalty. Future research should compare the differences between domestic and international tourists to better predict and understand tourist loyalty. The research examines the suitability of the ECSI model in tourism destinations that are so scarce. The current study addresses these shortcomings by examining tourist loyalty which inserts destination image, and trust constructs as potential predictors of tourist loyalty.

**Keywords:** Destination image; domestic tourist; loyalty; trust; ECSI model

### Introduction

The European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) model is a well-established tool for assessing tourist satisfaction and its antecedents and related constructs, and at present includes the constructs of tourist satisfaction, perceived value, perception of quality, tourist expectations, the image of the destination, tourist loyalty, and tourist complaints (Ball et al., 2004). Chenhui (2019) indicated that the ECSI model improves the ACSI model to some extent by inserting the latent variables. Recent developments in the extended ECSI model have heightened the need for a better explanation by the addition of trust (Askariyazad et al., 2015), and the image of the destination (Khan et al., 2020). Some researchers have made changes to the original model to adapt it to their specific studies. Understanding and predicting tourist loyalty to specific destinations are very important. However, far too little attention has been paid to the causal relationships among destination image, tourist trust, tourist satisfaction, and tourist loyalty based on the extent ECSI in the context of tourism destination have been insufficiently researched. Thus, Khan et al. (2020) confirmed that using ECSI model to comprehensively understand both tourist satisfaction and loyalty attitude is a critical issue for destination managers. To fill this gap, the current study proposes a new theoretical framework by inserting two additional constructs namely, tourist trust, and destination image into the original ECSI model, to better understand tourist loyalty. The current paper attempts to show how the extension of the ECSI model is better used to explain domestic tourist loyalty. The current paper also investigates the vital role of destination image, tourist trust, and tourist satisfaction as potential predictors of tourist loyalty to broaden the understanding of these causal relationships. The current study is using the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) approach to comprehensive predict and evaluate tourist loyalty (Ajami et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2012), and Dong Thap province for an empirical study to measure the

domestic tourist loyalty. Thus, a suitable method for this purpose, the study uses the extended ECSI model with additional constructs because this is one of the most precise methods, which can provide better estimation and evaluation of the complex causal relationships between the constructs of tourist loyalty and satisfaction (Ajami et al., 2018; Navarro et al., 2018; Strenitzerová & Gaňa, 2018). In particular, this study is also premised on the development of a basic research foundation for local authorities. The local authorities would better support building an attractive destination image, and trust as well as improving local tourism marketing efforts to attract more domestic tourists who will be surveyed regarding loyalty after visiting a specific destination for their holiday vacations.

## Conceptual framework

### *ECSI model*

ECSI (European Customer Satisfaction Index) is a customer satisfaction index in Europe where countries were first carried out in the United States and Sweden (Vithayaporn et al., 2019). The tourist expectations, perception of quality, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty constructs are similar to the ACSI model (Eklöf et al., 2002; Johnson et al., 2001). Grigoroudis et al. (2004) classified the ECSI model into 4 levels of satisfaction indices. Grigoroudis et al. (2004) found that the ACSI and ECSI models are similar to produce 4 levels of satisfaction indices consisting of National customer satisfaction indices; Economical sector indices; Specific industry indices; Scores for companies and organizations within the survey. They also noted that ACSI and ECSI models differ not only in antecedent but also in consequence variables as shown in Table 1. This view is supported by Prougestaporn (2018) who stated Consumer Satisfaction Index (CSI) model is structured by a series of latent variables and its credibility may be classified depending on the selection of variables and its relationship among variables.

Table 1. Comparison of Antecedent and Consequence Variables

<b>Latent Variables</b>	<b>ACSI</b>	<b>ECSI</b>
Perceived Performance Value	✓	✓
Customer Expectation	✓	✓
Perceived Quality	✓	
Perceived Product Quality		✓
Perceived Service Quality		✓
Image		✓
<b>Satisfaction</b>		
<b>Consequences</b>		
Complaints	✓	
Loyalty	✓	✓

Source: Prougestaporn (2018)

In the ECSI model, Bayol et al. (2000) showed that seven interrelated latent variables are introduced. It is based on well-established theories and approaches to tourist behaviour and it is to be applicable to some different industries. The ECSI model may be divided into a core model and optionals: (1) A core model which is often known as the traditional latent variables namely perception of quality, tourist expectations, perceived value, satisfaction, and tourist loyalty; (2) and the other is two optional latent variables that can be added by national committees: destination image and tourist complaints.

Prougestaporn (2018) lists three fundamental differences between ACSI and ECSI models. Firstly, ECSI separated perception of quality into the perception of product quality and perception of service quality. Secondly, ECSI incorporated destination image as a latent variable in keeping with the Norwegian Customer Satisfaction Barometer (NCSB). Prougestaporn (2018) also found distinct differences between ECSI and NCSB models in

which destination image has a positive and significant impact on tourist expectation, tourist satisfaction, and tourist loyalty. Lastly, ECSI eliminated the complaint construct as a consequence of tourist satisfaction. Johnson et al. (2001) published research which also described three more fundamental differences between the ACSI and ECSI models. ECSI model was first demonstrated by Johnson et al. (2001) did not include the incidence of complaint behavior as a consequence of tourist satisfaction. The ECSI model incorporates image constructs that will refer to a latent variable in the model. Also, measures of tourist loyalty are somewhat different, the ECSI loyalty measures include the intention of retention, the intention to suggest the company or brand, and whether the amount tourist is likely to revisit will increase.

A recent study by Vanesa et al. (2016) involved the ECSI model which was used as a reference to measure the determinants of tourist satisfaction, and the antecedents of satisfaction have a positive and significant impact on the loyalty to the tourism destination. Wan et al. (2018) claimed that the ECSI model has recently developed as a useful framework till today. Ryglová and Vajūnerová (2005) revealed that the ECSI model is not only the possibility to quantify the level of tourist satisfaction but also the fact that calculated indexes can be further statistically interpreted according to time, to recognize some new trends in tourist satisfaction development. Strenitzerová and Gaňa (2018) claimed that the ECSI model provided an insightful explanation of tourist loyalty and an in-depth understanding of the potentially complex relationships of the determinants of not only tourist loyalty but also tourist satisfaction. Keskar et al. (2020) concluded that ECSI covered all industries; also, plenty of research and literature on satisfaction and loyalty in the services industry, however, few researchers have been able to test the tourist satisfaction index for specific destination tourism based on ECSI model (Khan et al., 2020). This study has fulfilled its objective of finding out that the research to date has tended to focus on ECSI based on an exhaustive literature review and is widely used to measure tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Khan et al., 2020) in the destination context.

### *The extended ECSI model*

Askariazad et al. (2015) identified that the loyalty constructs in the extent ECSI model will be better explained by inserting additional variables of trust. Ball et al. (2004) claimed that loyalty can be somewhat well explained by the constructs in the ECSI model, and even comprehensive explained by the addition, of trust in the revised model. In addition to enhancing the precision of the image concept in the context of destination tourism, throughout this paper the term “image” will be used to refer to “destination image” followed by “customer loyalty” as “tourist loyalty” (Khan et al., 2020). Wang et al. (2009) indicated that the image of the destination could be associated with tourist expectation and perceived value which have positive and significant impacted tourist satisfaction and led to increasing tourist loyalty (Bayol et al., 2000; Pilelienė et al., 2016).

The extension ECSI model is proposed with the aim of an insight explanation and predicting tourist loyalty in the tourism destination context. Thus, the aim of this study improves the extended of ECSI model and emphasise the quality of the relationship and its relevance to domestic tourist loyalty. Furthermore, this research has presented an extended ECSI model with destination image and trust constructs for obtaining domestic tourist loyalty in the tourism destination context with better results. Zheng et al. (2022) identified tourist loyalty is often driven by tourist satisfaction and tourist trust raised by destination image construct. The current study, therefore, proposed the extending of ECSI by inserting a new variable consisting of trust to better understand tourist loyalty by examining the theoretical and empirical evidence on the causal relationships among the image of the destination, tourist

expectation, perceived quality, perceived value, tourist satisfaction for the case of Dong Thap province, Vietnam.

**Destination image**

Destination image may be defined as the visitor’s subjective perception of the destination reality (Chen et al., 2007). The term destination image is generally understood to mean an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, emotions, feelings, visualizations, and intentions toward a destination (Tasci, 2007: 200). Destination image may be broadly defined as a tourist’s general impression of a destination, that is, it is the “sum of beliefs, ideals, and impressions” that a visitor has toward a specific destination (Saqib, 2019). While a variety of definitions of the term “destination image” have been suggested, this paper will use the definition suggested by Bigné et al. (2009: 716) who saw it as the overall perception of a destination, it has been demonstrated that the representation in the tourist’s mind of what they know and feel about it.

Beerli and Martín (2004); Februadi (2014); Wang et al. (2012) tend to consider images being formed by the reasoned and the emotional interpretation of the consumer. It was considered that the consequence of two closely interrelated components: (1) the term perceptive/ cognitive evaluations is used to refer to the individual’s knowledge and beliefs about the object and (2) affective appraisals mean to the individual’s feelings towards the object. White (2004: 310) uses the term "cognitive component" to refer to the beliefs and knowledge one holds regarding an object or person, the affective component can be loosely described as one feeling towards an object. It has conclusively been shown that cognitive and affective dimensions increase destination image; further, each country may have its distinctive set of cognitive images towards a specific market (Huang et al., 2018)

**Proposed model and hypotheses**

The theoretical underpinning of these constructs and hypotheses is analyzed in the following sections and is presented in Figure 1.

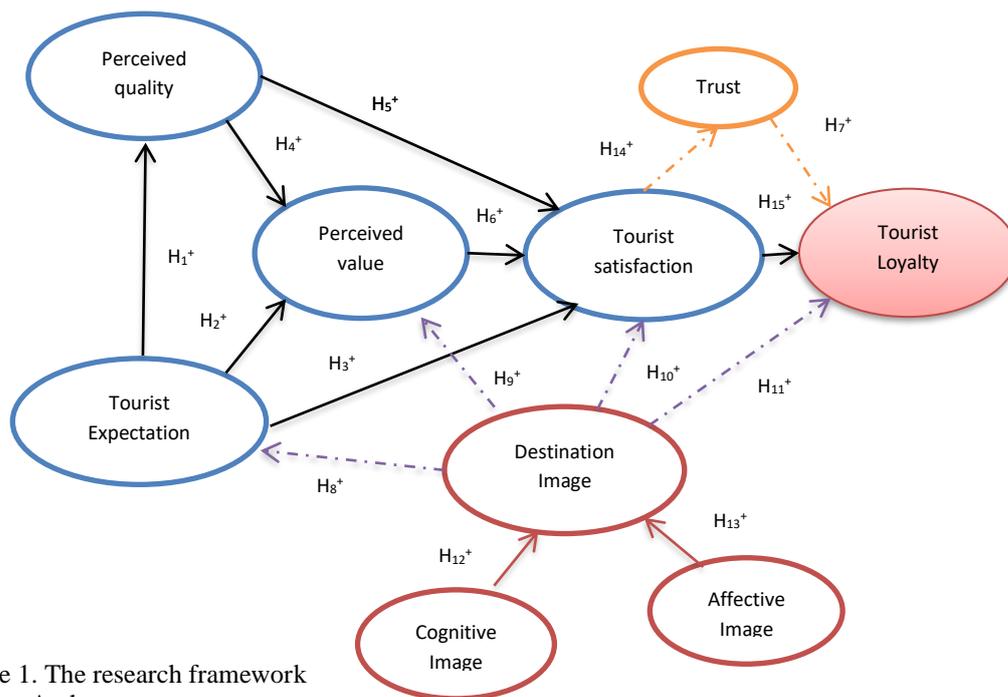


Figure 1. The research framework  
 Source: Author

Prougestaporn (2018) and Wang et al. (2009) argued that tourist satisfaction is the center of a chain between the cause and result relationships as well as argued that these relationships are running from the antecedent constructs of tourist satisfaction, tourist expectations, destination image, perceived quality, and perceived value to the consequences of tourist satisfaction, and tourist loyalty based on the ECSI model. The current study verifies and revises the ECSI model by adding new variables namely trust, and destination image. The extension of the ECSI model consists of defining relationships between the latent variables - destination image consists of a cognitive image and affective image, tourist expectations, perceived quality, perceived value, and trust, tourist satisfaction - with tourist loyalty. It has been demonstrated that tourist satisfaction is occupying a central place in the basic structure of the model, being preceded by destination image, tourist expectations, perceived quality, perceived value and trust, and followed by tourist loyalty. In conclusion, the original ECSI model consists of a destination image, and trust; aiming to better explain tourist loyalty in the context of tourism destinations.

### ***Tourist expectations***

Tourist expectations are the perception of the performance of a product or service as anticipated by the tourists (Wang et al., 2009). Tourist expectations are also related to actions anticipated by tourists regarding a product, service, or destination in particular performances at a certain destination (Maruthaiah et al., 2014). The expectation of the tourists can be formed based on the destination image formed the central focus of a study by Sadeh et al. (2012) which found that the expectation of the tourists which have from the destination before travelling (Sadeh et al., 2012). The relationship between tourist expectations for a destination and perceived value has been widely investigated (Prougestaporn, 2018). Sadeh et al. (2012) pointed out that tourist expectation directly influences the feelings of tourists about the services. Askariazad et al. (2015) argued that tourist expectation positively and significantly impacts the perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and perceived quality. A positive correlation was found between tourist expectations for a destination and perceived quality (Prougestaporn, 2018). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for the current study:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Tourist Expectation has a significant and positive impact on perceived quality
- H<sub>2</sub>: Tourist Expectation has a significant and positive impact on perceived value
- H<sub>3</sub>: Tourist Expectation has a significant and positive impact on tourist satisfaction

### ***Perceived quality***

Chen & Tsai (2007: 1116) defined the term “perceived quality” will be used to the “visitor’s evaluation of the standard of the service delivery process in association with the trip experience”. A relationship exists between perceived quality and tourist expectations, which are influenced by the image of the destination (Pilelienė et al., 2016). Prougestaporn (2018) indicated that perceived quality is associated with perceived value which also has a significant and positive impact on tourist satisfaction. The correlation between perceived quality and perceived value was a positive significant respectively (Pilelienė et al., 2016). Wang et al. (2009) concluded that the perceived quality of a destination plays an important role in tourist satisfaction and perceived value. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for the current study:

- H<sub>4</sub>: Perceived quality has a significant and positive impact on perceived value
- H<sub>5</sub>: Perceived quality has a significant and positive impact on tourist satisfaction

### ***Perceived value***

The term “perceived value” has come to be used to refer to the “value-for-money” aspect can be loosely described as the customer experiences. It is here seen to be affected by the perception of quality as well as by tourist expectations (Bayol et al., 2000). While a variety of definitions of the term perceived value have been suggested, this paper will use the definition suggested by Chen and Tsai (2007: 1116) who saw it as the tourist’s overall appraisal of the net worth of the trip, based on the tourist evaluations of what is received (benefits), and what is given (costs or sacrifice). Perceived value can give a rise to tourist satisfaction (Pilelienė et al., 2016). Tourist satisfaction occurs when tourists receive more value than they spend; thus, perceived value is what is intended to measure tourist satisfaction (Wang et al., 2009). Askariyazad et al. (2015) claimed that perceived value and perceived quality lead to increasing tourist satisfaction, and tourist loyalty. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed in the current study:

H<sub>6</sub>: Perceived value will affect tourist satisfaction and leads to increasing tourist loyalty

### ***Trust***

Throughout this paper the term “trust” will refer to a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence (see Moorma et al., 1993: 82). Trust is known to be an important part of influencing relationships between tourist commitments and tourist loyalty (Mulyana et al., 2019: 50). Therefore, trust will be used to refer to a new variable that assumedly impacts on tourist loyalty. In the revised ECSI model it is assumed that an increase in tourist trust will have a significant and positive impact on tourist loyalty (Ball et al., 2004: 1276). Askariyazad et al. (2015); Revilla-Camacho et al. (2018) found that trust is a critical variable for increasing tourist loyalty. Ball et al. (2004) claimed that trust will have a significant and positive impact on tourist loyalty. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for this study:

H<sub>7</sub>: Trust will affect tourist loyalty

### ***Destination image***

Askariyazad et al. (2015); Prougestaporn (2018) identified that the image of the destination may affect tourist expectation, perceived value, tourist satisfaction as well as tourist loyalty. Tourists may be loyal to the destination because of a positive image of the destination among other tourists (Ball et al., 2004). Prougestaporn (2018) supported that the image of the destination significantly influences tourist expectation and perceived value. Ajami et al. (2018) realized that the image of the destination has a significant and positive relation with tourist satisfaction, focusing directly on tourist loyalty. Throughout this paper the term destination image will refer to the tourists feeling special and impressed, tourists will find the values of the destination and therefore tend to enhance loyalty towards the specific destination (Prougestaporn, 2018).

Wang et al. (2009) concluded that destination image has a significant and positive impact on tourist behavior such as destination choice, perceived value, and satisfaction; and the relationship between destination image and tourist loyalty has been widely investigated (Ajami et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2001). In addition, it has conclusively been shown that cognitive and affective image increase destination image (Huang et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2007). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for the current study:

H<sub>8</sub>: Destination Image will affect tourist expectation

H<sub>9</sub>: Destination Image will affect perceived value

H<sub>10</sub>: Destination Image will affect tourist satisfaction

- $H_{11}$ : Destination Image will affect tourist loyalty
- $H_{12}$ : Cognitive Image will affect destination Image
- $H_{13}$ : Affective Image will affect destination Image

### ***Tourist satisfaction, trust, and tourist loyalty***

Chen et al. (2007) pointed out that tourist satisfaction is the extent of overall pleasure, happiness or contentment felt by the tourist and therefore resulting from the ability of the trip experience to fulfil the tourist's desires, expectations, and needs about the trip. Khan et al. (2020) realized that tourist satisfaction increases tourist loyalty. Tourist satisfaction positively and directly impacts tourist loyalty (Pilelienè et al., 2016). Askariazad et al. (2015) found that satisfaction has a significant and positive impact on tourist loyalty. Wang et al. (2009) identified that tourist satisfaction is one of the reliable and valid predictors of tourist loyalty. Loyalty is the final variable representing the efficiency of a model (Ajami et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2020). Askariazad et al. (2015) claimed that trust is affected by satisfaction and tourist trust will have a positive direct increase in tourist loyalty. Revilla-Camacho et al. (2017) also supported that satisfaction is associated with tourist behavior patterns and tourist loyalty. In addition, Zheng et al. (2022) claimed that tourist satisfaction and trust have a positive and significant impact on tourist loyalty. Finally, Ball et al. (2004) confirmed that tourist loyalty is associated with tourist satisfaction, perceived quality, destination image, and trust. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed for the current study:

- $H_{14}$ : Tourist satisfaction will affect trust
- $H_{15}$ : Tourist satisfaction will affect tourist loyalty

### **Research methods**

This study consists of two phases. The first phase was qualitative research in which the author interviewed 8 managers working at travel agent companies to adjust the scales, followed by a focus group discussion with 10 domestic tourists to improve the scales and design a final survey questionnaire. Table 1 shows the complete questionnaire officially used in this study consisting of items with 98 percent of agreement of corresponds. In the second phase, the proposed research model is tested by using the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) approach because the study is prediction-oriented research that aims to predict tourist loyalty in a tourism destination context.

Data were gathered from multiple sources at various time points from March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 to the end of May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. The targeted respondents for this study are main domestic tourists this is because the total number of domestic tourists visiting and travelling to Dong Thap was 37,728 tourist arrivals, an increase of 94.62% over the same period in 2020 (Culture, Sports and Tourism Department of Dong Thap, 2021). The data were collected through a survey in collaboration with 6 famous tour operators in Ho Chi Minh City specializing in organizing tours to Dong Thap province which is often known as the land of the lotus. The tour guides will send directly the questionnaire survey to tourists after explaining the purpose of the study and then collect these respondents after the trip.

According to Hair et al. (1995), to have a reliable representation of the population, the sample size must be at least  $p \times 5$ , where  $p$  is the number of independent variables. As there are 37 observed variables used in this study, the sample size must be at least 185 domestic tourists. However, to ensure high reliability, the sample was made up of 650 domestic tourists. Thus, the initial sample consisted of 650 domestic tourists of whom 78 did not complete all of the interviews. The final sample consisted of 572 usable questionnaires for data analysis.



### Scales of the study

The variables and the items adapted from previous studies are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Scales of the study

Code	Constructs and Adjusted Items	Authors	Decision
<b>Destination image</b>			
DI1	Dong Thap's environment is attractive	Akroush et al. (2016); Aunalal et al. (2017)	Support
DI2	The residents in Dong Thap are friendly	Akroush et al. (2016); Aunalal et al. (2017)	Support
DI3	The residents in Dong Thap are good and welcoming to tourist	Akroush et al. (2016); Aunalal et al. (2017)	Support
DI4	It is easy to access historical and touristic places in Dong Thap	Akroush et al. (2016); Aunalal et al. (2017)	Support
<b>Cognitive image</b>			
COG1	Dong Thap has unique cultural attractions	Februadi (2014)	Support
COG2	Dong Thap offers a lot in terms of natural scenic beauty	Lin et al. (2007)	Support
COG3	Dong Thap is a province with a good reputation as the "Land of the Lotus"	Februadi (2014)	Support
COG4	Dong Thap is a peaceful province	Februadi (2014)	Support
<b>Affective image</b>			
AFF1	Dong Thap is peace loving province	Februadi (2014); Wang et al. (2012)	Support
AFF2	Dong Thap is friendly toward us	Februadi (2014); Wang et al. (2012)	Support
AFF3	Dong Thap is cooperative with us	Februadi (2014); Wang et al. (2012)	Support
AFF4	Dong Thap is a likable province	Februadi (2014); Wang et al. (2012)	Support
<b>Tourist expectation</b>			
TE1	I had an expectation of the overall quality of expected system	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
TE2	I expected the experience of visiting to successfully meet my demand.	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
TE3	I expected reliability	Askariazad et al. (2015); Wang et al. (2009)	Support
TE4	I expected customization	Fornell et al. (1996)	Support
<b>Perceived quality</b>			
PQ1	I perceived that the quality of attractions in Dong Thap is good	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
PQ2	I perceived the quality of accommodation in Dong Thap to be good	Aliman et al. (2016); Wang et al. (2009)	Support
PQ3	I perceived the quality of the Dong Thap environment is good	Aliman et al. (2016); Wang et al. (2009)	Support
PQ4	I perceived the quality of food in Dong Thap is good	Aliman et al. (2016); Wang et al. (2009)	Support
PQ5	I perceive the quality of transportation in Dong Thap is good	Aliman et al. (2016); Wang et al. (2009)	Support
<b>Perceived value</b>			
PV1	Traveling to Dong Thap is worth the money spent	Aliman et al. (2016); Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
PV2	Traveling to Dong Thap is worth the time	Aliman et al. (2016); Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
PV3	Traveling to Dong Thap is worth the effort	Aliman et al. (2016); Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
PV4	Overall, visiting attractions in Dong Thap has been very valuable to me	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
<b>Tourist satisfaction</b>			
TS1	I enjoyed the visit to Dong Thap	Aliman et al. (2016)	Support
TS2	I am satisfied with my decision to visit Dong Thap	Aliman et al. (2016)	Support
TS3	This visit was better than expected	Aliman et al. (2016)	Support
TS4	My choice to purchase this trip was a wise one.	Aliman et al. (2016)	Support
<b>Trust</b>			
TR1	The service received from the trip to Dong Thap makes me feel safe	Revilla-Camacho et al. (2017)	Support
TR2	The services on this trip are a guarantee quality	Revilla-Camacho et al. (2017)	Support
TR3	Treating honestly in every transaction	Askariazad et al. (2015); Ball et al. (2004)	Support
TR4	Overall, I have complete trust in this trip to Dong Thap	Ball et al. (2004)	Support
<b>Tourist loyalty</b>			
TL1	I will recommend Dong Thap to anyone who asks my advice	Revilla-Camacho et al. (2017)	Support
TL2	Visiting attractions in Dong Thap will be my first choice in the future.	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
TL3	If I have a chance, I will revisit Dong Thap	Prougestaporn (2018)	Support
TL4	I will visit Dong Thap in the future	Wang et al. (2009)	Support

Source: Author (2021)

A survey was designed to collect data for this research. The survey comprises two sections: The first section includes general demographic information such as gender, age, and education level. The second section includes the main variables measured by 37 questions/items based

on a five-point Likert scale (from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree). All of the questions were tested to ensure the reliability and validity of the constructs.

### *Descriptive analysis*

There are three questions asked about the tourist’s demographic information, including gender, age, and educational background. Demographic data obtained from the survey are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics

	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	314	54.9
	Female	258	45.1
<b>Age</b>	< 25 years old	78	13.6
	26 - 35 years old	291	50.9
	36- 45 years old	122	21.3
	46 - 55 years old	36	6.3
	> 55 years old	45	7.9
<b>Educational Background</b>	High School	45	7.9
	Intermediate Professional	108	18.9
	College	138	24.1
	Bachelor	214	37.4
	Other	67	11.7

Source: Author (2021)

As regards the composition of the sample, 54.9% of those surveyed were men, and 45.1% were women. The majority of the tourists were more than 26 years of age. Approximately 32.3% are those with a bachelor’s degree - the highest among other education levels in the sample. From these profiles, the study concluded that domestic tourists who enjoyed visiting Dong Thap will be the loyal tourists; are grouped in the middle ages with a bachelor’s degree

### **Analysis of results**

Internal consistency is explained by composed reliability and Cronbach’s alpha. The results of the PLS measurement model indicate that Composite reliability (CR), Cronbach’s Alpha values are higher than 0.700; and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be greater than 0.500 respectively to establish indicator reliability and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019). The value of the reliability statistics using Cronbach's alpha was above 0.814; all the calculated values of the composite reliability (more than 0.878) are acceptable respectively (Henseler et al., 2016) with composed reliability close to 0.900. The average variance extracted AVE values were above the minimum required level of 0.643, with this case establishing over 50% of the construct variance defined by its indicators. The information provided in table 4 stands for the statistical values of the composite reliability more significant than the cut-off point that complies with the necessary conditions to get accepted.

The following table details the AVE square root values of the latent variables in its matrix diagonal. Below the diagonal, the existing correlations between the latent variables are shown to obtain the discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. According to Henseler et al. (2016), two criteria are informative about discriminant validity: the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotriat. Discriminant validity is exhibited only if all the correlations are statistically significant and each of these correlations is larger than all correlations. The results show that as per Fornell-Larcker’s criterion both basic and stringent assumptions are satisfied and discriminant validity has been established. It is worthwhile to note that the diagonal values (in bold) of the Fornell-Larcker’s table (Table 4) signify the

AVE's and each measured construct must have the value of AVE greater than 0.500 (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 4. Internal consistency evaluation, average variance extracted, AVE, and discriminant validity

	a	CR	AVE	AFF	COG	Dimage	Expect	Pquality	Pvalue	Satis	Tloyalty	Trust
AFF	0.881	0.918	<b>0.737</b>	<b>0.858</b>								
COG	0.853	0.901	<b>0.694</b>	0.202	<b>0.833</b>							
Dimage	0.858	0.904	<b>0.701</b>	0.413	0.437	<b>0.837</b>						
Expect	0.870	0.911	<b>0.720</b>	0.304	0.496	0.612	<b>0.848</b>					
Pquality	0.890	0.919	<b>0.694</b>	0.178	0.411	0.470	0.642	<b>0.833</b>				
Pvalue	0.909	0.936	<b>0.785</b>	0.325	0.359	0.478	0.649	0.508	<b>0.886</b>			
Satis	0.814	0.878	<b>0.643</b>	0.177	0.446	0.508	0.662	0.550	0.652	<b>0.802</b>		
Tloyalty	0.852	0.900	<b>0.693</b>	0.175	0.429	0.537	0.680	0.466	0.541	0.710	<b>0.832</b>	
Trust	0.843	0.895	<b>0.682</b>	0.198	0.443	0.468	0.685	0.478	0.615	0.799	0.778	<b>0.826</b>

Source: Author (2021)

As for discriminant validity, Table 4 also shows the result of Heterotrait-Monotriat analysis for accessing the discriminant validity of the model. The analysis confirms that each latent variable was discriminated from each other's since the Heterotrait-Monotriat ratio values were less than 0.900 will be acceptable (Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, the indicators that were used to measure the targeted construct were used for the respective construct. In this context, both the model's predictive power and the relationships between these constructs were examined (Figure 2).

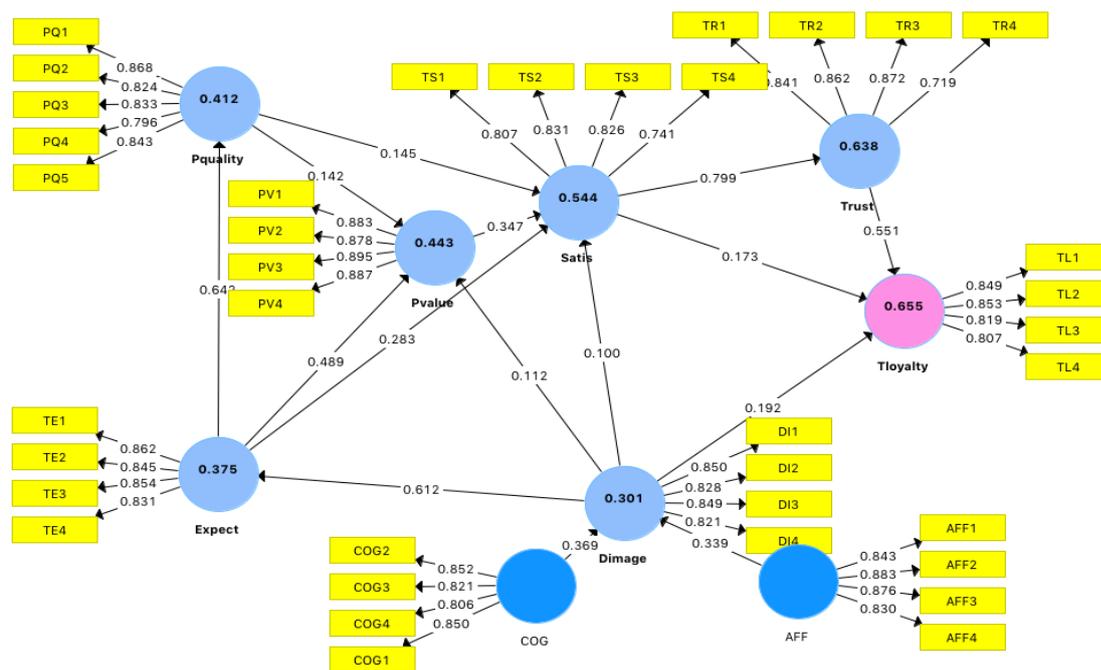


Figure 2. Results of the proposed model  
 Source: Author

Figure 2 indicates that the  $R^2$  value for the estimated equation is 0.655, which is significant at a 1 percent level of probability. The  $R^2$  adjusted shows that 0.653 (65.3) percent of the variation in tourist loyalty is described by the original ECSI, trust, and destination image. This means the extent ECSI with destination image, trust explains 65.3 percent of tourist loyalty which is relatively strong. Also, 77.9 percent of trust is explained by tourist satisfaction. This finding is in harmony with Askariyazad et al. (2015) stating these additional constructs appears to have



the most predictive value on tourist satisfaction and loyalty construct which further contribute to tourist loyalty in the tourism destination context. More importantly, tourist loyalty literature was enriched by indicating the linkage between the relationship of the original ECSI model with the additional constructs which indicated that tourists are satisfied with services provided at the destination and trust the specific destination.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis		B	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H <sub>13</sub> <sup>+</sup>	AFF-> Dimage	0.339	0.042	8.158	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>12</sub> <sup>+</sup>	COG-> Dimage	0.369	0.045	8.201	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>8</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Dimage-> Expect	0.612	0.037	16.388	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>9</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Dimage-> Pvalue	0.467	0.049	9.562	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>10</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Dimage-> Satis	0.492	0.046	10.626	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>11</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Dimage-> Tloyalty	0.494	0.048	10.196	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>1</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Expect-> Pquality	0.642	0.037	17.431	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>2</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Expect-> Pvalue	0.580	0.048	12.071	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>3</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Expect-> Satis	0.577	0.049	11.875	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>4</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Pquality-> Pvalue	0.142	0.050	2.855	<b>0.004</b>	Support
H <sub>5</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Pquality-> Satis	0.195	0.060	3.256	<b>0.001</b>	Support
H <sub>6</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Pvalue-> Satis	0.347	0.050	6.971	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>15</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Satis-> Tloyalty	0.612	0.042	14.417	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>14</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Satis-> Trust	0.799	0.035	22.826	<b>0.000</b>	Support
H <sub>7</sub> <sup>+</sup>	Trust-> Tloyalty	0.551	0.069	8.028	<b>0.000</b>	Support

Source: Author (2021)

The shreds of evidence revealed in table 5 signify the detailed results of bootstrapping for the testing of the hypothesis. In testing the hypothesis, the analytical bootstrapping technique describes the level of significance of the path between the variables, 5000 re-sampling bootstrapping procedures utilized while calculating SmartPLS (Hair et al., 2017: 162). The results indicated that the extent ECSI model with additional constructs consisting of the image of the destination, and trust has a positive and significant influence on tourist loyalty at the p = 0.05 level. The results revealed that all proposed hypotheses were supported respectively. The impact generated by tourist satisfaction over trust is highlighted as the most important relationship in this model with a 0.799 value, followed by the relationship between expectation and perceived quality with a 0.642 value, as well as the relationships between satisfaction and tourist loyalty, destination image and tourist expectations with this coefficient respectively, 0.612. Regarding trust, there was a significant and positive influence on the satisfaction construct with p-value = 0.001 and  $\beta = 0.799$ ; thus, the greater the satisfaction, the greater the trust. For the loyalty construct, there was a significant and positive influence of the trust construct on tourist loyalty, with p-value = 0.001 and  $\beta = 0.551$  as well as tourist satisfaction on tourist loyalty with p-value = 0.001 and  $\beta = 0.612$ , so the higher the trust, satisfaction, the higher the tourist loyalty. Finally, there was also a significant and positive influence of destination image on tourist loyalty, with p-value = 0.001 and  $\beta = 0.494$ , so the higher the destination image, the higher satisfaction, and loyalty.

Multicollinearity is calculated by variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance. If the values of VIF exceed 4.0 or less than 0.2 reflects the problems with multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2014, 197). The Collinearity Statistics (inner VIF values) of all constructs in the model must be under 4.0, representing that the multicollinearity problem between them does not exist (Table 6). On the other hand, the VIF values of this study ranged from 1.042 (affective and cognitive image) to 2.948 (tourist loyalty) which are under the reference value of 4.0 (Hair et al., 2014). This result indicates that the new proposed model has a positive effect and thus there has no multicollinearity occurs among these variables or constructs.

Table 6. The Collinearity Statistics

	<b>Dimage</b>	<b>Pvalue</b>	<b>Satis</b>	<b>Tloyalty</b>
<b>AFF</b>	1.042			
<b>COG</b>	1.042			
<b>Dimage</b>		1.627	1.650	1.367
<b>Expect</b>		2.153	2.581	
<b>Pquality</b>		1.728	1.764	
<b>Pvalue</b>			1.795	
<b>Satis</b>				2.948
<b>Trust</b>				2.801

Source: Author (2021)

New model discussion: According to the values obtained after the evaluation of the extended ECSI model in relation to new additional constructs consisting of destination image and trust, it shows that all hypothesis linked in the proposed model has been accepted respectively. These correspond to the cause-effect relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction, and tourist expectation, perceived value, and tourist loyalty as occurred in the original model. Likewise, these hypotheses linking have already been accepted. Hypothesis 8 (H<sub>8</sub>) which relates the destination image variable to tourist expectation has a 0.612 correlation coefficient that is positive and significant. Hypothesis 9 (H<sub>9</sub>) related destination image variable to perceived quality; Hypothesis 10 (H<sub>10</sub>) which related destination image variable to tourist satisfaction; (H<sub>10</sub>) which related destination image variable to tourist loyalty; Hypothesis 7 (H<sub>7</sub>) which related trust variable to tourist loyalty with this coefficient respectively, 0.393, 0.467, 0.492, 0.494 and 0.551. Chin (1998) indicated that standardized path coefficients should, at least, reach a 0.2 value, and ideally over 0.3 to establish themselves as significant. Therefore, the above relationships between the new additional variables consisting of destination image, and trust construct with the original ECSI model explained the new model perfectly. As a result of the current research, an extent ECSI model with destination image, and trust construct has been developed and adapted for a tourism destination, specifically for domestic tourists. In general, most tourists have positively satisfaction with this province which better predicts tourist loyalty towards the products/ services of the province. The empirical results of the current study indicate that domestic tourist loyalty is directly positive and meaningfully influenced by the extent ECSI model. The new major findings of this study are as follows. *First*, the evidence from this study suggests the positive and significant relationship between destination image, trust, and the original ECSI model. *Second*, the new finding supports the argument that the extension of the ECSI model is a better explanation of tourist loyalty in the context of destination tourism. The present findings seem to be consistent with other research by Khan et al. (2020); Zheng et al. (2022) who found a significant impact on the destination image, the trust in satisfaction, and satisfaction in turn as the antecedent of tourist loyalty.

### Managerial implications and conclusions

The current findings add to a growing body of literature on extending the original ECSI model with the inclusion of destination image and trust construct. The first major findings of the study revealed that, among all the constructs used in this study, trust had a strong effect on tourist loyalty. Research by Askariyazad et al. (2015) found that loyalty in the extended ECSI model will be better explained by the addition of the trust construct. Thus, it can be concluded that without this additional construct, tourist loyalty is primarily explained by satisfaction with a path coefficient is 0.612. However, by adding trust, tourist loyalty can be explained primarily by satisfaction and trust. Also, the direct significant effect of trust on loyalty identifies the viral role of this construct in the ECSI model. Tourist who has trust in tourist destination intends to revisit the destination. Therefore, destination managers should realize that trust is fundamental

to tourist and local destination relationships. The results of the current study will help local marketers better predict tourist satisfaction to communicate more effectively with targeted tourists as well as potential tourists.

The second major finding was an imperative understanding of tourist loyalty by extending the existing ECSI framework by adding a destination image construct. The results of this investigation show that all proposed hypotheses in this regard were accepted respectively, and were found to have a positive significant effect on tourist loyalty. Furthermore, the results of this investigation show that around 37.4 % of tourists are between the age group of 26-35 years old with a bachelor's degree which to better understand tourist satisfaction of this tourist group. These tourists will recommend Dong Thap to anyone who asks for their advice as well as they will revisit Dong Thap. Thus, the results of this research strongly support the idea that using the extent ECSI model to understand tourist satisfaction, tourist loyalty is a critical issue for local destination authorities.

The present study confirms previous findings and contributes both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study attempts to propose the extended ECSI with additional variables consisting of destination image, and trust constructs for local government. The managerial and empirical implications indicate that the study provides the conceptual framework for local government to better understand tourist loyalty, and can focus on building strategies portraying a good destination image with the “land of the lotus” of this province as effective marketing strategies. Taken together, these findings suggest a role for the local destination government and hospitality companies in promoting the truth tourism information of the destination, providing a high level of service quality as well as enhancing tourist loyalty. Therefore, the study confirms previous findings and contributes additional evidence that suggests the proposed model which integrates two additional variables such as destination image, trust into the ECSI model to better understand tourist satisfaction and lead to increase tourist loyalty

Several important limitations of this study need to be considered. First, this study is a survey of a random selection of domestic tourists who travel to Dong Thap. Future research may try to use other different survey techniques to understand tourist loyalty. Second, getting data through tour guides also has its limitations. Although, this way of data collection is convenient. Third, A future study investigating the differences between domestic and inbound tourists would be very interesting. Fourth, the findings of the current research were limited to the evaluation of domestic tourist loyalty and primary data was collected in Dong Thap province, thereby, the results may not be generalized in Viet Nam. Further research should investigate other cities or countries in Europe or Africa to identify a more robust new conceptual model of tourist loyalty in the tourism destination context. Finally, future research should therefore concentrate on the investigation of the new factors that impact tourist loyalty to provide a better understanding of tourist loyalty.

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