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TÁC ĐỘNG CỦA HOẠT ĐỘNG DÀNH CHO LGBT ĐỐI VỚI Ý ĐỊNH DU LỊCH CỦA CỘNG ĐỒNG LGBT TẠI VIỆT NAM: TÁC ĐỘNG TRUNG GIAN CỦA HÌNH ẢNH ĐIỂM ĐẾN

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Tóm tắt

Nghiên cứu dưới đây làm rõ vai trò trung gian của hình ảnh điểm đến trong mối quan hệ giữa các hoạt động dành cho cộng đồng LGBT và ý định du lịch của những du khách thuộc cộng đồng này. Dữ liệu nghiên cứu được thu thập từ 357 cá nhân trong cộng đồng LGBT; sau đó, dữ liệu tiếp tục được xử lý và phân tích thông qua mô hình phương trình cấu trúc tuyến tính (SEM) bằng việc sử dụng SPSS 25 và AMOS 24. Kết quả cho thấy, các hoạt động dành cho cộng đồng LGBT có ảnh hưởng đáng kể đến hình ảnh của điểm đến, dẫn đến tăng ý định đi du lịch của họ. Dựa trên kết quả này, nhóm nghiên cứu đề xuất một số khuyến nghị cho các khách sạn, công ty du lịch và những nhà quản lý nhằm thu hút thêm nhiều du khách tiềm năng thuộc cộng đồng LGBT trong tương lai.

Từ khóa: hoạt động dành cho cộng đồng LGBT, hình ảnh điểm đến, ý định du lịch

THE IMPACT OF LGBT ACTIVITIES ON TRAVEL INTENTIONS OF LGBT INDIVIDUALS IN VIETNAM: THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF DESTINATION IMAGE

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Abstract

This research examines the mediating role of destination image in the relationship between LGBT activities and the intention to travel in the LGBT community. A survey was conducted to gather data from 357 respondents in the LGBT community. The data was further processed and analyzed by utilizing structural equation modeling (SEM) by using SPSS 25 and AMOS 24. The results indicate that LGBT activities have a considerable influence on a destination's image, leading to stronger travel intentions. Based on the findings, this research paper enriches the empirical research about LGBT travel and tourism prospects in Vietnam, thus proposing some recommendations for hotels, travel agencies and tourism destination managers in order to attract more potential LGBT visitors.

Keywords: LGBT activities, Destination image, Travel intention

1. Introduction

In the present context of increasing support towards sexual orientation diversity, destinations with visibility and acceptance of LGBT citizens have fostered specialized markets for LGBT tourism worldwide (Bömkes, 2011). Likewise, Vietnamese tourism holds great promise for global LGBT travel (Hong, 2013) since it possesses scenic landscapes with unique cultural attractions, thus making it a potential LGBT destination across continents (Truong, 2006). If diversity and inclusivity are fully embraced by the Vietnamese tourism industry, it will be able to attract new groups of tourists to support the economy (Haley, 1997). Research in this realm can expose vital insights that inform the development of targeted interventions, policies, and support systems for the promotion of LGBT well-being through travel. Recognizing LGBT tourism's growth as a coping strategy can influence marketing, destination development, and safe space creation globally, benefiting not exclusively homosexuals but society as a whole.

Several international studies have emphasized the significance of supportive communities as a crucial factor influencing LGBT individuals' decision to travel. These communities provide emotional support, reduce isolation, promote social connections, and foster a sense of belonging (Wellman, B., & Wortley, S., 1990). However, there exists very limited available information regarding LGBT tourism in Vietnam. Hence, this study was conducted to emphasize the importance of tourism services tailored to LGBT tourists' preferences and needs. By the same token, the research team aims to highlight factors influencing the LGBT community's travel intention, which include LGBT activities and destination image, thereby providing valuable insights and recommendations for the development of inclusive and sustainable tourism practices that cater to the needs and preferences of the LGBT community.

2. Literature review

2.1. Push-pull theory

The 'push-pull factor' compendium hypothesis developed by Tolman (1959) and later Dann (1977), is possibly the most well-known theory in the field of tourism research (Uysal et al., 2008). In this theory, "pull" factors are those that draw tourists to a specific destination (for example, sunshine, sea, etc.) and are perceived to be valued in the object of travel. "Push" factors, on the other hand, refer to the tourists as the subject and address the elements that drive them to travel

(for instance, escape, nostalgia, etc.) (Dann, 1977). In this research, the push-pull theory is utilized to indicate LGBT activities and destination image as pull factors, acting as the motivation for the LGBT community to have travel intention.

2.2. Theory of planned behavior (TPB) model

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) were the first people to introduce this theory, which includes three key elements: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. This model is an expansion of the theory of reasoned action (TRA), which focuses on individual motivational factors, or the drive, to have specific intentions and perform actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991, 2001; T. Lam, C.H.C. Hsu, 2005; DE Montano, D Kasprzyk, 2015). In this research paper, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) model is employed to investigate the complex behavioral intention when choosing a travel destination in the LGBT community.

2.3. LGBT

Biological sex, determined by reproductive organs and gametes, categorizes individuals into male and female. This distinction differs from gender identity, which is shaped by personal and social influences, and it can be either stable or changeable during different phases of one's lifetime (Bussen K., 2011). The way people identify as male or female can have a direct impact on their self-perception and also acts as an important foundation for their interactions with others (T.D. Steensma et al., 2013). Sexual orientation, on the other hand, encompasses lasting attractions to same, opposite, or both genders (Derek R., 2016), shaping one's identity and community belonging. Under the scope of this paper, the targeted population is LGBT tourists - LGBT consumers on tourism. LGBT is the acronym of "lesbian", "gay", "bisexual", and "transgender". This term is used to refer to people who have sexual fluidity or changes in sexual orientation.

2.4. LGBT activities

LGBT activities can include Pride parades, which have become "an entertaining and celebratory tourist event" (Johnston, 2005) that attract international and domestic LGBT tourists. In the context of Vietnam, Nguyen (2022) determines that the VietPride Festival in Vietnam has become the foremost annual series of events for the LGBT community to foster pride as well as unity, and support Vietnamese LGBT. Over the past decade, it has evolved into a significant cultural celebration, which not only attracts a great number of participants and support from diverse groups but also leads to positive changes in social perceptions.

2.5. Destination image

Destination image, defined by Kotler, Haider, and Rein (1993), as cited in Murphy et al., (2000) is a combination of a people's beliefs, thoughts, and impressions of a place, linked to the significance of atmosphere to a tourism experience. Also, according to Phelps (1986, as cited in Ying-Chan Liu et al., 2018), destination image is described as a person's overall perception or the whole set of impressions of a place. In this study, destination image is evaluated in terms of LGBT-friendliness, safety, and service quality.

2.6. Travel intention

Travel intention refers to an individual's anticipated or planned future behavior related to travel and engaging in a particular trip (Swan, 1981; Armitage & Conner, 2001; as cited in T. Lam,

C.H.C. Hsu, 2006). Jang et al., 2009 state that travel intention is formed when each desires to embark on a journey. It results from a cognitive process that transforms motivation into behavior, manifesting as an actionable commitment to travel. In this study, the authors define travel intention as an expectation of potential LGBT tourists for leisure or vacation purposes.

3. Research model and proposed hypotheses

As LGBT tourism is a specific niche, this tourist segment requires tailored services due to pervasive heteronormativity, leading to stigmatization toward the LGBT community (Vorobjovas, 2015). Therefore, to attract the targeted market, there is an urgent need for non-judgemental spaces for LGBT individuals. Despite not seeking special treatment, LGBT travelers favor a gay-friendly and non-homophobic milieu (Melián-González, Gil and Araña, 2011). Besides common services such as bars, restaurants, shops, or clubs, LGBT events such as drag shows or pride parades can raise the image of the destinations by making them appear trendy (Hahm, Ro and Olson, 2017). LGBT travelers are drawn to these places not only for leisure but also for building meaningful connections and fostering a sense of belonging. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: The LGBT activities have a positive impact on the destination image.

Destination image can influence the Travel intention of the LGBT community in both positive and negative ways because the perception of a destination by tourists is significantly influenced by the destination image (Remoaldo et al., 2014). On the positive side, LGBT tourists will have a strong tendency to choose places that allow them to enjoy themselves without having to suppress themselves (Hughes, 2002 a, 2002 b, cited in Yael, Amit, Isaac Mizrachi, and C. Michael, 2019). Furthermore, Karl, Bauer, Ritchie, & Passauer, 2020 used a research paper by Chen, Hua, & Wang, 2013. He stated that “a positive destination image can weaken the impact of constraints on travel intentions”. However, on the negative side, literature reviews that travelers tend to form their travel choices influenced by their perception of risk rather than actual circumstances (Fuchs & Reichel, 2004; Rittichainuwat & Chakraborty, 2009; Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992). More specifically, LGBT travelers often avoid destinations that cater to families and children, as there may be instances of disapproval from heterosexual families towards gay couples (Clift and Forrest, 1999; Hughes, 2002; Lucena, Jarvis, and Weeden, 2015). Based on the above discussion, this study supposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Destination image has a positive impact on the LGBT community's travel intentions.

Research indicates that a majority of LGBT tourists tend to choose destinations recognized for being gay-friendly, with concentrated establishments and events catering to the LGBT community (Hughes & Deutsch, 2010; Ram et al., 2019). In a previous study, some participants stated that pride festivals created a space for them to show that being LGBT is normal (Sonay et al., 2019), thus providing them with the opportunity to embrace their true selves (Poria, 2007). Hence, the presence of festivals or events that are oriented towards LGBT represents the “pull” factors as well as the drive which, in other words, are the reason for customers to choose their particular destination (Uysal et al., 2008; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). From the previous analysis of LGBT activities in other contexts, both Western and non-Western ones, we would like to look through the lens of Vietnam. Therefore, our research suggests the following hypothesis:

H3: The LGBT activities have a positive impact on the LGBT community's travel intentions.

In today's dynamic and competitive global economy, destination image is widely acknowledged as a significant instrument to empower the travel industry (Afshardoost and Eshaghi, 2020). According to some previous research, there exists a positive relationship between destination image and the intention to travel (Chaulagain, Wiitala, & Fu, 2019; Kani, Aziz, Sambasivan, & Bojei, 2017) as well as the intention to recommend (Stylidis, Shani and Belhassen, 2017). As elaborated in H1, LGBT tourists tend to be attracted by places that are associated with being LGBT-friendly. As a result, they would perceive these destinations positively, forming a favorable destination image. In light of this, destination image might act as a mediating factor between LGBT activities and travel intention, shaping travelers' perceptions of a destination and influencing individuals' desire to visit. Thus, the research introduces the following hypothesis:

H4: Destination image has a mediating effect on the relationship between LGBT activities and travel intention.

Based on the aforementioned analysis, the model is proposed as follows

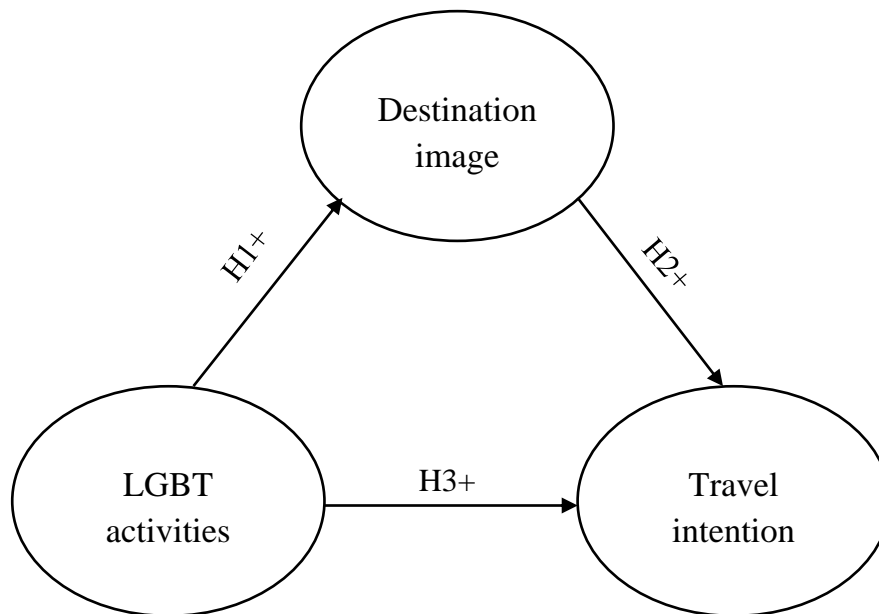


Figure 1. Proposed research model

Source: Authors' suggestion

4. Research methodology

4.1. Questionnaire design

The survey was distributed online with two parts: the first part included demographic questions, while the second part aimed to gather respondents' opinions on factors influencing their travel intentions. Each factor in the research model is measured by 3-6 items using the Likert scale varying from 1 - Strongly disagree/Very unimportant to 5 - Strongly agree/Very important.

Table 1. Observed variables in the research model

Variables	Code	Observed variables	Source
<i>Factors influencing the LGBT community's travel intention</i>			
LGBT activities (LA)	LA1	I am interested in LGBT-specific entertainment venues (e.g. saunas, massage, pride parades, etc.).	G. Prayag et al. (2023)
	LA2	LGBT community events and festivals make me want to travel.	
	LA3	I want to experience LGBT-themed nightlife (e.g. bars, clubs, drag shows, etc.)	
	LA4	LGBT tours (e.g. guided tours with other sexuality or gender-diverse individuals) are one of the LGBT activities I want to participate in.	
Destination image (DI)	DI1	The destination is LGBT-friendly.	Ram et al. (2019), Byon and Zhang (2010)
	DI2	The destination is safe and private.	
	DI3	The destination offers interesting cultural events (festivals and/or concerts).	
	DI4	The destination has good service quality.	
	DI5	The destination has beautiful scenery.	
	DI6	The destination offers good value for my travel money.	
<i>Intention to travel of LGBT community</i>			
Travel intention (TI)	TI1	I have a list of places I want to visit.	Jang et al. (2009), Mohammed Abubakar (2016)
	TI2	I predict I will travel in the near future.	
	TI3	I am planning to travel in the near future.	

Source: Authors' compilation

4.2. Data collection

According to Hair *et al.* (2014), the minimum sample size required for exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was determined to be from 100 to 200. Applying a non-probability convenience sampling technique, the survey questionnaire was sent online to Vietnamese people in the North,

South, and Central of Vietnam and 357 valid responses were received, satisfying the minimum sample size requirement. The data was collected from January to February 2024.

Most respondents are bisexual-oriented, accounting for 38.38% of the total population. The majority of surveyees are aged 18 to 23 (46.5%), while the region with the highest rate of responses is the North (48.46%). Around 48,2 % participants earn more than 10,000,000 VND per month.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Items		Number of surveys	Percent (%)
Sexual orientation	Bisexual	137	38.38
	Gay	121	33.89
	Lesbian	52	14.57
	Transgender	28	7.84
	Others	19	5.32
Age	18 - 23	166	46.50
	24 - 29	144	40.34
	30 - 35	26	7.28
	36 - 40	10	2.80
	41 - 50	5	1.40
	Over 50	6	1.68
Monthly income	Below 5,000,000 VND	87	24.37
	5,000,000 - 10,000,000 VND	98	27.45
	11,000,000 - 15,000,000 VND	76	21.29
	16,000,000 - 20,000,000 VND	49	13.73
	21,000,000 - 30,000,000 VND	28	7.84
	30,000,000 VND and above	19	5.32

Localities	The North	173	48.46
	The South	112	31.37
	The Central	72	20.17
Total		357	100.00

Source: Authors' compilation

4.3. Analytical methods

We have used quantitative surveys in this research. To properly assess the study's feasibility, quantitative analysis is carried out with a preliminary survey of 50 individuals before we conduct our official survey to collect data from 357 Vietnamese. After that, we employ SPSS 25 and AMOS 24 to run Cronbach's Alpha test, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) in evaluating the impact of factors that affect LGBT's traveling intention.

5. Research results and discussions

5.1. Research results

5.1.1 Testing the reliability of the scale

The authors have used Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the internal consistency reliability of factors and analyze the close interrelationship between the observed variables in one factor. The value can be considered as a high reliability and acceptable index when it is equal to or greater than 0.6 (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, based on the previous research of Hair et al. (2010), this study also uses the value of 0.3 to evaluate if the relevance of these observed variables in the same factor happens or not. The Cronbach's Alpha test results have been outlined specifically in **Table 3** below with all factors being greater than 0.6 (the smallest value belongs to the dependent variable TI and the highest one belongs to the mediating variable DI, 0.879 and 0.933 respectively). The correlation coefficients of all 13 observed variables (3 factors) in total are greater than 0.3, which is the smallest value to be considered as accepted. To be specific, the observed variable TI1 with a total correlation of 0.703 is the smallest number while the value of 0.833 belongs to the observed variable DI6 is the largest among all variables. There is no case of Cronbach's Alpha if the item is deleted being higher than the original Cronbach's Alpha. Therefore, all observed variables are accepted and used in the following stage of analysis.

Table 3. The results of testing the reliability of the scales

Variable name	Number of items	Variable code	Cronbach's Alpha
LGBT activities	4	LA1, LA2, LA3, LA4	0.904

Destination image	6	DI1, DI2, DI3, DI4, DI5, DI6	0.933
Travel intention	3	TI1, TI2, TI3	0.879

Source: Author's calculation

5.1.2 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

This research paper has an EFA result with Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and the KMO coefficient = $0.911 > 0.5$, which not only determines that all observed variables have a correlation but also proves EFA is appropriate (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Next, three factors from observed variables have been analyzed with the result of Eigenvalues = $1.205 > 1$ with Varimax rotation, and the total variance explained of 77.315% (greater than 50%) is accepted. Thus, all the EFA results satisfied the criteria.

Table 4. EFA analysis of the scale factors influencing the intention to travel of LGBT community

LGBT activities	Destination image	Travel intention
<i>Factor loadings</i>		
0.857 (LA1)	0.857 (DI6)	0.856 (TI3)
0.853 (LA2)	0.854 (DI4)	0.836 (TI2)
0.825 (LA3)	0.843 (DI3)	0.785 (TI1)
0.807 (LA4)	0.830 (DI5)	
	0.825 (DI1)	
	0.768 (DI2)	

KMO = 0.911; Sig. = 0.000; Eigenvalue = 1.205; Total Variance Explained = 77.315%

Source: Author's calculation

5.1.3 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

CFA not only allows the authors to verify the factor structure of all the observed variables but also to evaluate the convergence and discriminance related to the value of the scale. This study was based on the criteria from the research of Hair *et al.* (2010). To be more specific, CFA results indicate that $CMIN/DF = 2.342 < 5$, $CFI = 0.976 > 0.9$, $GFI = 0.939 > 0.9$, and $PCLOSE = 0.072 > 0.05$. These results of data analysis demonstrate that the proposed research model has a reasonably high level of compatibility with the field data.

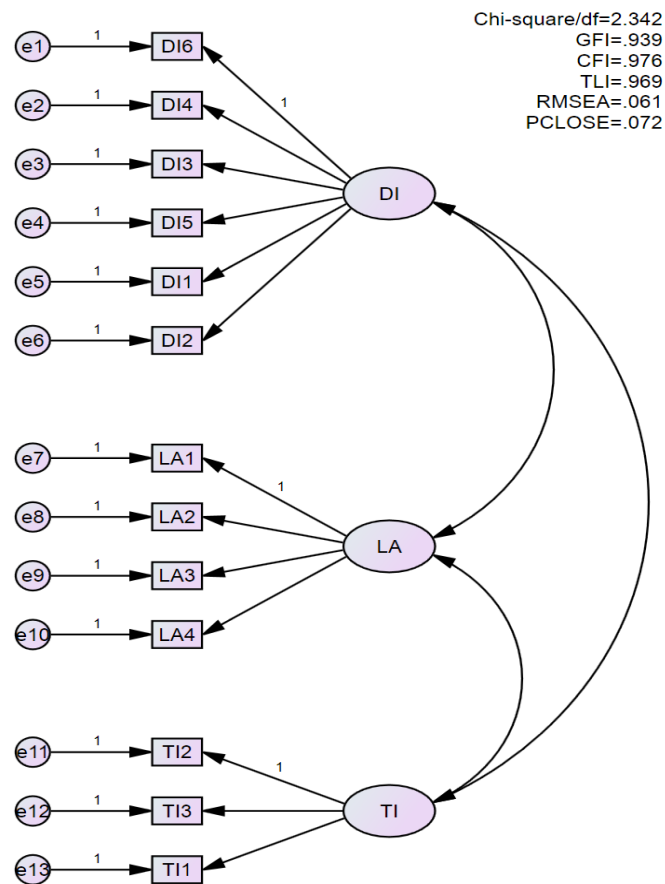


Figure 1. CFA results

Source: Authors' calculation

In terms of composite reliability (CR), CR is a value used to measure the reliability of scale along with the internal consistency of indicators within a scale and is used as a substitute for Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Like Cronbach's Alpha, CR has a value ranging from 0 to 1. With exploratory research, the CR values between 0.6 and 0.7 are considered acceptable. According to CR results, all factors are greater than 0.8, which means the reliability of the scale and internal consistency of indicators are suitable.

When it comes to average variance extracted (AVE), evaluating the convergent validity and discriminant validity are crucial to confirm CFA results and show whether the estimates can indicate the significance of the data and its suitability with reality or not. The results of this research paper have all the AVE index > 0.5, which means the convergent validity is ensured. Regarding discriminant validity, all variables have the value of AVE being higher than that of maximum shared variance (MSV) and the square root of all AVE values (SQRTAVE) for a variable being greater than the correlation between the Inter-Construct Correlations structures in the Fornell and Larcker table. As a result, the discriminant validity is suitable as well (**Table 5**).

Table 5. The results of CR and AVE analysis

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	LA	DI	TI
LA	0.904	0.703	0.354	0.905	0.838		
DI	0.933	0.700	0.292	0.935	0.464	0.837	
TI	0.882	0.715	0.354	0.901	0.595	0.540	0.845

Source: Author's calculation

5.1.4 A theoretical testing model with SEM

Table 6 shows that, at a 95% confidence level, both Destination image and LGBT activities impact the intention to travel of the LGBT community in Vietnam. The activities for LGBT's community have the most significant influence on Travel intentions, while the image of tourism sites affects the dependent variable on a smaller scale. After testing the proposed model, LGBT activities also have a positive impact on Destination image. This study's results are entirely satisfied with those of the previous ones. The analysis of the research also illustrates that these aforementioned factors can affect the LGBT's travel initiation by up to 44% (the value of squared multiple correlations).

Table 6. Findings from SEM examine the connection between the factors in the study model (Regression weights)

Relationship		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Destination image	← LGBT activities	0.486	0.059	8.310	0.000
Travel intention	← Destination image	0.386	0.062	6.224	0.000
Travel intention	← LGBT activities	0.528	0.068	7.809	0.000

Source: Author's calculation

5.1.5 Summary of testing the hypotheses

The analysis indicates that the intention to travel of LGBT community is influenced most by LGBT activities with the value of standardized regression weights = 0.439, which is followed closely by Destination image with standardized regression weights = 0.336.

Table 7. Results of hypothesis H1, H2, H3 testing

Hypotheses	Relationship	Standardized regression weights	Sig	Hypothesis confirmation
H1	LA → DI	0.464	0.000	Accepted
H2	DI → TI	0.336	0.000	Accepted
H3	LA → TI	0.439	0.000	Accepted

Source: Author's calculation

Table 8 tests the hypothesis H4 regarding the role of the Destination image as a mediator. The result shows that the independent variable (LGBT activities) has an indirect effect on the dependent variable (Travel intentions), with the p -value = 0.001 < 0.05, and the standardized estimate is 0.156. Hence, Destination image mediates the relationship between LGBT activities and Travel intentions.

Table 8. Results of hypothesis H4 testing (Standardized Indirect Effects)

Hypothesis	Relationship	S.ES	Sig	Hypothesis confirmation
H4	LA → DI → TI	0.156	0.001	Accepted

Source: Author's calculation

The study assessed the mediating role of Destination image on the relationship between LGBT activities and Travel intentions. The results revealed that LGBT activities had a positive significant indirect effect on Travel intentions, supporting H4. Furthermore, the direct effect of LGBT activities on Travel intentions with the mediator Destination image was also found significant (Estimates = 0.439, $p < 0.05$). Total effect is 0.595. Therefore, Destination image partially mediated the relationship between LGBT activities and Travel intentions.

Table 9. Mediation Analysis Summary

Relationship	Direct effect	Indirect Effect	P-value	Conclusion
LGBT activities → Destination image	0.439	0.156	0.001	Partial Mediation
→ Travel intentions				

Source: Author's calculation

5.2 Discussion

From the previous results, it can be seen that LGBT events and activities not only help improve the destination image but also act as the catalyst for the intentions to travel among people belonging to this group. The former statement is further supported by a previous study into the advantages of LGBT-inclusive destinations by Ram et al. (2019). According to these authors' findings, a gay-friendly destination brings about certain touristic benefits including but not limited to positive evaluation as well as customer satisfaction. In addition, Hahm, Ro and Olson (2017) have concluded in their research that arranging LGBT-themed events can have an impact on destination image and help maintain the attractiveness and operation of that destination. Hosting such activities is a testimony to tolerance and respect, creating an image that the destination embraces and increases the visibility of LGBT people, accepts their rights and roles as well as recognizes their benefits. Moreover, from our reasoning about the potential link between LGBT activities and destination image coupled with these research results, we associate LGBT-welcoming destinations with a positive and inclusive attitude toward visitors of minority groups in general. In other words, being open with LGBT individuals can carry a possible implication that diversity and norm non-conformity are also respected.

Also proven by this study is the importance of destination image to customer's travel intention. This correlation is positive, which is consistent with Jalilvand et al. (2012) in their research proving that building a suitable destination image is considered to be among the key factors behind the success of attracting new tourists and having a solid loyal customer base. In terms of LGBT travelers' expected destination image, a worth-traveling place should decrease the feeling of social constraints besides providing standard services. To be more specific, those destinations should be LGBT-friendly, meet safety and privacy standards, and, as highlighted above, hold LGBT-suitable activities. For individuals whose purpose of traveling is not necessarily finding the sense of relief from social constraints, they still seek for a place that has the capacity to cater to their basic travel needs through typical travel offerings.

Pertaining to the relationship between LGBT activities and travel intention, LGBT individuals are more incentivized to make their trips to a destination if informed that there are activities and services available for them there. Therefore, it is a positive correlation and LGBT activities are the pull factor not only when considering the context of LGBT tourism in Western countries but also when investigating an Asian market such as Vietnam. This finding is consistent with Hahm, Ro and Olson (2017), proving that rainbow events increase the sense of belonging among sexual minority individuals, hence intriguing positive behavioral intention to "revisit" the place and creating a ripple effect from mouth-to-mouth recommendations.

Our research results play a role in opening an interesting avenue of studies focused on the impact of the LGBT community on domestic as well as international tourism. In fact, LGBT tourism has been the subject of investigation in Western countries while there is still a dearth of examination into this potential sector in their Eastern counterparts in which social perceptions about gender diversity tend to be more negative due to deep-rooted philosophies and norms. Even though in the context of Vietnam, a small community has already paid attention to the growing trend of LGBT travel around the world and has probed into this topic in the local market, the current focus given to it is not substantial.

Looking through the lens of tourism businesses, the findings from our study have some practical implications. Firstly, those businesses should intentionally mold their destination image as a positive and inclusive one. This target can be achieved by staff training and service diversification which aims at adding nice touches to LGBT customers. Secondly, in the studied market, there has been a strong support community which holds annual and seasonal events for LGBT people. Therefore, businesses can work hand in hand with those organizations to gain better insights into the target customers. Moreover, such affiliation can also be extended to the participation and sponsorship of businesses to facilitate the activities of LGBT event series. Thirdly, if executed properly, the market segment for tourism businesses can branch out to high-income LGBTs whose, according to numerous research into Western markets, are called "DINKs" or in verbatim, "Double Income No Kids".

6. Conclusion

This study was conducted to evaluate how the destination image affects the relationship between LGBT activities and the intention to travel in the LGBT community in Vietnam, with a sample of 357 individuals by a quantitative research method. This study found that the existence

of LGBT activities in a place helps in shaping its image favorably, thus attracting more LGBT tourists. On the other hand, an affirmative destination image heightens LGBT people's willingness to visit such locales and, as a result, increases the opportunity of revisiting those destinations. Moreover, the availability of LGBT events has proven to be impactful in influencing the travel choices of homosexual communities, as those people opt for locations known for their welcoming attitude towards the LGBT community, featuring a high number of businesses and activities specifically tailored to them.

According to the survey, the response rate among people of young age and those of average income accounted for a significant percentage of the result. Nonetheless, only little questionnaire data was collected from high-age and well-off subjects in Vietnam, thereby minimizing representation to some extent. Furthermore, as most of the underlying studies were conducted in the West, few articles were found on LGBT activities in Vietnam. Therefore, it was difficult for the research to understand the characteristics and needs of tourists from the LGBT community. The findings may be specific to the Vietnamese context and cannot be easily generalized to other countries or regions due to cultural, social or political differences. Comparative analysis and inclusive sampling with an extension of the survey to homosexuals from different countries can be used in future studies.

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