The Relationships among Food Image, Tourist Satisfactions and Destination Loyalty Intention: A Case of Hanoi Local Cuisine

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine tourist satisfaction towards Hanoi local food image as well as examine the relationship between those two variables with tourist destination loyalty intention. A self-administered survey was carried out in Hanoi, Vietnam. Of the distributed 400 questionnaires, a total 393 respondents of foreign tourists were used to data analysis by a convenience sampling method. Factor analysis was performed to identify underlying dimensions of what foreign tourists expect most from Hanoi local food image. The results showed that foreign tourist perceived Hanoi local food image as, food quality, food culture, contexture features and atmospheric. The finding showed that Hanoi local food image had a direct effect on foreign tourist's satisfaction and destination loyalty intention. In addition, tourist satisfaction had a positive influence on destination loyalty intention. At last, considering the results from this study, it is suggested that it is necessary to create and maintain the identity of image by formulating appropriate strategies and it is instrumental to promote local food image based on its distinctiveness and diversity which stands for the unique native culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, tourism in Vietnam has grown rapidly due to its incredible landscapes, treasured cultural heritage and natural resources (Vietnam Tourism Marketing Strategy to 2020 and Action Plan, 2013). International tourists to Vietnam increased by 10% compared to 2014 to nearly 8 million visitors in 2015 accordingly to the Vietnam national administration of tourism.

In Vietnam, besides various attractions, tourism also replies upon local cuisine, which plays a central role in Vietnamese lifestyle. Thus Vietnam focuses on developing tourism to be related to the social culture of its local delicacies (Responsible Tourism for the F&B Sector in Vietnam, 2013). A significant motivational factor for international tourists to visit Vietnam has been its cuisine, which is based on the variety combination among fresh and delicious ingredients. Hanoi is one of the famous destinations and should be visited because it lies at the heart of Vietnam's cultural center that has been cultivated over historical sites as well as the intangible cultural heritage (Giang, 2013). In addition to these major magnificent attractions, Hanoi also has a famous reputation for its variety of traditional local cuisine such as Bun Cha, Banh Cuon, Pho and Banh My. Therefore, food tours have been increasing in

Hanoi recently (Hanoi Tourism Government, 2015).

Several studies have confirmed the relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction. For instance, Chi and Qu (2008) examined that seven attributes of destination image, namely accommodation, dining, attractions, activities and events, shopping, environment, and accessibility, had a positive influence on attribute satisfaction. However, the relationship between food image and satisfaction remains questionable. Research examining the possible effect of food image on tourist satisfaction remains limited (Ling, Karim, Othman, Adzahan, & Ramachandran, 2010).

In relationship to Hanoi, international tourists' understanding of the local's delicacies' positive image remains very limited. The image of Hanoi's local cuisine as a culinary destination remains very weak compared to those of other countries in the area. Some Vietnamese traditional food types are considerably less well known than those of its neighbors. The following fundamental issues remain before the uniqueness of Hanoi's local cuisine can become a huge opportunity for Hanoi to become a culinary tourism destination in Asia: How do international tourists see and evaluate Hanoi's cuisine? Should local cuisine have its own identity and image which presents Hanoi cultural value? The attitude and behavior of international visitors regarding the local cuisine in Hanoi has not yet been established. Few studies have focused on the relationship between international tourists' fulfillment with the current tourist destinations characteristics in Hanoi. In particular, little information has been published regarding international travelers' perceptions of Hanoi's local cuisine.

The purpose of this study to explore international tourists' perceived image, satisfaction, and destination loyalty intentions in regards to Hanoi's local cuisine. The study is devised to determine Hanoi's local cuisine and then examine the relationship between the satisfaction level and the destination loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Food Image

According to Quan and Wang (2004), Among factor of destination image, food experience could be considered as an important factor. Through local food, tourists can enrich their experience and enjoyment during the trip that could become one of unforgettable memories. Destinations can use food to represent their "cultural experience, status, cultural identity,

and communicating" (Frochot, 2003). Thus, the image and feature of a destination can depend on the local food itself.

Balogu and McCleary (1999) suggested two parts that are necessary to form an image about a particular object: perceptual or cognitive and affective evaluations. In simplistic terms, this means that the image of an object is created by a combination of ideas, beliefs, feelings and knowledge towards it. In this study, "food image" is defined as the image that is specifically connected to tourists' perceptual evaluations in regards to local food.

With long lasting history and the unique identity of nature, Hanoi cuisine has become an important attractiveness that attracts all travelers once they come to Hanoi. In 2012, Hanoi was honored to receive the Asian Cuisines Award for three dishes of Pho, Bun Thang, and Bun Cha. Recently the Telegraph selected Hanoi as one of the world's best cities for food. Many Hanoi's dishes have been mentioned in world travel guidebooks with their original names like Nem, Pho, and Cha Ca. Hanoi local food with a plenty of option can be the paradise for who want to eat street food like local people.

Some previous studies employed the multiple-attribute approach in order to measure the food image. For instance, Jang, Ha and Silkes (2009) classified food attributes into four categories when examining the perception of six types of Asian food (Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Vietnam): appearance, health-related characteristic, uniqueness, and other. Recently, Qing-Chi, Chua, Othman, and Karim (2013) classified food image with three components: food diversity and enjoyment, food distinctiveness and accessibility, and food quality and presentation.

Based on previous arguments, four observable attributes are used in this study to measure the "food image": food quality, food culture, contexture features and atmospherics.

2.2. Tourist Satisfaction

In the tourism literature, tourist satisfaction has been measured through several approaches. Namkung and Jang (2007) focused on understanding the tourist patronage of different food service establishments: ethic restaurants, fast food, theme restaurants and tourist dining satisfaction. Several elements such as food itself, service atmosphere, price-quality relationship and authenticity have been related to tourist dining satisfaction (Ab. Karim & Chi, 2011). On the other hand, some studies examined the effects of individual attributes of local

cuisine on tourist overall satisfaction (Ab. Karim & Chi, 2011; Qing-Chi et al., 2013; Kivela & Crotts, 2006). Gnanapala (2015) suggested that a positive relationship tourists' perception and with their satisfaction towards the quality and taste of foods and of beverages, variety of foods, reasonable food price, food serving methods, and availability of favorite foods to be eaten.

These empirical studies have shown that in some cases, the culinary experience can be the most memorable aspect of a trip and tends to strongly enhance the overall travel experience of tourists, whereas dissatisfaction with destinations' local cuisine and service can have a greater negative impact on the overall experience (Nield, Kozak, & LeGrys, 2000). According to Ha and Jang (2010), Through experience when consuming, customer satisfaction can be seen as a cognitive evaluation either service or food quality. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Food image affects tourist satisfaction

2.3. Destination Loyalty Intention

Tourist scholars have been examining the affective methods to entice more tourists to their specific destinations which is referred to as "destination loyalty" (Kim & Brown, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). During the research into destination loyalty, Yoon and Uysal (2005) noted that measurements used in understanding the dynamics of the destination loyalty phenomenon are mostly focused on the behavioral aspect, attitudinal aspects and their composite or combination. Prayag and Ryan (2012) focused their research on established adequate measures that would identify tourists' loyalty to any given destination. They stated that measuring a tourist's behavioral intention would give an adequate measure. Behavioral intention can be defined as any tourist intention on revisiting their destination by giving and spreading positive information about it by PWOM (positive word-of-mouth) to their friends and family or though social media. Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Hormburg and Giering (2001) used two barometers to measure the conceptual elements of "future behavioral intention". The two barometers used in our construct are the intention to repurchase and to give positive recommendations. A similar approach has been adopted by tourism intention to revisit the destination and motivation to recommend it to family and friends as their "tourist loyalty intentions". This study use two measurements to measure a tourist's destination loyalty intention: "revisiting intentions"

and "willingness to recommend".

2.4. The Relationship between Food Image, Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty Intention

Kivela and Crotts (2006) suggested that culinary experience has a strong relationship with destination image and destination. Among the factors that affect to tourist experience, culinary have an important role. There are some tourists would return the same destination with only reason that taste its cuisine again. Following the previous argument, it was hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: Food image affects destination loyalty intention

There are some researches that ascertain the relationship between satisfaction and tourist's behavior. With satisfaction, visitors are willing to repeat visit and recommend the destination to others (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kozak, Bigne, & Adreu, 2004). Ryu and Jang (2006) examined that positive beliefs and past eating experience could promote tourists to experience local cuisine. That is, the formation of a positive culinary image in tourists mind will result in tourist satisfaction and thus affect tourists' behavior. This supports the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Tourist satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty intention

The conceptual framework is developed based on the relationship among food image, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

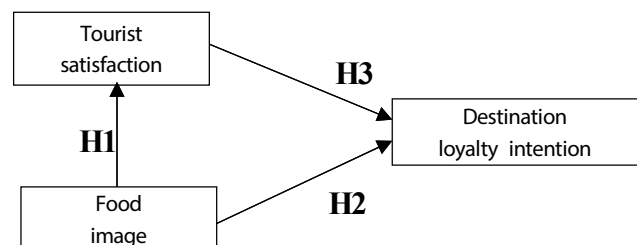The relationship between food image, tourist satisfaction

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.

and destination loyalty intention made up the conceptual framework of the study. The questionnaire included 4 sections: food images tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty intention, and demographic information about the respondents. The first section of the questionnaire measured food image with 18 attributes being developed based on previous food image literature review (Nield et al., 2000; Ab. Karim & Chi, 2010; Ab. Karim et al., 2011; Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2011; Ha & Jang, 2012; Qing-Chi et al., 2013; Kivela & Crotts, 2006, Ling et al., 2010). These attributes were modified to fit the content of this study. The next part of the questionnaire focused on measuring tourist satisfaction with 5 attributes that were selected from research of Ryu and Jang (2006), Kievla and Crott (2006), Ab. Karim and Chi (2010), and Ling et al. (2010). The third section was aimed at "behavioral intentions" to measure tourists' loyalty intentions in regards to Hanoi's local cuisine that follows several previous studies (Namkung & Jang, 2007; Ab. Karim et al., 2011). In these three sections, the questionnaires asked respondents to answer the questions on a 5-point scale with measurements ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In the last section, the respondents were asked to provide information regarding their demographic profiles.

This research was a descriptive study using a questionnaire to gather data about Hanoi, Vietnam. This research collected our data samples in the "Old Quarter" of Hanoi for two reasons: First, this area contains a large number of locally authentic restaurants and also tourists' hotels that helped researchers to achieve a large enough tourist sampling size within a reasonably allotted time frame. Second, the Old Quarter has historically been a very popular tourist destination for international travelers to Hanoi. The voluntary respondents were screened by answering a few questions in order to qualify to participate in the survey. Local people residing in Hanoi were excluded from the survey. Questionnaires were distributed and collected from the first week of February to the last week of February in 2017. Tourists were asked to complete the questionnaire where they were free after visiting a tourist place.

Four hundred international tourists, who were able to understand English, were asked to volunteer to answer the questionnaire, thus providing convenience sampling data.

Data were analyzed by using SPSS software, version 22. The analysis of the data was divided into three sections using inferential and descriptive statistics. In order to identify the rudimentary elements of Hanoi's food image attributes, exploratory factor analysis was employed. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the relationships among food image, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty intention. The relationship between tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty intention was tested by simple linear regression analysis.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Demographic Information of Respondents

Of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 393 usable questionnaires were obtained, resulting in a response rate of 98.2%. There were 39.9% males and 60.1% females. The most common age group ws 50～59 with 31.8% followed by the age group of 60 and above with a frequency of 118 (31.7%). A larger proposition of respondents came from North America (78.6%). The majority of respondents stayed in Hanoi for 2-4 days. The most popular reason that respondents visited Hanoi was for holiday or pleasure (84%). Most of respondents visited Hanoi for the first time (89.8%).

4.2. Underline Dimensions of Hanoi Local Food Image

Factor analysis of international tourists' attitude towards to Hanoi local cuisine indicated that the Barltet's test was significant at 0.00 and the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) was 0.84, proving that the data were significantly appropriate for factor analysis. For further analysis, items with factor loading 0.05 and higher were retained.

The 18 attributes associated with how Hanoi local cuisine is perceived by foreign tourists were explored by principle component factor analysis with Varimax rotation. The internal consistency of the 18 items was examined by Cronbach's alpha analysis. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.87.

The factor analysis compiled a four factors solution as shown in Table 1. Each of the factors was the same factors that were identified. Factor 1 with 5 items relating to food quality of Hanoi local cuisine (α=0.80). Factor 2 consists of 5 items covering "Food Culture" (α=0.77). Factor 3 includes 4 items, pertaining to Atmospheric (α=0.75). Factor 4 consists of 4 items relating to Contextual Features (α=0.76). All factors were generated with Eigenvalues above 1.0, which is about 57.78% of the total variance.

The summated means of all factors were above mid-point of 3.0. In other words, the respondents agreed with 18 items

Table 1. Hanoi local food image (*N*=393)

Factor and attribute	Mean	Factor loading	Eigen value	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Food quality	4.14		5.70	31.68	0.80
A lot of herb and spice	4.06	0.75			
Clean and safe	4.14	0.73			
Enticing	4.16	0.75			
Different kinds of ingredients	4.11	0.59			
High availability of food	4.24	0.64			
Factor 2: Food culture	4.23		2.21	12.30	0.77
Rich in flavor	4.32	0.65			
Tableware is authentic	4.13	0.73			
Well presented	4.25	0.65			
Local food culture was delivered	4.17	0.62			
Cooking methods were unique and interesting	4.22	0.50			
Factor 3: Atmospheric	4.06		1.42	8.00	0.80
The overall interior	4.08	0.60			
Layout and facility aesthetic	4.12	0.52			
The sound in the eating place and surrounding	3.96	0.77			
The view from eating place	4.09	0.65			
Factor 4: Contextual features	4.12		1.06	5.91	0.77
The typical food was unique	4.11	0.73			
Variety of local specialties	4.17	0.80			
Experience culture through local food	4.17	0.64			
The dinning customs	4.02	0.51			

of the Hanoi local cuisine. Especially, foreign tourists perceived Hanoi local food imaged as "Food culture" (x=4.23), followed by "Food quality" (χ=4.14).

4.3. Tourist Satisfaction

As mention in Table 2, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of

Table 2. Tourist satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction	Mean
The Hanoi local food contributes to the quality of my vising experience	4.03
Eating food in Hanoi add to my visiting enjoyments	4.20
The food experience in Hanoi meets my expectation	4.24
I got to know the culture of Hanoi by eating local food.	3.66
I have good impression on Hanoi food.	4.29
Summated mean	4.08
Cronbach's alpha coefficient=0.76	

tourist satisfaction was 0.76, indication a high internal reliability within each item. The summated mean of the tourist satisfaction items was 4.08. Specifically, foreign tourists had good impression with Hanoi local food, which was reflected by the highest mean score (4.29). However, they did not agree that they got to know culture through eating Hanoi local food (3.66).

4.4. Destination Loyalty Intention

The results in Table 3 show that Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.79, indicated good reliability. The mean score (χ= 4.26) means that tourists will recommend Hanoi local food positively to others.

4.5. The Relation between Hanoi Local Food Image and Tourist Satisfaction

Hypothesis 1 proposed that food image positively affects

Table 3. Destination loyalty intention

Destination loyalty intention	Mean
I'll recommend Hanoi local food to my friends and family.	4.22
I'd say positive things about Hanoi local food to others.	4.26
If I have a chance in the future, I'll visit Hanoi for Hanoi local food.	4.22
Summated mean	4.24
Cronbach's alpha coefficient=0.79	

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis of food image and tourist satisfaction

Variables entered	Standardized coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.t
Food quality	0.33	9.91	0.00
Food culture	0.47	14.09	0.00
Atmospheric	0.45	13.45	0.00
Contextual features	0.15	4.58	0.00
Multiple R=0.75			
R^2=0.56			
F=124.71, Sig=0.00			

tourist satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between Hanoi local food attributes and foreign tourist satisfaction with the food. It was used to estimate the coefficients of the linear equitation involving four factors of Hanoi local cuisine (independent variable) that best predict the value of tourist satisfaction (dependent variable). Table 2 shows the significant variables in the equation which explain tourist satisfaction based on standardized beta coefficient value. The result presented in Table 2 indicated that the most influential food image to tourist satisfaction was Food Culture of the Hanoi local food (β=0.47), followed by Atmospheric (β=0.45); the least influential factor to tourist satisfaction was Contextual Feature (β=0.15). The results indicated that the regression model fits the data well (F=124.71, p=0.00). About 56% of the variance in tourist satisfaction was explained by food image attributes. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is supported.

4.6. The Relation between Hanoi Local Food Image and Destination Loyalty Intention

Hypothesis 2 proposed that food image positively affects

destination loyalty intention. Multiple regression was conducted to verify this hypothesis and explore how much variation in destination loyalty intention could be explained by the variability in food image dimension. The regression results shown in Table 5 indicate that the independent variables have a significant and positive effect on destination loyalty intention. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is supported. The R^2 value of 0.40 means that 40% of destination loyalty intention can be explained by food image dimension.

4.7. The relationship between Tourist satisfaction and Destination Loyalty Intention

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between foreign tourist satisfaction and their loyalty intention. The results for Table 5 show that Tourist Satisfaction (β=0.63) was significantly affected by Destination Loyalty Intention (p=0.00). The analysis indicated that the model fits the data (F=179.18, p=0.00).

Hypothesis 3 considered that tourist satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty intention. Consistent with this hypothesis, the results of the regression analysis shown in Table 6 indicate that 31% of destination loyalty intention is ex-

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis of Hanoi local food and destination loyalty intention

Variablesentered	Standardized coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.t
Food quality	0.32	8.2	0.00
Food culture	0.33	8.38	0.00
Atmospheric	0.37	9.46	0.00
Contextual features	0.26	5.72	0.00
Multiple R=0.63			
R^2=0.40			
F=64.96, Sig=0.00			

Table 6. Simple linear regression analysis of tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty intention

Variables entered	Standardized coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.t
Tourist satisfaction	0.63	8.58	0.00
Multiple R=0.56			
R^2=0.31			
F=179.18, Sig=0.00			

plained by tourist satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

This study has examined the destination loyalty intention by constructing a model that considers food image and tourist satisfaction. The relationships between all variables in this study were tested by using data obtained from a structured survey conducted in the Old Quarter area in Hanoi.

Important findings from this research demonstrated that food image is comprised of four dimensions: food quality, food culture, contextual feature and atmospheric. The resulting four-dimensional structure of food image suggests that the images of "food culture" and "food quality" of Hanoi local food are crucial for sustaining the cuisine as one of the most influential factors that attract foreign tourists to visit Hanoi.

Several studies have supported that some tourist activities will lead to greater satisfaction and that satisfaction will result in positive destination loyalty intention. However, little empirical research has been done to examine tourist satisfaction based on food attributes. This study also confirms a previous theory suggesting that food image within a destination is an important antecedent of tourist satisfaction with the food experience. (Qing-Chi et al., 2013)

The relationship analysis indicates that food image appears to positively affect tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty intention. Tourist satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty intention such as intention to visit and positive word-of-mouth. Previous studies have proved that there is a strong relationship between satisfaction and behavior intention based on perceived experience (Ryu & Jang, 2006). Therefore, In destination marketing strategies, some improvement should be launched to enrich the image of Hanoi local food in order to facilitate the development of food tourism in the Hanoi in parallel with other niche tourism products. Furthermore, local government and marketers should improve the Hanoi local food image and tourist satisfaction with their food experience in order to enhance tourist perception of visiting quality and promote behavioral intention among them. The real competitive environment requires that it's necessary to create and maintain the identity of image through launching appropriate strategies. Hanoi marketers could promote Hanoi local food image base on its distinctiveness and diversity that reflect the unique culture.

This study has some limitation that need to be highlighted.

The main study limitation concerns the geographic area, i.e., the tourist site where the research was conducted. Due to the application of convenience sampling in the Old Quarter area, the findings cannot be generalized to the whole population of tourists visiting Hanoi. It would be useful to replicate this research in other regions such as the International Airport. These findings would provide a comprehensive picture of Hanoi food culture and more clear-cut findings about the role that Hanoi food plays in tourism. Future research could survey tourists in different destinations in other provinces in Vietnam.

In terms of the study instrument, using structured questions to measure variables has common disadvantages. Therefore, future research would benefit from applying both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The variables used in this study as the antecedents to destination loyalty intention were limited to food image and tourist satisfaction. Other variables affecting behaviors should also be investigated to improve the model in future study.

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