

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i3.754>

Integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior and Motivation Theory in Studying Tourist Consumption Behavior in Spiritual Tourism

Do Hai Yen¹, Nguyen Quang Vinh²

Abstract

The study's objective is to analyze the consumer behavior of tourists toward spiritual tourism through the combination of two theoretical models of motivation and planned behavior. The study employs the PLS-SEM method to analyze 12 hypotheses based on survey results from 500 tourists at three prominent spiritual tourism sites in Northern Vietnam: Huong Pagoda, Tran Temple, and Yen Tu Pagoda. The research findings indicate that 10 out of 11 hypotheses concerning direct relationships are accepted, including those involving Push Factors, Pull Factors, Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control about Behavioral Intention and Consumer Behavior. Only the connection between attitude and behavioral intention is rejected. This study also shows the mediating role of Behavioral Intention for 3/5 independent variables in the relationship between push factors, subjective norms, behavioral control, and consumer behavior in spiritual tourism programs. The conclusion, academic and managerial contribution, and research limitations are also discussed in this study.

Keywords: Theory of Planned Behavior, Motivation Theory, Tourist Consumption Behavior, Spiritual Tourism, Vietnam.

Introduction

Spiritual tourism is not just a growing trend, but also a widely accepted one in the global tourism industry. It has been attracting tourists who seek spiritual connection and a break from the pressures of modern life (Ariely et al., 2017; Patwardhan et al., 2020; Vu et al., 2024). These spiritual places, with their deep cultural and spiritual meanings, provide a platform for people to explore traditional and personal values (Muthuswamy & Alshiha, 2023). For tourism managers, understanding the process of choosing spiritual tourism destinations is crucial, especially in the context of the strong development of religious and belief activities in Vietnam in recent years. The increasing societal and state interest in developing spiritual tourism is a testament to its widespread acceptance (Wang et al., 2021). It is considered one of the solutions to meet the spiritual needs of the people while preserving and honoring traditional values and respecting noble human values.

According to the Institute for Tourism Development Research (Tuyen, 2023), about 95% of Vietnam's population has a religious life (among thousands of beliefs, the most popular are ancestor worship and Mother Goddess worship). In Vietnam, the North is an area with many unique spiritual heritages, such as Huong Pagoda, Yen Tu, and Tran Temple, attracting millions of visitors each year. According to statistics, Huong Pagoda welcomes more than 1.4 million visitors yearly, while Yen Tu welcomes about 700,000. Major festival events such as the Tran Temple Festival also attract hundreds of thousands of participants, creating significant economic and cultural impacts (VTV, 2020). However, current studies have only stopped at describing

¹ Hanoi School of Business and Management, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam . Email: Yendh@hsb.edu.vn.

² Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism, Thuongmai University, Hanoi Vietnam. Email: vinh.nq@tmu.edu.vn. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3618-9098> (Corresponding author)



spiritual activities at places of worship and descriptive statistics on the number of pilgrims and festival participants but have not highlighted the factors that promote and influence tourists' spiritual tourism behavior.

Although there have been many studies on spiritual tourism (B. Kim et al., 2020), detailed analyses related to the combination of theoretical frameworks of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) and Motivation Theory (MT) (Dann, 1981) are still limited. Current studies often only stop at discrete applications of specific theoretical frameworks such as the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction and destination loyalty (Carvache-Franco et al., 2024; Liao et al., 2021; Quang & Thuy, 2024) or applying the TPB model in studying tourist behavior (Asnawai & Sihombing, 2021; Behboodi et al., 2022) or applying MT in studying travel motivation (Damijanić, 2021; Dey et al., 2020; Su et al., 2020) without fully exploiting the interactive relationship between motivation theory and behavioral intention in the context of spiritual consumption behavior. Some studies also show the combination of theoretical frameworks in tourism research, such as the combination of TPB theory and norm activation model by Manosuthi et al. (2020) in the study of volunteer tourism or the combination of TPB and expectancy theory in urban tourism or Julina et al., 2021) in development of the TPB model by adding the religiosity variable as a moderator to measure the intention to visit halal tourism. In that context, more extensive studies are needed to provide a more integrated and systematic view in understanding tourists' motivations and intentions for special types of tourism with cultural and spiritual characteristics. This study's aim is to explain tourists' behavior by emphasizing the interaction between TPB and MT theoretical frameworks in consumer behavior research. It is not only an academic contribution but also provides recommendations for the development of spiritual tourism services at tourist destinations in Northern Vietnam.

Literature Review

Spiritual tourism

According to (Baker, 2003), spirituality is an aspect of human existence in which a person attempts to find meaning and purpose. It aims to orient one's journey in search of answers to the questions that guide one's life. Spirituality is a form of tourism that has a significant impact on health and well-being, thereby enhancing the quality of human life (Counted et al., 2018; Jafari et al., 2010; Vitorino et al., 2018). The original purpose of tourism is to bring people entertainment and peace of mind. Spiritual tourism, however, goes beyond these superficial needs and fulfills deep tourism needs, making it a unique and intriguing form of travel. Therefore, the essence of spiritual tourism is to seek answers for existence, mental and emotional health, and connection with the supreme divine (Buzinde, 2020; Ivona & Privitera, 2019)

Spiritual tourism is defined as a type of tourism that focuses on activities related to the individual's spiritual, mental, and religious experiences at sacred destinations (Sharpley & Jepson, 2011). It is a spatial journey and a search for inner peace, connection with metaphysical values, and expression of religious or spiritual beliefs (Smith & Kelly, 2006). This tourism includes cultural aspects, beliefs, and personal development, enriching the tourist experience in modern stress and social pressure. According to studies by Buzinde (2020) and Vu et al. (2024) spiritual tourism is often motivated by individual and collective motivations, including Individual Searching for meaning in life, psychological healing, or spiritual development. Collective: Participating in religious ceremonies and festivals to connect with the community. Studies by Cini et al. (2013) and Yoo et al. (2018) have shown that the intrinsic motivation of tourists is to improve their mental health and seek enlightenment or harmony with nature, while

extrinsic motivation includes the impact of external environments such as social influences and cultural or destination attraction. This sense of community is a significant aspect of spiritual tourism, making tourists feel connected and part of something bigger.

Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was developed by (Ajzen, 1991) from the Theory of Reasoned Behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975), which was created due to the limitation of the previous theory that human behavior is entirely under rational control. Predict human behavior based on three main factors: Attitude, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control. However, the TPB model has some behavioral prediction limitations (Werner, 2004). The first limitation is that the determinants of intention are not limited to attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Other factors may influence behavior. Based on empirical research, it has been shown that only 40% of the variation in behavior can be explained using the TPB (Ajzen, 1991; Werner, 2004).

Dann (1991) developed motivation theory (MT) to explain why individuals participate in specific actions by distinguishing between push and pull motivation. Push motivation is internally driven by the desire to discover oneself, achieve peace, or achieve spiritual satisfaction. Pull motivation comes from external factors, such as reputation, social expectations, or amenities at the destination. In tourism research, MT is frequently applied to examine the factors that drive tourists to select a particular destination or type of tourism.

The TPB model's limitation regarding a person's needs before engaging in an action or an individual's emotions during decision-making (Werner, 2004) requires explanatory factors for tourists' behaviors in participating in spiritual tourism programs. While the TBP model predicts behavior based on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, the MT model explains tourists' push and pull motivations for participating in a spiritual tourism destination (Yoo et al., 2018). Integrating these models enhances understanding of the relationship between motivation, intention, and consumption behavior in spiritual tourism.

Hypothesis Development

Push Motivation, Behavioral Intention and Consumer Behavior

Push motivation is the factors that motivate an individual to engage in a particular action (Jailani & Huda, 2024). Studies have shown that internal factors motivate an individual to move from intention to action (Casey, 2021; Damijanić, 2021; E. Kim et al., 2018). In that context, the study of Yoo et al. (2018) shows the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on behavioral intention and consumer behavior in tourism. The study of Sharpley & Sundaram (2005) shows that intrinsic motivation for spiritual tourism, such as the need to seek spiritual refuge, search for meaning in life, or enlightenment, strongly influences tourists' behavioral intention and consumer behavior for spiritual tourism.

Hypothesis:

H1: Push Factors positively influence tourists' behavioral intention to participate in spiritual tourism.

H2: Push Factors have a positive influence on the behavior of tourists participating in spiritual tourism

Pull Motivation, Behavioral Intention and Consumer Behavior

Pull motivation is the factor that attracts individuals to participate in a specific action (Jailani & Huda, 2024). External factors include natural and human tourism resources, the reputation of the destination, religious activities, and the convenience of physical facilities, which are promoted and introduced to attract tourists (Cini et al., 2013). Studies by Dey et al. (2020) have shown the positive influence of extrinsic factors on tourists' behavioral intentions and participation in spiritual tourism. When tourists feel the appeal of these factors, they will tend to participate (Sharpley & Sundaram, 2005).

Hypothesis:

H3: Pull Factors positively influence tourists' behavioral intentions to participate in spiritual tourism.

H4: Pull Factors positively influence tourists' behavioral intentions to participate in spiritual tourism.

Attitude, Behavioral Intention, and Consumer Behavior

Attitude is an individual's evaluation of a particular behavior (Al Rousan et al., 2024; Clark et al., 2019). Positive perceptions of the values of spiritual tourism will lead to positive attitudes towards this type of tourism of tourists (Ghazvini S. A. M., 2020). Studies by Julina et al. (2021) also show that awareness and feelings about the values that spiritual tourism brings, such as peace or psychological healing, strongly impact the intention to participate in spiritual tourism.

Hypothesis:

H5: Tourists' attitude positively influences behavioral intention to participate in spiritual tourism.

H6: Tourists' attitude positively influences their behavior in participating in spiritual tourism.

Subjective Norms, Behavioral Intention, and Consumer Behavior

Subjective norms are the pressures of society related to participating in a specific behavior (Julina et al., 2021). For Eastern societies like Vietnam, the community's customs and beliefs strongly influence tourists' participation in spiritual tourism activities (Tuyên, 2023). The study of Han et al. 2019) shows that encouragement from relatives increases the intention to visit spiritual tourism destinations.

Hypothesis:

H7: Subjective norms positively influence the behavioral intention of tourists participating in spiritual tourism.

H8: Subjective norms positively influence the consumer behavior of tourists participating in spiritual tourism.

Perceived Behavioral Control, Behavioral Intention, and Consumer Behavior

Perceived behavioral control is the degree to which individuals perceive the difficulty or ease of performing a particular behavior (Ahmed N., 2021; Clark et al., 2019). Factors such as time available, income, or destination accessibility can influence tourists' behavioral intention to participate in a tourism program. Studies by Asnawai & Sihombing (2021) show that when tourists perceive they have sufficient resources and capabilities to perform, their behavioral intention will become more assertive in participating in spiritual tourism programs. Research by

Al Rousan et al. (2024) also shows the strong influence of behavioral intention on consumer behavior.

Hypothesis:

H9: Perceived behavioral control positively influences tourists' behavioral intention to participate in spiritual tourism.

H10: Perceived Behavioral Control positively influences the Behavioral Intention of tourists participating in spiritual tourism.

H11: Behavioral Intention positively influences the Consumer Behavior of tourists in spiritual tourism.

The mediating role of Behavioral Intention

Factors such as intrinsic intention, extrinsic intention, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control have an indirect effect through behavioral intention on the behavior of performing a specific action ((Al-Jubari et al., 2019; Asnawai & Sihombing, 2021; Julina et al., 2021)). When tourists feel intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for spiritual tourism, they firmly intend to participate (Liao et al., 2021). This intention is an important mediator leading to actual behavior. When individuals hold positive attitudes, perceive spiritual or cultural values, receive encouragement from relatives, and have sufficient resources, their intention to participate in the trip becomes stronger. (Wang et al., 2021)

Hypothesis:

H12a: Push Factors indirectly affect consumer behavior through behavioral intention.

H12b: Pull Factors indirectly affect consumer behavior through behavioral intention.

H12c: Attitudes indirectly affect consumer behavior through behavioral intention.

H12d: Subjective Norms indirectly affect consumer behavior through behavioral intention.

H12e: Perceived Behavioral Controls indirectly affect consumer behavior through behavioral intention.

Methodology

The authors conducted a process that included three steps to test the research hypotheses: qualitative research, preliminary quantitative research, and formal quantitative research. The qualitative research involved in-depth interviews with several subjects, including tourists who had visited spiritual tourism destinations in Hanoi and experts in the tourism field. The collaborative nature of this research, involving a diverse range of subjects, made the findings more inclusive and comprehensive. The research results were instrumental in guiding the authors to make necessary adjustments to the model, measurement scale, and discoveries. The questions in the questionnaire were refined based on these adjustments before the implementation of the quantitative research, ensuring a reliable testing of the model. Drawing from a wide range of domestic and foreign studies, the authors selected scales developed by previous researchers, used in Vietnam, or revised to suit the conditions of Vietnam. The scales of the variables in the research model were built based on the following specific scales:

Table 1 Scales of the variables			
Variables	Observation variables	Coding	Source
Journal of Posthumanism			

Push Factors	I go to a spiritual destination to find peace of mind.	PF1	Dann, (1981) and (Sharpley & Sundaram (2005)
	I want to experience a sense of connection with spiritual values.	PF2	
	I plan to reduce pressure and stress through this trip.	PF3	
	I want to learn more about local culture and beliefs.	PF4	
Pull Factors	The natural landscape and spiritual space of the destination attract me.	PLF1	
	This spiritual destination is a significant pilgrimage site in Vietnam.	PLF2	
	I want to participate in festivals and religious events here.	PLF3	
	This destination is widely promoted in the media.	PLF4	
Attitude	I believe that spiritual tourism brings spiritual value to me.	ATT1	
	I think the destination is the ideal place to find the meaning of life.	ATT2	
	I feel that spiritual tourism is a meaningful activity in life.	ATT3	
	My family encourages me to participate in spiritual tourism.	SN1	
Subjective Norms	My friends often share their experiences at spiritual destinations and suggest that I participate.	SN2	(Ajzen (1991) and Julina et al. (2021)
	Participating in spiritual tourism helps me strengthen my relationship with the community.	SN3	
	I found it easy to arrange my time to participate in spiritual tourism.	PBC1	
Perceived Behavioral Control	The cost of traveling to this destination was reasonable for me.	PBC2	Wang et al. (2021)
	I found the services at this destination convenient and easy to use.	PBC3	
	I intend to participate in spiritual tourism shortly.	BI1	
Behavioral Intention	I am willing to recommend this destination to friends and relatives.	BI2	
	I plan to return to this destination to participate in spiritual festivals.	BI3	
Consumer Behavior	I spent money on spiritual offerings or services at this destination.	CB1	Wang et al. (2021)
	I was satisfied with the services and experiences at this destination.	CB2	

I often buy souvenirs related to my beliefs CB3
when I visit.

The study used the convenience sampling method to collect questionnaires from tourists at typical spiritual sites such as Huong Pagoda, Hanoi; Yen Tu Pagoda, Quang Ninh; and Tran Temple, Nam Dinh. Six hundred fifty questionnaires were collected in three months (from February to May 2024) using a direct survey (printed) and an online survey (Google Forms). The survey subjects included tourists who had participated in spiritual tourism at the research sites.

The study conducted Harman's single factor test to test the Common Method Bias (CMB). The results showed that three factors were extracted when ten observed variables were given for factor analysis without using a rotated matrix. The total variance extracted was <50%, so it can be concluded that the collected data does not have the CMB phenomenon (Cooper et al., 2020). In addition, the results of multicollinearity testing through the variance inflation index (VIF) showed that all VIF values were less than 2, indicating the absence of the CMB (Kock, 2015).

This study applied partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze survey data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS statistical data analysis tools. PLS-SEM was evaluated in two steps: measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. Measurement model evaluation is tested based on: Cronbach's Alpha (≥ 0.7), Composite Reliability ($CR \geq 0.7$), Average Variance Extracted ($AVE \geq 0.5$), and Discriminant Validity based on Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio ($HTMT \leq 0.85$). Structural model evaluation of the values such as the variance inflation index ($VIF < 3$), the influence level (f^2), the out-of-sample predictive ability coefficient (Q^2), and the explanatory coefficient of independent variables on a dependent variable (R^2) were used. The bootstrapping method was applied to test the hypothesis. The β values, t-values, and p-values are used to evaluate the significance of the relationship.

Research Results

Demographic Information

Out of the 650 survey questionnaires distributed, 500 were deemed valid and usable after invalid responses were removed, representing 76.9% of the questionnaires are used. Table 2 provides an overview of the demographic information of the tourists who participated in the study.

Table 2 Demographic information of the tourists

Characteristic		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	194	38.8
	Female	306	61.2
Age Group	Below 25	132	26.4
	25-45	254	50.8
	Above 45	114	22.8
Education Level	High school or below	132	26.4
	Vocational - College	180	36.0
	University or above	188	37.6
Destination	Huong Pagoda	148	29.6
	Tran Temple	185	37.0
	Yen Tu Pagoda	167	33.4

Visit Frequency	First-time	110	22.0
	Second time	251	50.2
	Third-time or more	139	27.8
Total		500	100.0

In the total sample of 500 tourists who visited spiritual tourism destinations, there were 194 male subjects, accounting for 38.8%, the number of female subjects was 306 people, accounting for 61.2%. This result is consistent with the specific reality of spiritual tourism when women tend to be the majority. Regarding the age of tourists, the subjects surveyed were 25 years old or younger, accounting for 26.4%. The number of spiritual tourists aged 25 to 40 accounted for 50.8%, accounting for the most significant proportion in this study, which is appropriate because of the characteristics of tourism services. The age group over 45 had the lowest proportion, accounting for 22.8%.

Regarding the educational level of tourists, the results in Table 2 show that 26.4% of tourists have a high school degree or lower; the number of people with vocational or college degrees accounts for 36.0. In comparison, people with university degrees or higher is 37.6%. The research results also show that the number of questions is distributed relatively evenly across all three survey destinations. Specifically, the survey destination of Huong Pagoda accounts for 29.6%, Tran Temple accounts for 37.0%, and Yen Tu Pagoda accounts for 33.4%. Regarding the frequency of visits to spiritual tourist attractions of tourists surveyed in this study, it also shows that most tourists visiting spiritual tourist attractions, including this survey, are more than once. In contrast, the number of people visiting these destinations for the first time accounts for only 22.0%.

Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement model, which includes 7 variables and 23 observed variables, was analyzed. The results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 Test for reliability and convergent

Variables	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	C.R	AVE
Push Factors	PF1	0.808	0.872	0.912	0.722
	PF2	0.866			
	PF3	0.880			
	PF4	0.843			
Pull Factors	PLF1	0.763	0.810	0.875	0.637
	PLF2	0.751			
	PLF3	0.857			
	PLF4	0.818			
Attitude	ATT1	0.882	0.849	0.907	0.766
	ATT2	0.867			
	ATT3	0.876			
Subjective Norms	SN1	0.817	0.808	0.886	0.723
	SN2	0.867			

	SN3	0.865			
Perceived Behavioral Control	PBC1	0.905	0.890	0.932	0.820
	PBC2	0.904			
	PBC3	0.907			
Behavioral Intention	BI1	0.906	0.892	0.933	0.822
	BI2	0.912			
	BI3	0.901			
Consumer Behavior	CB1	0.900	0.880	0.926	0.807
	CB2	0.893			
	CB3	0.902			

The results in Table 3 show that all observed variables have factor loading values greater than 0.7, Cronbach's Alpha reliability index, Composite Reliability (CR) greater than 0.7, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) index greater than 0.5, so the data analyzed here ensures the necessary reliability (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Table 4 shows that the model's Fornell-Larcker discriminant value is guaranteed because all values on the diagonal are more significant than the values in the corresponding column..

Table 4: Discriminant Validity Based on Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Attitude	Behavioral Intention	Consumer Behavior	Perceived Behavioral Control	Pull Factors	Push Factors
Attitude	0.875					
Behavioral Intention	0.120	0.907				
Consumer Behavior	0.216	0.431	0.898			
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.069	0.516	0.410	0.906		
Pull Factors	0.047	0.316	0.450	0.349	0.798	
Push Factors	0.162	0.244	0.311	0.127	0.151	0.850
Subjective Norms	0.209	0.372	0.512	0.332	0.353	0.260

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method is used to clarify the discriminability between concepts in the model. In theory, if all HTMT values are < 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015), then the discriminability between concepts is confirmed.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity Values Based on HTMT

	Attitud	Behavioral	Consume	Perceived	Pull	Push
--	---------	------------	---------	-----------	------	------

	e	Intention	r Behavior	Behavioral Control	Factors	Factors
Attitude						
Behavioral Intention	0.133					
Consumer Behavior	0.245	0.486				
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.077	0.578	0.464			
Pull Factors	0.052	0.368	0.530	0.404		
Push Factors	0.184	0.276	0.351	0.144	0.176	
Subjective Norms	0.241	0.435	0.604	0.392	0.432	0.306

The results in Table 5 show that all HTMT values are < 0.85 , confirming the discriminant validity between the concepts in the model. The concepts are measured independently, without serious multicollinearity. This result supports the discriminant validity, ensuring the theoretical and empirical basis for further model testing.

Structural Model Analysis

Table 6 provides the values of f^2 , VIF, R^2 Adjusted, and Q^2 , which help assess the influence of independent variables on Behavioral Intention and Consumer Behavior:

Table 6: Effect Sizes and Model Quality Indicators

	Behavioral Intention		Consumer Behavior	
	f^2	VIF	f^2	VIF
Push Factors	0.024	1.092	0.029	1.118
Pull Factors	0.030	1.232	0.077	1.246
Attitude	0.001	1.061	0.016	1.062
Subjective Norms	0.024	1.306	0.098	1.345
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.210	1.208	0.024	1.462
Behavioral Intention			0.022	1.509
R^2 Adjusted	0.330		0.421	
Q^2	0.270		0.335	

The analysis results presented in Table 6 indicate that the f^2 values demonstrate a significant influence of Perceived Behavioral Control ($f^2 = 0.210$) and Pull Factors ($f^2 = 0.030$) on Behavioral Intention. Additionally, Subjective Norms ($f^2 = 0.098$) and Pull Factors ($f^2 = 0.077$) are identified as important factors influencing Consumer Behavior (Cohen, 1988). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values range from 1.061 to 1.509, all below the threshold of 3, indicating no serious multicollinearity present (Hair et al., 2010). The R^2 Adjusted values show that the variables account for 33.0% of the variance in Behavioral Intention and 42.1% in Consumer Behavior, illustrating the model's adequacy. Furthermore, the Q^2 values of 0.270 and 0.335

The parameters used to analyze regression results and test hypotheses include the regression coefficient, which shows the independent variable's influence level on the dependent variable. Statistical value t was used to test statistical significance ($T > 1.96$). Probability value, confirming statistical significance ($P < 0.05$).

Table 7: Direct Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis		Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
H1	Push Factors -> Behavioral Intention	0.131	3.504	0.000	Accepted
H2	Push Factors -> Consumer Behavior	0.137	4.006	0.000	Accepted
H3	Pull Factors -> Behavioral Intention	0.096	2.146	0.032	Accepted
H4	Pull Factors -> Consumer Behavior	0.235	6.271	0.000	Accepted
H5	Attitude -> Behavioral Intention	0.032	0.787	0.432	Rejected
H6	Attitude -> Consumer Behavior	0.100	2.437	0.015	Accepted
H7	Subjective Norms -> Behavioral Intention	0.161	3.211	0.001	Accepted
H8	Subjective Norms -> Consumer Behavior	0.274	7.004	0.000	Accepted
H9	Perceived Behavioral Control -> Behavioral Intention	0.410	8.677	0.000	Accepted
H10	Perceived Behavioral Control -> Consumer Behavior	0.143	2.952	0.003	Accepted
H11	Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.136	3.079	0.002	Accepted

The results in Table 7 show that 10/11 hypotheses for direct relationships are accepted, specifically: Push Factors have a direct impact on Behavioral Intention ($O = 0.131$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$) and Consumer Behavior ($O = 0.137$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$) so hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted. Similarly, Pull Factors also have a direct impact on Behavioral Intention ($O = 0.096$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$) and Consumer Behavior ($O = 0.235$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$), so hypotheses H3 and H4 are accepted, it can be seen that in this study, factors belonging to the Motivation theory model have a direct impact on tourists' behavioral intentions and consumer behavior for spiritual tourism. Regarding the behavioral intention model factors, the results in Table 7 show that the customer's attitude towards spiritual tourism has no impact on behavioral intention but has an impact on consumer behavior ($O = 0.10$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$). Meanwhile, Subjective Norms have a direct impact on Behavioral Intention ($O = 0.161$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$) and Consumer Behavior ($O = 0.274$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$). Similarly, Perceived Behavioral Control also has a strong

influence on Behavioral Intention ($O = 0.410$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$) and Consumer Behavior ($O = 0.143$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$). Thus, hypotheses H6, H7, H8, H9, and H10 are accepted, while hypothesis H5 is not accepted when it shows no relationship between the attitude factor towards spiritual tourism of tourists. Finally, hypothesis H11 is also accepted when the results in Table 7 show that the Behavioral Intention factor directly impacts Consumer Behavior ($O = 0.136$, $t > 1.96$, $P < 0.05$).

Hypothesis H12 refers to the mediating role of the behavioral intention variable in the relationship between the MT and TPB variables in consumption behavior with spiritual tourism destinations. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Indirect Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis		Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	Confidence Interval		P Values	Results
				2.5 %	97.5 %		
H12a	Push Factors -> Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.018	2.316	0.005	0.036	0.021	Accepted
H12b	Pull Factors -> Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.013	1.694	0.011	0.031	0.091	Rejected
H12c	Attitude -> Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.004	0.713	-0.007	0.017	0.476	Rejected
H12d	Subjective Norms -> Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.022	2.181	0.005	0.044	0.030	Accepted
H12e	Perceived Behavioral Control -> Behavioral Intention -> Consumer Behavior	0.056	2.887	0.019	0.095	0.004	Accepted

The research results in Table 8 show that Behavioral Intention has a mediating role for 3 out of 5 independent factors, specifically Behavioral Intention has a mediating role between Push Factors and Consumer Behavior ($O=0.018$, $t>1.96$, $P<0.05$), Subjective Norms and Consumer Behavior ($O=0.022$, $t>1.96$, $P<0.05$) and Perceived Behavioral Control and Consumer Behavior ($O=0.056$, $t>1.96$, $P<0.05$). In addition, the research results do not show the mediating role of Behavioral Intention for Pull Factors and Attitude in the relationship with Consumer Behavior, so it can be concluded that hypotheses H12a, H12d, and H12e are accepted. Figure 1 illustrates

the structure of the research model and the significance of the paths within variables.

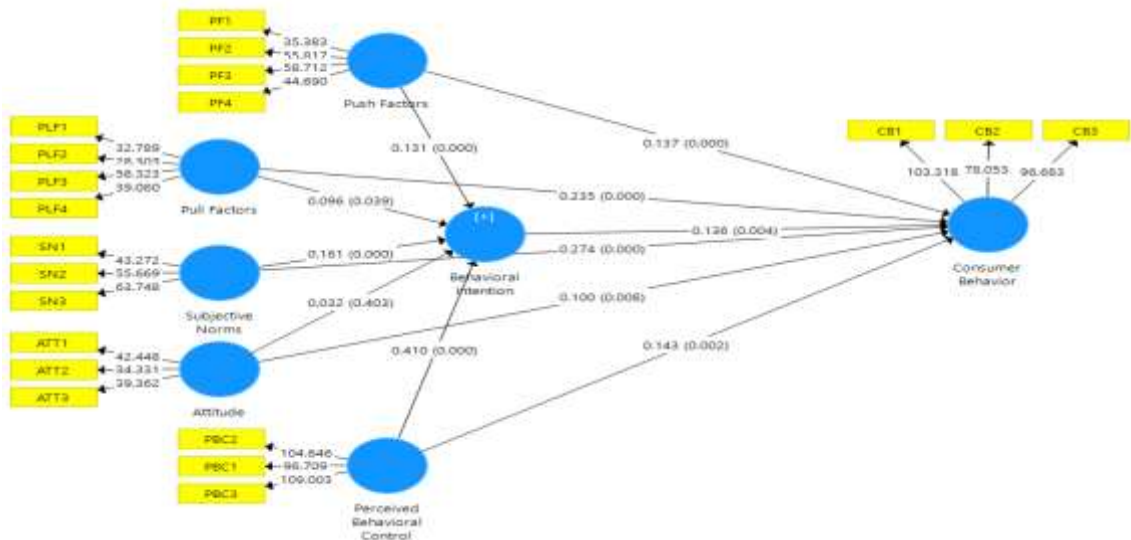


Figure 1: The structure of the research model

Discussion

Spiritual tourism is a unique form of travel that revolves around human beliefs and faith. As everyday life becomes increasingly stressful and demanding, the need for a place to rest the soul and heal psychological wounds, often guided by a specific spiritual belief, is growing stronger. The research results show that both factors of the motivational theory model positively impact tourists' behavioral intentions and consumer behavior for spiritual tourism, demonstrating that the hypotheses closely reflect reality. Studies by Casey (2021); Damijanić (2021) and E. Kim et al. (2018) also show the impact of internal factors on behavioral intentions and consumer behavior for spiritual tourism. Besides, Yoo et al. (2018) and Sharpley & Sundaram (2005) also showed that external factors (pull factors such as natural landscape and spiritual space) significantly impact satisfaction and loyalty to spiritual tourism. However, previous studies have not verified the relationship between behavioral intentions and spiritual tourism behavior.

Although Ajzen's (1991) theoretical model of planned behavior has been used quite commonly for consumer behavior studies, besides factors such as subjective norms and behavioral control, this study reveals that the hypothesis linking attitude to behavioral intentions is not supported, despite factors that directly influence consumer behavior and intentions as the similar results of Al Rousan et al. (2024); Clark et al. (2019) and Julina et al. (2021). However, it demonstrates the direct effect of attitude on tourists' consumption behavior in spiritual tourism programs.

The findings on the mediating role of behavioral intention highlight a distinct perspective. While prior studies essentially affirm its mediating function (Ahmed N., 2021; Clark et al., 2019), this study reveals that behavioral intention only mediates the relationships of three out of five independent variables—specifically push factors, subjective norms, and behavioral control—concerning consumer behavior in spiritual tourism programs.

This result confirms that Dann's (1981) motivational theory effectively addresses the limitations of Ajzen's (1991) Planned Behavior model. The study's findings highlight significant points from

the integration of both models compared to previous research.

Conclusion

The study's objective is to analyze the consumer behavior of tourists toward spiritual tourism through the combination of two theoretical models of motivation and planned behavior. The study employs the PLS-SEM method to analyze 12 hypotheses based on survey results from 500 tourists at three prominent spiritual tourism sites in Northern Vietnam: Huong Pagoda, Tran Temple, and Yen Tu Pagoda. The research findings indicate that 10 out of 11 hypotheses concerning direct relationships are accepted, including those involving Push Factors, Pull Factors, Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control in relation to Behavioral Intention and Consumer Behavior. Only the connection between attitude and behavioral intention is rejected. This study also shows the mediating role of Behavioral Intention for 3/5 independent variables in the relationship between push factors, subjective norms, behavioral control, and consumer behavior in spiritual tourism programs. This result confirms that Dann's (1981) motivational theory model is suitable to supplement the shortcomings of Ajen's (1991) Planned Behavior model. The combination of these two models from the results of this study shows some noteworthy points when compared with previous.

Academically, The study demonstrates the suitability of the hybrid model combining Dann's (1981) motivational theory with Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior. Additionally, the mediating role of behavioral intention has been tested, yielding significant results. While previous research indicated that behavioral intention mediates the relationship between attitude variables, subjective norms, behavioral control, and consumer behavior, this study reveals that it only mediates the relationship between subjective norms, behavioral control, and consumer behavior. The influence of behavioral control variables on behavioral intention is academically significant. The high impact of pull factor, subjective norms, and consumer behavior indicate the importance of the tourists's living environment . This result highlights another aspect of Eastern societies' spiritual and cultural values, such as Vietnam.

The research findings offer valuable insights for managers of spiritual tourism destinations. The results show that managers need to pay special attention to issues related to improving service quality and promoting the image of spiritual tourism destinations because these factors strongly attract tourists and affect their consumption behavior. The research results also show the strong influence of behavioral control factors on behavioral intentions, which shows the need for tourism programs for each customer segment. It is necessary to classify and select customer segments according to free time, ability to pay, and accessibility to spiritual tourism destinations. In fact, for Vietnamese tourists, going to a temple is not only for entertainment or psychological healing but also has a sacred spiritual meaning, connecting real life and spiritual life besides conventional values; this type of tourism also brings the value of faith to tourists. They believe that their prayers will be witnessed and helped by supernatural beings, so they are willing to pay significant expenses for offerings at the destination. This study has important implications for spiritual tourism destination managers in building, promoting, and implementing spiritual tourism programs.

While the study offers valuable theoretical and practical insights, it is limited by focusing on just three tourist destinations in Northern Vietnam. The average R^2 value further indicates that the model's predictive capability is still constrained. The research model only stops at analyzing the positive impact without any factors regulating the relationships or controlling factors for the dependent variable. In addition, the research time is during the festival season (spring), so it does

not show all the behavioral changes compared to other regular seasons of the year for tourists for spiritual tourism. Further studies need to rely on the limitations pointed out in this study to improve the model and have a more detailed empirical analysis.

References

- Ahmed N., L. C. K. A. Q. S. A. N. S. & R. F. (2021). Purchase intention toward organic food among young consumers using theory of planned behavior: role of environmental concerns and environmental awareness. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 64(5), 796–822.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The Theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179–211.
- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1975). A Bayesian analysis of attribution processes. *Psychological Bulletin*, 82(2), 261.
- Al Rousan, R., Siddiqui, S., & Bano, N. (2024). Urban tourists' intention towards visiting national parks: an exertion of theory of planned behaviour and expectancy theory. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 7(2), 653–675.
- Al-Jubari, I., Hassan, A., & Liñán, F. (2019). Entrepreneurial intention among University students in Malaysia: integrating self-determination theory and the theory of planned behavior. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 15, 1323–1342.
- Ariely, D., Dalkir, K., Guay, F., Vallerand, R. J., Blanchard, C., Mishra, D., Maheshwari, N., & Sun, C.-C. (2017). Spiritual tourism development: a comprehensive synthesis for sustainable destination planning and growth. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 15(3), 175–213. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2010.04.066>
- Asnawai, A., & Sihombing, P. R. (2021). The Antecedent Of Intention To Visit Halal Tourism Areas using The Theory Of Planned Behavior: The Moderating Effect Of Religiosity. *Journal of Tourism Management Research*, 8(2), 127–135.
- Baker, D. C. (2003). Studies of the inner life: The impact of spirituality on quality of life. *Quality of Life Research*, 12, 51–57.
- Behboodi, O., Arabshahi, M., & Pashaei, M. (2022). The effect of tourists' memories on Tourist purchasing behavior: An approach to spiritual tourism (Case Study: Tourists in Mashhad). *International Journal of Tourism, Culture & Spirituality*, 5(2), 29–49.
- Buzinde, C. N. (2020). Theoretical linkages between well-being and tourism: The case of self-determination theory and spiritual tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 83, 102920.
- Carvache-Franco, M., Regalado-Pezúa, O., Carvache-Franco, O., & Carvache-Franco, W. (2024). Sociodemographic aspects, satisfaction, loyalty, and motivations in religious tourism. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2401145.
- Casey, M. H. (2021). Understanding the Alabama agritourism industry: Motivation, value, and cost. Auburn University.
- Cini, F., Kruger, S., & Ellis, S. (2013). A model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations on subjective well-being: The experience of overnight visitors to a national park. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 8, 45–61.
- Clark, E., Mulgrew, K., Kannis-Dyand, L., Schaffer, V., & Hoberg, R. (2019). Theory of planned behaviour: Predicting tourists' pro-environmental intentions after a humpback whale encounter. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(5), 649–667.
- Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (2020). *Applied behavior analysis* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Counted, V., Possamai, A., & Meade, T. (2018). Relational spirituality and quality of life 2007 to 2017: An integrative research review. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, 16, 1–18.

- Damijanić, A. T. (2021). Travel motivations as criteria in the wellness tourism market segmentation process. *Academica Turistica-Tourism and Innovation Journal*, 13(2).
- Dann, G. M. S. (1981). Tourist motivation an appraisal. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 8(2), 187–219.
- Dey, B., Mathew, J., & Chee-Hua, C. (2020). Influence of destination attractiveness factors and travel motivations on rural homestay choice: the moderating role of need for uniqueness. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research*, 14(4), 639–666. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCTHR-08-2019-0138>
- Ghazvini S. A. M., T. D. J. & S. J. (2020). Environmental concerns and attitudes of tourists towards national park uses and services. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 31, 100296.
- Hair Jr, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2021). A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Sage publications.
- Han, H., Al-Ansi, A., Koseoglu, M. A., Lin, P. M. C., Park, J., Yu, J., & Kim, W. (2019). Halal tourism: travel motivators and customer retention. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(9), 1012–1024.
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., & Henseler J., R. C. M. & S. M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), 115–135.
- Ivona, A., & Privitera, D. (2019). Places and religious bands: Explorations in spiritual tourism. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 7(4), 7.
- Jafari, E., Dehshiri, G. R., Eskandari, H., Najafi, M., Heshmati, R., & Hoseinifar, J. (2010). Spiritual well-being and mental health in university students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 1477–1481.
- Jailani, M., & Huda, M. (2024). The Motivation of People Going to Hajj Repeatedly: Discussion About Experience and Awareness of Religion as Islamic Culture in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Al-Banjari: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 23(1), 51–72.
- Julina, Asnawi, A., & Sihombing, P. R. (2021). The antecedent of intention to visit halal tourism areas using the theory of planned behavior: the moderating effect of religiosity.
- Kim, B., Kim, S., & King, B. (2020). Religious tourism studies: evolution, progress, and future prospects. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 45(2), 185–203.
- Kim, E., Fredline, L., & Cuskelly, G. (2018). Heterogeneity of sport event volunteer motivations: A segmentation approach. *Tourism Management*, 68, 375–386.
- Kock, N. (2015). Common method bias in PLS-SEM: A full collinearity assessment approach. *International Journal of E-Collaboration*, 11(4), 1–10.
- Liao, Y. K., Wu, W. Y., Truong, G. N. T., Binh, P. N. M., & Van Vu, V. (2021). A model of destination consumption, attitude, religious involvement, satisfaction, and revisit intention. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 27(3), 330–345.
- Manosuthi, N., Lee, J.-S., & Han, H. (2020). Predicting the revisit intention of volunteer tourists using the merged model between the theory of planned behavior and norm activation model. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37(4), 510–532.
- Muthuswamy, V. V., & Alshiha, A. A. (2023). Effect of Religiosity, Religious Motivation and Cultural Motivation on Destination Loyalty and Emotional Connection: Exploring Mediating Effect of Religious Tourism. *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion*.
- Patwardhan, V., Ribeiro, M. A., Woosnam, K. M., Payini, V., & Mallya, J. (2020). Visitors' loyalty to religious tourism destinations: Considering place attachment, emotional experience and religious affiliation. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 36, 100737.
- Quang, N. N., & Thuy, D. C. (2024). Mindfulness affecting loyalty with mediating role of customer experience in the context of adventure tourism in Vietnam. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2312651.
- Sharpley, R., & Jepson, D. (2011). Rural tourism: A spiritual experience? *Annals of Tourism Research*,

- Sharpley, R., & Sundaram, P. (2005). Tourism: A sacred journey? The case of ashram tourism, India. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 7(3), 161–171.
- Smith, M., & Kelly, C. (2006). Wellness tourism. In *Tourism recreation research* (Vol. 31, Issue 1, pp. 1–4). Taylor & Francis.
- Stone, M. (1974). Cross-validatory choice and assessment of statistical predictions. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series B (Methodological)*, 36(2), 111–133.
- Su, D. N., Nguyen, N. A. N., Nguyen, Q. N. T., & Tran, T. P. (2020). The link between travel motivation and satisfaction towards a heritage destination: The role of visitor engagement, visitor experience and heritage destination image. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 34(December 2019), 100634. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2020.100634>
- Tuyên, V. V. (2023). Trends and solutions for developing spiritual tourism products in Vietnam. Institute for Tourism Development Research. https://itdr.org.vn/nghien_cuu/xu-huong-va-giai-phap-phat-trien-san-pham-du-lich-tam-linh-o-viet-nam/
- Vitorino, L. M., Lucchetti, G., Leão, F. C., Vallada, H., & Peres, M. F. P. (2018). The association between spirituality and religiousness and mental health. *Scientific Reports*, 8(1), 17233.
- VTV. (2020). Localities welcome high numbers of tourists during Tet [Broadcast]. <https://english.vtv.vn/news/localities-welcome-high-numbers-of-tourists-during-tet-20220209151001015.htm>
- Vu, V. Van, Le, C. C., & Nguyen, T. Van. (2024). Factors Affecting Revisit Intentions at Spiritual-cultural Tourist Destinations in Vietnam. *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 12(1), 11.
- Wang, Z., Yang, P., & Li, D. (2021). The influence of heritage tourism destination reputation on tourist consumption behavior: A case study of world cultural heritage shaolin temple. *SAGE Open*, 11(3), 21582440211030276.
- Werner, P. (2004). Reasoned action and planned behavior. *Middle Range Theories: Application to Nursing Research*, 125–147.
- Yoo, C.-K., Yoon, D., & Park, E. (2018). Tourist motivation: an integral approach to destination choices. *Tourism Review*, 73(2), 169–185.