

# Impacts of Company Support and Co-Creation Performance on Tourists' Satisfaction and Loyalty: An Experiment in The Mekong Delta

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on determining the impacts of company support and co-creation performance on tourists' satisfaction and how their satisfaction influences customer loyalty in the Mekong Delta. Based on a survey sample of 271 customers, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation model (SEM) are used for analysis. The results of the study indicated that the assurance most impacted on customers' satisfaction, followed by the responsiveness, empathy, reliability and physical facility. In addition, the customers' satisfaction is also a significant factor influencing customers' loyalty.

**Keywords:** Satisfaction, Loyalty, Tourists, Tourism.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism in the Mekong Delta is proving its role as a leading economic sector. Many tourism experts have found that the tourism industry in localities of the region has changed and the number of tourists is increasing. According to statistics from localities in the Mekong River Delta, in 2018, the Mekong Delta received 40.7 million tourists coming to tourist destinations and using tourism services with specific products such as water-based ecotourism, spiritual tourism, island and island tourism, historical and cultural heritage research tourism, community-based agro-tourism, and MICE tourism. According to the Tourism Development Master Plan for the Mekong Delta, by 2020, the region will receive about 34 million tourists, including 3.5 million international tourists, and gain VND 25,000 billion in revenue. To achieve this goal, localities in the region have to find a way to prolong tourists' length of stay, and increase the return rate of tourists, which in turn, enhances economic development (Sangpikul, 2017; and Choomgrant and Sukharomana, 2017).

However, effective tourism development requires the participation and coordination of various stakeholders such as managers, travel businesses, hotels, entertainment service providers, and tourist destinations, etc. Among these stakeholders, businesses that provide accommodation service make an important contribution, acting as a bridge between tourist destinations and tourists. Their performance with provision of information about tourist destinations has a great impact on tourists' choice of destination and

contributes to form a tourism product package together with other stakeholders such as restaurants, tourist attractions and entertainment service providers to meet the needs of tourists.

In recent years, the number of 3-star and higher quality hotels in the Mekong Delta has been increasing. Major brands such as Vinpearl, Bambusa Resort, Cottage Village, Novotel, Azerai Resort, etc. have arrived to the Mekong Delta one after another, enhancing the quality of service for tourists.

Therefore, businesses' awareness and actions are important to tourism development in the Mekong Delta. The current study of *Impacts of Company Support and Co-creation Performance on Tourists' Satisfaction and Loyalty: Experiment in the Mekong Delta* provided empirical evidence on this issue. The study aimed to measure the impacts of the support of the accommodation companies and co-creation on the tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. Based on the study's findings, necessary solutions for increasing tourists' satisfaction and loyalty will be offered to accommodation businesses in the Mekong Delta.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Conceptual Framework

Organizational support is the interaction between the organization and its customers, thus facilitating customers' co-creation performance and allowing customers to participate in customer orientation processes, and facilitating the connection between the organization and its customers (Ursula and Nicola, 2012). According to Bettencourt (1997), organizational support behaviors include the fairness in individual

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treatment, effective recovery, keeping promises and reliable service delivery, and staff's fulfillment of special requirements. In the context of this study, the support of an accommodation business is that the accommodation business always attaches great importance to the needs and desires of the guests, providing the necessary information for them, and creating favorable conditions for them to interact with staff and express their desire so that the accommodation business could better serve the needs of its guests.

According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004), co-creation performance is the participation of both the facility and customers to create the value. It is not only the attempt of the facility to satisfy its customers but also the joining of customers in creating service experience that is appropriate to their situation. Co-creation performance in tourism services can be understood as the interaction between the staff of the facility and customers in a way that customers can receive the best service in accordance with their respective conditions. For example, with 2 guests having different financial conditions, the hotel staff will recommend different room types for each customer, ensuring the best service to their own affordability.

According to Kotler (2003), customers' satisfaction is evaluated according to what they have received as compared to their expectations. This is an individual comparison. If what a customer has received is more than what they expected, the customer is satisfied and vice versa (Vo and Pham, 2015). This is the consideration of customers' satisfaction after they have experienced the service, and the final psychological assessment in reaffirming customers' initial expectations of the service (Oliver and Swan, 1989).

Tourists' loyalty indicating their intent of future behaviors which are influenced by their travel experience is their reuse and recommendation of the service to others (Lee and Hsu 2013). According to Gursoy *et al.* (2014), tourists' loyalty includes their attitudes or behaviors.

In the context of this study, customers' loyalty is reflected in their reuse of accommodation services and their intent of recommending this accommodation business to friends, relatives, colleagues, and other tourists wanting to visit the Mekong Delta.

## 2.2. Literature Review

A study by Ursula and Nicola (2012) aimed to find out the support of accommodation businesses, co-

creation performance, visitors' satisfaction and loyalty. The authors indicated that the support of accommodation businesses is essential for the increase of visitors' loyalty, whereby co-creation performance will be improved and the increase of visitor's satisfaction and loyalty will be stimulated.

Another study by Yi and Gong (2013) aimed to find out the relationship between tourism services of accommodation businesses and co-creation performance to increase tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. The authors conducted an analysis of the increase of co-creation performance which resulted from the useful services provided by the accommodation business, thereby, the improvement of the services provided by the accommodation business would promote visitors' satisfaction and loyalty to a better level.

In Vietnam, following the study by Ursula and Nicola (2012), Vo and Pham (2015) indicated that according to the theory of advantage of resources and service-oriented perception, the service value is co-created by visitors and providers. Therefore the authors developed and tested the model of relationship between the Behaviors and Attitudes of tourists. The samples were collected in 1-1 pairs, including one guide and one tourist served by this guide. 464 pairs of questionnaires were used for the study. The results of the SEM analysis showed that both tourists' participation behaviour and tourist-oriented behavior had a positive impact on tourists' satisfaction. However, the impact of tourists' participation on their satisfaction was stronger. The tourists' attitudes when participating had a strong impact on their participation behaviours; tourist-oriented behavior did not affect tourists' attitudes when participating.

This study proposed the following hypotheses:

### ***Relationship between Company Support and Co-Creation Performance***

According to Ursula and Nicola (2012), service activities are equalized by allowing customers to actively participate in co-creation performance and empowering them to give comments. Moreover, with better support of organizations, including those operating in the field of tourism, activities of customers and service providers will be better and better as customers actively obtain information (Ursula and Nicola, 2012; Yi and Gong, 2013).

Accordingly, if an accommodation business creates good interaction with guests, provides detailed information about the rooms, always prioritises their

needs and satisfies their specific demands, tourists will have many opportunities and incentives to participate in co-creation performance that will contribute to the creation of value when using tourist services (Ursula and Nicola, 2012; Yi and Gong, 2013). On that basis, the authors proposed the following hypothesis:

*H1: Company Support has a positive impact on co-creation performance.*

**Relationship between Co-creation performance and Customers' Satisfaction and Loyalty**

According to Ursula and Nicola (2012), when customers participate in using a service, their perception of the service provider reflects their satisfaction and loyalty to the service provider. When customers have the opportunity to co-create a personalized tour package which is tailored to their needs, they will be more satisfied and more likely to return to use the service provided by that organization once more and recommend it to others. This indicates that co-creation performance has a positive impact on and improve customers' satisfaction and loyalty. On that basis, the authors proposed the following hypotheses:

*H2: Co-creation performance positively influences Tourists' Satisfaction.*

*H3: Co-creation performance positively influences Tourists' Loyalty.*

**2.3. Methodology**

The data collection was conducted on tourists to the Mekong Delta by using questionnaires distributed at hotels and resorts where tourists stayed in provinces and cities such as Can Tho and Tien Giang, Ben Tre, Vinh Long, Hau Giang, Dong Thap, An Giang and Bac Lieu, for a period of 5 months from February 2019 to June 2019. The collection of data was conducted in a default and convenient way as follows:

- + Requested the consent from the owners of hotels and resorts for the distribution of questionnaires to the guests staying at the facilities, and requested the staff (receptionists) to act as contact persons to distribute and collect the questionnaires.
- + Sent the questionnaires to the reception department of each hotel or resort right after the owner of the hotel or resort gave the consent.

**Table 1: The Scales Measuring Factors in the Research Model**

Factors	Code	Scale	Source
Company Support	HT1	Accommodation businesses thought well of my needs and desires	Ursula and Nicola (2012)
	HT2	Accommodation businesses always provided me as much as possible the most necessary information when I needed it	
	HT3	Accommodation businesses always well informed me about what would happen in their premises	
	HT4	Accommodation business explained the room types to me and made very helpful suggestions	
Co-creation Performance	TS1	I actively participated in my tour	Ursula and Nicola (2012)
	TS2	I used the experience from previous tours to arrange the lodging	
	TS3	The ideas of choosing the lodging were of interest to me	
	TS4	I spent a considerable amount of time choosing the lodging	
Customer Satisfaction	HL1	I was satisfied with the customer service of the Accommodation Business	Ursula and Nicola (2012)
	HL2	Overall, I was very satisfied with the lodging of this Accommodation Business	
	HL3	My stay at this accommodation met my expectations	
Loyalty	TT1	If I have the opportunity to return to the Mekong Delta, I will stay at this accommodation provider again	Ursula and Nicola (2012)
	TT2	I may use other services of this accommodation provider the next time I travel	
	TT3	I will recommend this accommodation providers to my friends and relatives	
	TT4	I like to discuss this accommodation providers with others	

Source: Author's summarize.

The information on the questionnaires was saved and the author conducted the 2nd survey to check the accuracy of the data by making direct phone calls to respondents. Unfulfilled questionnaires were removed from the samples.

The collected data was coded and processed in SPSS and AMOS (using Structural Equation Modeling) to get the assessment results of Impacts of accommodation businesses' support and co-creation performance on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty.

All variables in the research model are measured on a 5-point Likert scale from the study of Ursula and Nicola (2012), as follows:

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1. Findings

Of the total 300 distributed questionnaires, 283 were collected, with a response rate of 94.33%. And of the collected questionnaires, 12 were unfulfilled, thus the total number of valid questionnaires was 271, accounting for 90.33%.

First, the author conducts statistical analyses on the information provided by respondents who were tourists to the Mekong Delta according to the criteria of the number of visits, the purpose of using accommodation services and the duration of stay. The findings show that the number of respondents with 1 or 2 visits is 31, accounting for 11.44%; with 3 or 4 visits is 56, accounting for 20.66%; with 5 or 6 visits is 63,

accounting for 23.25%; and with more than 6 visits is 121, accounting for 44.65%. The number of respondents with sight-seeing purposes is 141, accounting for 52.03%; with business purposes is 96, accounting for 35.42%; and with other purposes is 34, accounting for 12.55%. The number of respondents with the duration of stay less than 2 days is 78, accounting for 28.78%; with duration of stay from 2 to 5 days is 157, accounting for 57.93%; and with duration of stay over 5 days is 36, accounting for 13.29%.

The results of reliability analysis show that the factor with the highest Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.893 is Loyalty, and the one with the lowest Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.795 is Co-creation Performance. All Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of the factors are relatively high, reaching 0.7 or higher. The correlation coefficient of the total variables is greater than 0.3, showing that the variables are closely correlated. Thus the variables are eligible to be included in the regression analysis.

Thus, the results of analysis and evaluation of the scale reliability show that all 15 variables (including variables of factors) included in the analysis meet the requirements. Therefore, they are all eligible to be included in the next analyses.

All 15 variables of the factors that meet the requirements of Cronbach's Alpha are included in the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to explore the scale structure of factors: HT (Company Support), TS (Co-creation Performance), HL (Tourists' satisfaction with accommodation businesses), TT (Tourists' Loyalty).

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistical Results**

Variables	Description	Number of respondents	Percent
Number of visits	1 or 2	31	11.44
	3 or 4	56	20.66
	5 or 6	63	23.25
	more than 6	121	44.65
Purpose of using hotel services	sight-seeing	141	52.03
	business	96	35.42
	others	34	12.55
Duration of stay	< 2 days	78	28.78
	from 2 to 5 days	157	57.93
	more than 5 days	36	13.29

Source: Author's calculation.

**Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha**

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	n of variables
The support of tourist accommodation businesses	0.890	4
Co-creation performance	0.795	4
Satisfaction	0.866	3
Loyalty	0.893	4

Source: Author's calculation.

After ensuring proper implementation of the EFA process, the factors are tested to clean the data.

**Table 4: Results of EFA**

KMO value		0.891
Bartlett's test	Chi-Square value	2,035.864
	df	105
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Author's calculation.

With the results of analysis of variables of factors, the author obtains KMO coefficient of 0.891, and Sig. of

0.000. This confirms that the KMO value ensures the appropriateness of exploratory factor analysis and the significant level of the data put into performing factor analysis. The Chi-Square statistic of Bartlett's test is 2,035,864 with Sig = 0.000 << 0.05. At the same time, the total variance explained is moderate, 76.069% of the data variation is explained by 4 factors, and the scales are extracted and accepted. The extraction is stopped at the 4th factor, equivalent to eigenvalue of 1,185, greater than 1 (this confirms that the input variables are arranged into 4 factor groups).

The results of factor rotation show that all factors meet the requirements (factor loadings are greater than

**Table 5: Factor Rotation Results**

	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
HT2	0.871			
HT3	0.854			
HT4	0.826			
HT1	0.810			
TT2		0.931		
TT3		0.864		
TT1		0.815		
TT4		0.589		
TS2			0.890	
TS1			0.838	
TS4			0.710	
TS3			0.671	
HL3				0.891
HL1				0.847
HL2				0.761
Eigenvalue = 1.185				
Percent of Total Variance Explained	50.017	59.838	68.169	76.069

Source: Author's calculation.

0.5) and arranged in 4 separate groups of factors, including Support from Accommodation Businesses (HT1, HT2, HT3, HT4), Co-creation Performance (TS1, TS2, TS3, TS4), Customers' Satisfaction (HL1, HL2 and HL3) and Customers' Loyalty (TT1, TT2, TT3).

The author conducts CFA, using AMOS software, with the purpose of checking the relationship of the factors. In order to conduct CFA, the author uses results obtained from EFA, with the main factor groups included for analysis, namely: HT (Support of accommodation businesses), TS (Co-creation Performance), HL (Customers' Satisfaction), TT (Customers' Loyalty). After conducting CFA, the author obtains standardized analysis results with the results as follows:

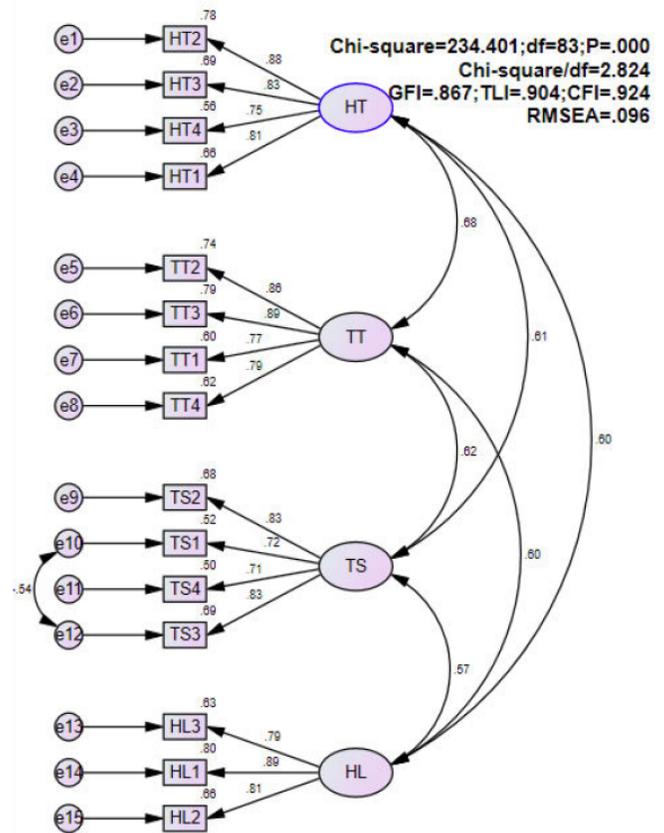
**Table 6: Indicators for Evaluation of CFA Analysis Results by Standardized Coefficients**

Sq	Indicators	Values
1	Chi-square/df	2.824
2	P-value of Chi-square	0.000
3	TLI	0.904
4	CFI	0.924
5	RMSEA	0.096

Source: Author's calculation.

As being shown in the table, Chi-square / df is 2,824, less than 3; TLI is 0.904, greater than 0.8; CFI is 0.924, greater than 0.9; and RMSEA is 0.096, less than 0.1. So it can be said that the model is consistent with the collected data. And as the standardized coefficients are greater than 0.5, which is statistically significant, meaning that the factors reach a convergence value.

Thus, with the results of CFA analysis, the author obtains model results with the main factors as the data included in the CFA analysis, namely: HT (The support of accommodation businesses), TS (Co-creation Performance), HL (Customer satisfaction), TT (Customer Loyalty).



**Figure 1: CFA results according to standardized coefficients.**  
Source: Author's calculation.

Also, the paper performs the calculation of the synthetic reliability values and the total variance extracted to evaluate the reliability of the scales. The results show that the combined reliability values and total variance extracted of all factors are greater than 0.5, which show that the factors ensure the reliability when being included in the analysis. In addition, the P-value calculation of the correlation coefficients in each pair show that the P-value is less than 0.05 (5%), so the correlation coefficients of each pair are different as compared to 1 at 95% reliability. Therefore, the concepts reach the discriminatory value.

To conduct the SEM analysis to explore the impacts of the accommodation business's support on co-

**Table 7: Reliability Coefficients and the Total Variance Explained of Factors**

Seq	Factors	Reliability	Total variance explained
1	Company support	0.892	0.773
2	Co-creation Performance	0.856	0.709
3	Satisfaction	0.872	0.794
4	Loyalty	0.898	0.789

Source: Author's calculation.

creation performance, tourists' satisfaction and loyalty, the paper changes the models obtained from the results of CFA analysis to the SEM.

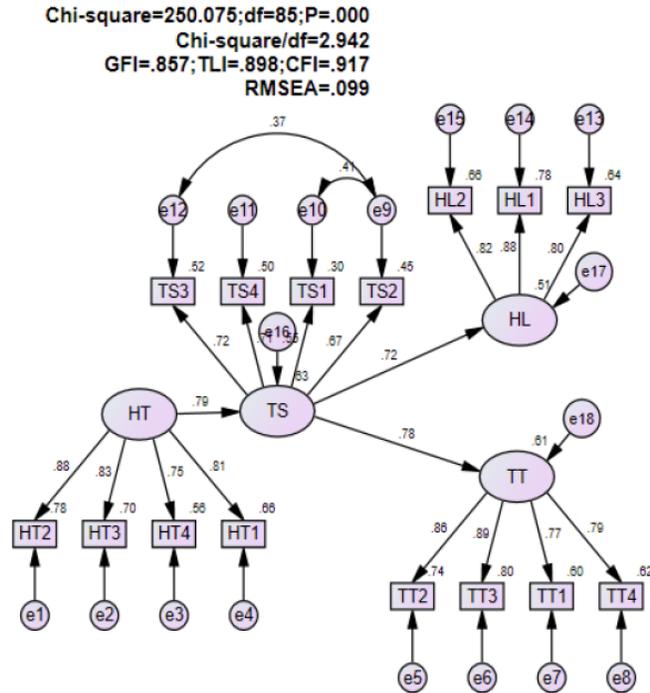


Figure 2: SEM results: Impacts of the support from accommodation businesses and co-creation on customers' satisfaction and loyalty.

Source: Author's calculation.

Table 8: Indicators for Evaluation of SEM Analysis Results by Standardized Coefficients

Sq	Indicators	Values
1	Chi-square/df	2.942
2	P-value of Chi-square	0.000
3	TLI	0.898
4	CFI	0.917
5	RMSEA	0.099

Source: Author's calculation.

The table shows that the model results are consistent with market data, which are reflected in indicators: Chi-square / df is 2,942, less than 3; TLI is 0.898, greater than 0.8; CFI is 0.917, greater than 0.8; and RMSEA is 0.099, less than 0.1.

Also, based on the analysis results and significant P-value of the relationships between the factors, we can see that the P value is less than 5%. Therefore, the factors such as HT (Company support), TS (Co-creation performance), HL (Customer satisfaction), and

TT (Customers' Loyalty) are all statistically significant in SEM.

Table 9: SEM Results

Relationship	Regression coefficient	S.E.	C.R.	P
CC <--- CS	0.548	0.063	8.640	***
CS <--- CC	1.146	0.154	7.464	***
CL <--- CC	1.310	0.157	8.366	***

Source: Author's calculation.

Table 10: Results of SEM Standardized Coefficients

Relationship	Regression coefficient	Coefficients rounded according to the diagram
CC <--- CS	0.791	0.79
CS <--- CC	0.716	0.72
CL <--- CC	0.783	0.78

Source: Author's calculation.

### 3.2. Evaluation

In reviewing the regression coefficient values among factors, we see that the regression coefficient values of all factors are greater than zero, thus indicating the positive relationship (positive impacts) among the factors. First of all, Support from Accommodation Business has a positive impact on Co-creation Performance (with regression coefficient being 0.79), which means that when the Support from Accommodation Businesses is better, the Co-creation Performance will increase (with the Support from Accommodation Businesses increasing by 1 time, the Co-creation will increase by 0.79 time). This result is proved by Ursula and Nicola (2012) and Yi and Gong (2013).

Also, the Co-creation Performance positively impacts on visitors' satisfaction (with regression coefficient being 0.72), that is, when Co-creation Performance is better, tourists' satisfaction will increase (with the Co-creation increasing by 1 time, the Tourists' Satisfaction will increase by 0.72 time). This result is proved by Ursula and Nicola (2012) and Yi and Gong (2013). The Co-creation Performance also positively impacts on Tourists' Loyalty (with regression coefficient being 0.78), that is, when Co-creation is better, Tourists' Loyalty will increase (with Co-creation Performance increasing by 1 time, the Tourists' Loyalty will increase by 0.78 time). This result is different from

those of the previous studies. The studies by Ursula and Nicola (2012) and Yi and Gong (2013) did not show the significance of the impacts of co-creation performance on the tourists' loyalty.

Thus, in order to increase tourists' satisfaction and loyalty, accommodation businesses should increase co-creation performance as well as their support for tourists

#### 4. CONCLUSION

With the results of the study we suggest that in order to increase tourists' satisfaction and loyalty, accommodation businesses should regularly implement work of environmental sanitation in the rooms to ensure hygiene before tourists check in. Also, accommodation businesses should regularly implement the checking, maintenance of furniture and appliances needed for work such as air conditioners, refrigerators, and taps in the rooms, replacing old items which can no longer meet the needs of tourists. Besides, accommodation businesses should provide hot and cold drinks at the corridors in service of tourists.

Moreover, accommodation businesses should regularly have their staff improve their expertise and update knowledge about famous attractions of the region to provide necessary information to tourists when they need. The staff should also uphold the serious and professional working attitudes, creating a good image of accommodation business staff in the eyes of tourists. In particular, accommodation businesses should comply with regulations of security assurance of tourists' personal information, not to reveal or use it for profitable purposes.

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