

Consumption decisions in green tourism: The case of tourists participating in sports events in Vietnam**Dung Phung Xuan^a, Phuong Bui Cam^{b*}, Toi Dinh Van^c, Long Pham Tran Thang^b, Thang Vu Ngoc^d and Thuy Nguyen Thi^d**^a*Hanoi University of Physical Education and Sports, Vietnam*^b*Thang Long University, Vietnam*^c*Nghe An University of Economics, Vietnam*^d*Dai Nam University, Vietnam***CHRONICLE***Article history:*

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This study applies the Motivation - Opportunity – Ability model on social networking platforms to study tourists' selection of green hotels for their participation in sports events. The study analyzed the intention to choose green hotels of 324 Vietnamese tourists staying at 4- and 5-star hotels with green labels in Vietnam. The research results show that the Motivations, Opportunity, and Ability factors in using social networks have a positive impact on the belief in green hotels, thereby promoting the intention to choose green hotels when tourists participate in sports events in Vietnam. This study also provides some practical implications for green hotels in using social networks to enhance the trust and intention to choose a hotel of tourists participating in sports events. At the same time, the study also proposes some suggestions for directing human resources training towards the organization of tourism-integrated sports events to create responsible tourism products.

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1. Introduction

Faced with the situation of more and more polluted environments at a global scale and gradually depleting natural resources, governments and citizens of countries are more and more concerned and conscious about environmental protection. Environmental friendliness becomes a prerequisite when they pick products and services. For the tourism industry, tourists are increasingly interested in responsible tourism products, tourism associated with health, tourism associated with sustainable development, green tourism (Pujari & Wright, 1996). Along with the interest in green tourism and sports tourism, tourists also tend to choose hotels with environmentally friendly activities, also known as green hotels (Manaktola & Jauhari, 2007; Han et al., 2010).

In recent years, with the strong development of social networking platforms, consumers interact more and more on social networking platforms (Somayeh et al., 2016). Along with that, corporations in general and hotels have taken advantage of social networks to serve as promotional communication tools to reach customers (Bindu, 2018); while tourists increasingly value information found on the internet (Cai et al., 2004). Tourists often refer to online reviews and discussions on social networks to decide on travel services (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Topics of green consumption, green tourism, and sports tourism are also discussed more on social networking platforms (Severo et al., 2019).

Tourism has also become one of the important economic sectors of Vietnam, contributing about 10% to the country's GDP. Currently, hotels applying green practices in Vietnam are increasing, not just a trend used to polish their names. In Vietnam,

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tours associated with sports activities, team building often choose green hotels as accommodation facilities for tourists with the message of a community-oriented service, towards solidarity, environmental protection, health care for customers... Green hotels become important criteria in doing business in the direction of more responsibility to the community. In such a context, the study of factors affecting the intention to choose green hotels based on tourists' social networking platforms in sports tours and sporting events in Vietnam is necessary and meaningful in both theory and practice.

In this study, we use the Motivation, Opportunity, Ability model in information processing developed into the use of social networks by MacInnis & Jaworski (1989); to study the impact of the above factors on the intention to choose green hotels when participating in sports events. The study was conducted with Vietnamese tourists participating in sports events and staying at green hotels in Vietnam. The research results will contribute to making policy recommendations in the development of sports tours and sports events associated with the widespread provision of green hotels to tourists and communities.

2. Theoretical foundations and research hypotheses

2.1. Green Hotel

According to the Green Hotel Association (GHA), Green hotels are environmentally friendly hotels in which hotel managers wish to establish programs to save water, save energy, and reduce solid waste – while saving money – to help protect our unique earth. Some developed countries (e.g. USA, Canada) have issued green hotel standards such as Green Seal Hotel Plan (USA), Green Leaf EcoRating Program (Canada). In Vietnam, the Green Lotus standard has also been issued for environmentally friendly hotels since 2019. Thus, green hotels can be understood as a business model towards environmental friendliness and social responsibility.

Tourists have an increasingly positive perception of green hotels and seem ready to choose green hotels (Ogbeide, 2012). The green hotel model is effective in gaining competitive advantage and making a difference, because it can affect tourists who have high environmental awareness, desire to find eco-friendly hotels, and gain other values such as cost savings; at the same time create a good image for the hotel (Penny, 2007). In Vietnam, a number of studies on green tourism, sport tourism, green hotels show that tourists really care about their green behaviors at the destination, as well as interested in green hotel standard certifications of accommodation businesses and fitness and sports activities for the community (Nguyen, 2017). Although there have been many efforts in Vietnam to popularize the green hotel model through many training courses, seminars, conferences, etc., this concept still seems to be quite new and unfamiliar (Ho et al. 2019). Hotels that meet the “Green Lotus” standard are only scattered in big cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang.

2.2. Social networks and intention to choose green hotels

2.2.1. The role of social networks in hotel preference

Having become more and more popular in Vietnam, social networking platforms are understood as online platforms, websites and applications on internet, where anyone can join and share with others their thoughts, feelings such as, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram..., and forums; those were born in the digital technology era (Leung & Bai, 2013).

For sports tours, sports events, in addition to the content related to sports activities that visitors can participate in or attend at destinations, sports events, hotels are also a key factor affecting tourist behavior. A TripAdvisor survey found that 89% of travelers refer to social media when choosing an accommodation (TripBarometer, 2014). Therefore, hotels need to pay more attention to social networking platforms and the user-generated content on them. In the hotel industry, communication through social networks has become increasingly popular to reach customers, enhance brand recognition, and orientate customers, etc. (Leung & Bai, 2013). A large amount of information about the environment and green consumption trends on social networks has had a positive impact on users' awareness of environmental issues (Severo et al., 2019). Social networks have been encouraging environmentally friendly activities. Social networks are being oriented “green”, and the trend of green consumption is being cared about and discussed very often on social networks. Discussions and interactions of users about green tourism, sharing about green hotels will have a positive impact on the intentions to choose a green hotel to stay in sports tours, sports events in Vietnam.

2.2.2. Model of MOA on social network platforms

The MOA (Motivation, Opportunity, Ability) model was proposed by MacInnis & Jaworski (1989) and developed by MacInnis et al (1991). Accordingly, the extent to which individuals process information to make decisions is based on three factors: Motivation, Opportunity and Ability. Specifically:

M – Motivation is a combination of readiness, willingness, interest and desire to process information in the context of persuasive communication. In the context of this study, motivation is understood as the willingness and desire of tourists to use social networks to interact and exchange topics on green tourism, sports tourism, and green hotels.

O - Opportunity refers to the availability of time and favorable conditions that allow action. In the context of this study, opportunity is understood as visitors spending time, effort, as well as possessing tools such as phones, laptops, tablets, etc., to interact and exchange relevant information to green tourism, sports tourism, green hotels on social networking platforms.

A - Ability is understood as the customer's capacity and competence to understand. In this study, ability is understood as the capability of tourists to search for information, interact and exchange information related to green tourism, sports tourism, green hotels on social networking platforms.

2.3. Research hypothesis

The MOA (Motivation, Opportunity, Ability) model is used in understanding consumer behavior, including explaining individuals' behaviors of information processing and information sharing to one another. In the context of tourism, a number of studies have applied MOA theory to study the behavior of tourists (Hung & Petrick, 2012; Leung & Bai, 2013). Accordingly, the level of information processing depends on the factors Motivation, Opportunity, Ability of individuals. Motivation in information seeking affects an individual's perception (MacInnis et al., 1991). When a person is motivated to participate in the exchange of information on social networks, they will form beliefs about the information provided by others (Sigala et al., 2012). The process of interacting with information about the green environment also affects visitors' perceptions and behaviors towards green tourism activities (Sigala, 2016). Users' trust in content on social networks also depends on their ability to understand, adjust and evaluate information (Hocevar et al., 2014). If tourists can search for environmental information on social networks, they will know how to find information sources about green tourism, sports tourism, sports events, resulting in their confidence in the information about them. Finally, the more opportunities to connect and exchange information on groups, articles about green tourism, sports tourism, sports events on social networks will have a greater impact on tourists' beliefs about them (Kane et al., 2012). Afterwards, individuals will experience cognitive and emotional responses during information processing (MacInnis et al., 1991). Information processing has affected tourists' interest in tourist information, and this in turn affects their destination choice behavior (Leung & Bai, 2013).

Accordingly, the behavioral intention of tourists is affected through the perception and feeling of each individual in the process of information processing. It is found that trust in information related to green tourist destinations and sports events is an important factor that occurs in tourists' perception. Trust in user-discussed content on social media will have a positive effect on visitor expectations of a place (Narangajavana et al., 2017). On that basis, the variable "Tourists' trust in green-oriented information mentioned on social networks" (collectively referred to as Green Trust) is included in the model of this study as the intermediate variable in the relationship between MOA factors and the behavioral intention of visitors towards green hotels during sports events. Applying the theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), some studies show that beliefs and attitudes of individuals have an influence on the intention to choose green hotels (Teng et al., 2013; 2018; Chen & Tung, 2014). Therefore, this study predicts that, if tourists have trust in the content and information on social networks about hotels that are applying the green hotel model, they will intend to choose green hotels when participating in green tours, sports tours, sports events.

From the above arguments, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: *The motivation to use social networks for information related to green tourism has a positive impact on the trust of tourists participating in sports events towards green hotels.*

H₂: *The opportunity to use social networks for information related to green tourism has a positive impact on the trust of tourists participating in sports events towards green hotels.*

H₃: *The ability to use social networks for information related to green tourism has a positive impact on the trust of tourists participating in sports events towards green hotels.*

H₄: *The trust of tourists participating in sports events towards green hotels has a positive impact on the intention to choose green hotels.*

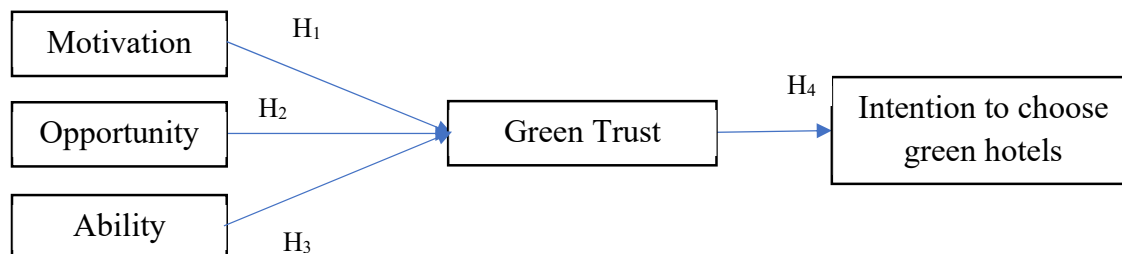


Fig. 1. Proposed research model

3. Research data and methods

All scales use a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Specifically, the Motivation scale consists of 6 observed variables adapted from research by Parra-López et al. (2012); the Opportunity scale consists of 4 observed variables; the Ability scale consists of 4 observed variables adapted from the study of Gruen et al. (2006). The Green trust scale is adapted from research by Narangajavana et al (2017); the scale of Intention to choose green hotels is adapted from the study of Chen & Tung (2014). All scales were adjusted to be relevant to the context and objectives of the study.

The study was conducted with a survey of tourists staying at 4-star and 5-star hotels with green labels in Vietnam. 400 survey questionnaires were sent to Vietnamese tourists via Google Form and 324 valid responses were received, ensuring reliable eligibility with research results according to the minimum sample size (Hair et al., 2009). The collected data are processed on SPSS20 and AMOS20 software with tests such as Cronbach's Alpha, EFA, CFA, and SEM (Gorsuch, 1983).

4. Results and discussion

4.1. EFA analysis results, Cronbach's Alpha

The KMO result of the MOA Scale (Motivation, Opportunity, Ability) is 0.868 (>0.5) and the Barlett test has statistical significance Sig.= 0.000 (<0.05), showing that the study data are suitable for EFA analysis. The results for the Green Trust scale and the Green hotel choice intention scale also give consistent results. The data testing results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

EFA results, Cronbach's Alpha

Observed Variables	Results of EFA and Cronbach's Alpha		
	Factor loading	%Var.	Alpha
Moti1	0.765	72.432	0.845
Moti2	0.862		
Moti3	0.788		
Moti4	0.835		
Moti5	0.864		
Moti6	0.791		
Oppo1	0.803	70.268	0.880
Oppo2	0.876		
Oppo3	0.721		
Oppo4	0.758		
Abi1	0.823	73.660	0.862
Abi2	0.877		
Abi3	0.780		
Abi4	0.816		
Gree1	0.706	76.506	0.858
Gree2	0.838		
Gree3	0.878		
Gree4	0.890		
Gree5	0.815		
Inten1	0.721	77.112	0.802
Inten2	0.812		
Inten3	0.822		
Inten4	0.865		
Inten5	0.808		

Source: Results of data analysis by the research team.

4.2. CFA analysis results

The results of CFA analysis pointed out that Chi-square=688.605, df=233, cmin/df=2,368, RMSEA=0.068 (pclose < 0.001), CFI=0.868. Although these indicators suggest that the model has a moderate degree of fit (RMSEA remains below 0.1 and CFI remains above 0.8) (Hair et al., 2009; Shi et al., 2019). All observed variables have normalization coefficients greater than 0.5 and are statistically significant at the level of 0.1%. The reliability of all factors is greater than 0.7. The average value extracted (AVE) results are all greater than 0.5, showing the convergent validity of the measurement. The discriminant validity of the observed data is guaranteed when the square root of the AVE on each factor is larger than the correlation between that factor and other factors.

4.3. SEM test results

To assess the fit of the research model and test the relationships in the model, this study uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM). The results show that all hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4) are accepted and ranked in descending order from Ability (standardized Beta coefficient is 0.346) reached the level of statistical significance above 99% ($p < 0.001$); to Motivation (standardized Beta coefficient is 0.282) reached the level of statistical significance above 99% ($p < 0.001$); and Opportunity (standardized Beta coefficient is 0.138) reached the level of statistical significance above 95% ($p < 0.05$). The study confirms a positive relationship between Green Trust and Intention to choose green hotels with a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.468 and at the level of statistical significance above 99% ($p < 0.001$). The model fit indicator values are $\text{cmin}/\text{df} = 4.236$, $\text{RMSEA} = 0.069$ ($\text{pclose} < 0.001$). $\text{CFI} = 0.880$; shows the adequate fit of the research model (Hair et al., 2009).

Table 2
SEM results

Hypothesis	Standardized Beta coefficient	t value	Result
H1: Motivation → Green trust	0.282	4.136***	Confirmed
H2: Opportunity → Green trust	0.138	2.129*	Confirmed
H3: Ability → Green trust	0.346	5.154***	Confirmed
H4: Green Trust → Intention to choose green hotels	0.468	6.966***	Confirmed

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Results of data analysis by the research team.

5. Conclusion and practical implications

This is considered one of the first studies to apply the MOA model in the context of social networks to study the intention to choose green hotels for tourists participating in sports events in Vietnam. This research result contributes to the theory of green behavior of users on social networking platforms. In order to have confidence in information related to green destinations on social networks, tourists need motivation, opportunity and ability to learn and process information related to environmental issues, green activities on social networks. Ultimately that trust will promote the intention of tourists to come to green destinations when participating in sports tours, sports events.

Research results show that the decision of tourists to choose green hotels when participating in sports tours or sports events in Vietnam is strongly influenced by Motivation and Ability to search and analyze information on social networking forums through the intermediary variable Green Trust. Therefore, in order to increase tourists' access to green hotel services, sports events and sports tours need strong communication about the meaning of events, spirit for the community, spirit for sustainable development, sports spirit... through social networking tools. That way customers have more opportunities to access information and increase trust in tourism products associated with sports, as well as to choose green hotels with a unified logic.

In fact, in Vietnam, every year there are many sports events on a national and international scale; however, it seems that it has not really been recognized as an attractive event in terms of tourism and economic activity. There are also not many green hotels, which are mainly concentrated in big cities. It is worth mentioning that these green hotels are also almost an outsider in creating sports events to attract tourists. Therefore, it is important to have human resources with understanding of sports tourism, sports economy, organization of sports events, etc.; then, the organization of sports events will be associated with tourism, with the hotel business, with activities for the community. That role may belong to sports training schools, tourism hotels. Because universities are the place to train high-quality human resources to lead the society; and in the field of sports economy and sport tourism, there is still a huge gap in Vietnam today.

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