

## IMPACT OF DESTINATION SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ON DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY AND REVISIT INTENTION AT DESTINATIONS IN THE SOUTHEAST REGION, VIETNAM

Pham Ngoc Kim KHANH<sup>ID</sup>

Faculty of Business Administration, Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, e-mail: phamngockimkhanh@iuh.edu.vn

Nguyen Thanh LONG<sup>\*ID</sup>

Faculty of Business Administration, Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, e-mail: nguyenthlanhlong@iuh.edu.vn

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**Citation:** Khanh, P.N.K., & Long, N.T. (2023). IMPACT OF DESTINATION SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ON DESTINATION BRAND EQUITY AND REVISIT INTENTION AT DESTINATIONS IN THE SOUTHEAST REGION, VIETNAM. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 51(4spl), 1692–1702. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.514spl10-1165>

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the impact of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention at destinations in the Southeast region, Vietnam. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods with a 593-tourist survey at the destinations. The results show that destination social responsibility positively affects destination brand equity and the revisit intention at the destinations. Destination social responsibility also affected revisit intention through destination brand equity as a moderating factor. From these findings, some managerial implications were proposed for tourism managers, destinations, and enterprises to be more interested in destination social responsibility activities and destination brand equity to improve the revisit intention of tourists in the Southeast region, Vietnam.

**Key words:** destination social responsibility, destination brand equity, revisit intention, tourism, southeast region in Vietnam

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### INTRODUCTION

Currently, most countries worldwide are interested in the tourism industry, which they orient tourism as a sustainable industry. However, tourism practices could occur negative impacts on the environment, social, and communities, such as health, people live. Therefore, the impact would be minimized by realizing social responsibility practices, attracting more tourists. Corporate social responsibility is a definition attracting more interest from all enterprises, even those operating in any industry. Day to day, more enterprises invest in corporate social responsibility activities to build their brand, especially since the global COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, human lives are approaching the 4.0 technological revolution, and life quality is also increasing day by day. Hence, consumers always demand and expect any brand to provide a high-quality good or service. According to Kuokkanen and Sun (2020), a good new marketing tool is corporate social responsibility, which differentiates a brand from other brands. Additionally, from corporate social responsibility concepts, Su et al., (2018) introduced the definition of destination social responsibility, which meant the efforts of the stakeholders at destinations to engage in socially responsible practices. On the other hand, some scholars have developed destination brand equity concept from brand equity concept, such as Boo et al. (2009); Liu (2020); Lu et al. (2015); or Phung and Huynh (2022).

The destination value, well responses with destination brand, and brand commitment have been built-up by the positive tourist perception of the destination (Chi et al., 2020). The destination brand equity would create more values, or meaning that tourists could perceive about the destination, which it could lead to their revisit intention (Lim and Weaver, 2014).

Vietnam tourism would be the leading attractive tourist destination in the Southeast Asia to affirm the destination brand and competitiveness (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2023a). Vietnam tourism welcomes millions of tourists both domestic and foreign. In the first five months of 2023, Vietnam welcomed about 4.6 million international tourists (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2023b). The tourism development strategy of Vietnam in 2020, with a vision to 2030, stated that the Southeast region of Vietnam was one of seven key tourism regions (Vietnam.gov.vn, 2020).

The Southeast region includes six municipality and provinces, Hochiminh city, Dong Nai, Vung Tau, Binh Duong, Tay Ninh and Binh Phuoc. As one of the vital tourism regions in Vietnam, the Southeast has many potentials and strengths to develop diverse and attractive tourism categories such as forest and eco-tourism, sea-island tourism, community tourism, cultural tourism, or cuisine with a 350-km coastline and mountain landscape. In addition, Thanh Long and Khoa Tran (2023) stated that Vietnam had been focusing on the tourism development last years, however, the tourism brand was weak in tourists' minds due to inconsistent tourism brand development. Numerous studies have explored destination social responsibility affecting destination brand equity, destination perception or tourist behavior.

This study examines the impact of destination social responsibility on both destination brand equity and tourist behavior – revisit intention via empirical study, which is the first study related to this context. The Southeast region should develop tourism linking with environmental perspectives, socially responsible perspectives. In addition, the destination brand equity and destination perception in the Southeast region would be improved via socially responsible practices to develop

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\* Corresponding author

Southeast tourism rapidly and sustainably. Therefore, this study aims to explore and examine destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention at the destinations in the Southeast region, Vietnam, to propose some managerial implications for the destination developing sustainably, which no author, no previous study mentioned this topic in the research about the Southeast region, Vietnam before. This study is organized as follows: section 1 – Introduction presents the research context. Section 2 – Literature review describes theoretical background; previous studies on destination social responsibility, destination brand equity, and revisit intention; research model and hypotheses. Section 3 – Methodology shows what methods were applied in this study. Section 4 – Research results and section 5 – Discussion and managerial implications illustrate result analysis, result discussion, and managerial implications. Section 6 shows the conclusion. Finally, section 7 describes limitations and future research directions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Destination social responsibility**

Destination social responsibility was defined as focusing on the efforts of the destination's stakeholders and the community's consciousness. To minimize economic, environmental, and social risks were stakeholders' obligations, which it was destination social responsibility (Azinuddin et al., 2023; He et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2021a; Su and Huang, 2018). Destination social responsibility also needed to generate economic benefits for community and residents (Azinuddin et al., 2023; He et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2021a; Long et al., 2023; Su and Huang, 2018). Destination social responsibility was mentioned again as the obligation and responsibility of stakeholders, including government, tourist communities, organizations, tourists, and local communities, was to play an important role in carrying out social activities (Azinuddin et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2021; Su and Huang, 2018). At the same point, (Nguyen et al., 2019) also stated that there were many aspects relating to destination social responsibility of stakeholders, such as tax payment, worker and customer rights and benefits, environment, supplier benefits, and hygiene and food safety prevention. According to Ma et al. (2013), destination social responsibility was defined as a perception of social responsibility of stakeholders, including investors, suppliers, competitors, local competitors, tourists, employees, and government via status and activities.

Destination social responsibility was developed from corporate social responsibility concept of Carroll (1991), including economic, ethical, legal and philanthropic responsibility. From these findings, destination social responsibility included economic, social, environmental, and stakeholder responsibilities (Dahlsrud, 2008). Ma et al. (2013) defined destination social responsibility as including economic, social, philanthropic and environmental responsibility. Azinuddin et al. (2023) and Su and Huang (2018) found that there were economic, environmental, legal, ethical, and social responsibilities of destination social responsibility. This study continues exploring the destination social responsibility concept, including economic, environmental, legal, and ethical responsibilities as a second-order construct.

### **Brand equity and destination brand equity**

Brand equity was defined as an intangible asset of an enterprise through marketing. Keller (1993) stated that the concept of customer-based brand equity was a positive response from customers with brand knowledge from marketing. Organizations or enterprises should constantly improve and optimize these assets to build a strong brand in customers' sight (Wang et al., 2021). Brand equity concept was divided into 5 aspects: brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary brand assets (Aaker, 1991). However, in later studies, researchers rejected the last aspect – other proprietary brand assets because they were unrelated to customer perception. Hence, the studies mentioned four aspects of concept of Aaker (1991), such as Yoo and Donthu (2001). In addition, these aspects also needed to depend on the research contexts and business categories (Bose et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2021).

Tourism seems to be a special industry. Therefore, tourists would evaluate these aspects of brand equity through both physical and psychological perspectives. Hence, the brand equity concept of Aaker (1991) had been developed by many scholars to be suitable for tourism context. Scholars combined the concept of brand equity and the definition of destination to define the destination brand equity concept. This concept was divided into four aspects, including brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Liu, 2020; Lu et al., 2015; Phung et al., 2019) In contrast, Aktan et al. (2021) stated that destination brand equity included five aspects: brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, brand loyalty and brand value. Hence, conflict opinions appeared between the scholars. However, from the above findings, most researchers agreed that destination brand equity had included brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. This study would use destination brand equity as a second-order construct embedded with brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty.

### **Revisit intention**

According to Chen and Funk (2010), tourist behavior was divided into three stages, including pre-visit – during-visit – post-visit. Intention behavior had a key role in predicting a consumer's possible behavior, which it also expressed whether the actual behavior occurs or not (Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982). Simultaneously, Mat Som et al. (2012) stated that tourist behavior included destination choice, evaluation, and plans. Yang et al., 2020 stated that the revisit intention would be a positive support for destinations or organizations. Tourists's evaluation meant what values and satisfaction tourists received. The future plan was an activity that meant tourists would be willing to revisit the destination where they experienced and to recommend for others.

Tourists would come back to destinations relating to what they had experienced, such as affective and pre-behavioral elements, especially their real feelings, emotions or evaluation when they had experienced (Cachón Rodríguez et al.,

2019). Ajzen (1991) pointed out the closed connection between the intention and decision behavior of consumers. Therefore, when tourists have a positive attitude towards a destination, they will choose that destination for their next vacation as the first choice without looking for another one (Blanco-Gonzalez et al., 2020). Positive attitude depends on satisfaction with destination image (Chen and Tsai, 2007; Lee, 2009), environment, famous places, travel costs, climate (Park and Njite, 2010), territory, personal services, and human factors (Maunier and Camelis, 2013).

### Hypotheses and research model

Destination social responsibility is a concept that has developed from corporate social responsibility concept in recent years. When building destination brand equity, destinations should understand which values are brought for customers and which values they need. In addition, tourists have been interested in environment, social responsibilities (Azinuddin et al., 2023). Destination social responsibility has been generated by all stakeholders of destinations (Azinuddin et al., 2023; Jones, 2005; Lee et al., 2021b; Ma et al., 2013; Su et al., 2018; Su and Huang, 2018; Su and Swanson, 2017). Therefore, when the destination satisfied tourists that it meant its destination brand equity would be more valuable. (Henderson, 2007) and (Nicolau, 2008) pointed out that destinations had affected negatively on the natural environment, culture-society and so on. Hence, social responsibilities would be a critical term that tourists and communities would expect. Corporate social responsibility has been a key role in the economic market, recently, especially when the global has faced with economic recessions (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

Furthermore, currently, research on destination social responsibility is quite limited. However, with previous research on this factor, destination social responsibility has been developed, expanded, and applied the main principles of corporate social responsibility in other contexts such as museums, heritage sites, and tourist attractions. Similarly, this study develops research on the impact of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity through previous studies on corporate social responsibility and brand equity in fields close to the tourism field, such as research by Gutiérrez Rodríguez et al. (2017); Martínez and Nishiyama (2019); Phung and Huynh (2022). Hence, this study proposed the hypothesis as follows:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Destination social responsibility has a positive influence on destination brand equity

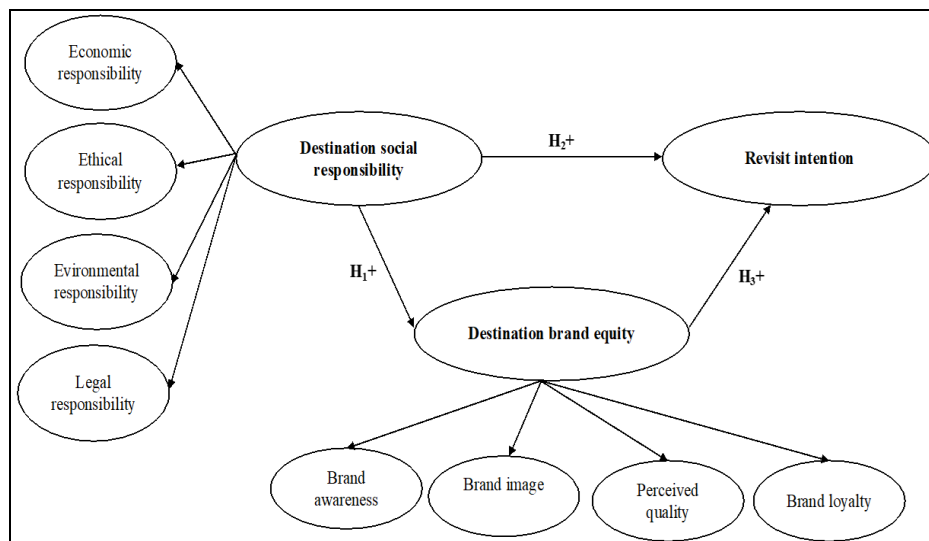


Figure 1. Research model

Yang et al. (2020) stated that tourists' revisit intention would positively support the enterprise development. In the previous studies, corporate social responsibility and revisit intention were tested through mediating variables such as customer satisfaction or reputation. However, the findings illustrated that the revisit intention was influenced highly by corporate social responsibility activities (Chernev and Blair, 2015; Lee et al., 2018; Tong, 2014). Destination social responsibility has developed from the corporate social responsibility concept. There are less previous studies relating clearly to destination social responsibility and revisit intention. However, the influence of destination social responsibility on revisit intention was pointed out by Hassan and Soliman (2021); Su and Huang (2018).

Customer loyalty would be raised well when the organizations or destinations had operated responsibly, which it would increase the relationship quality between customers and the organizations or destinations (Nyadzayo et al., 2016). The tourists' feeling and perception getting from their past vacations was an important factor affecting their revisit intention (Horng et al., 2012). Accordingly, the second hypothesis states as follows:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Destination social responsibility has a positive influence on revisit intention

Tourist experiences have affected strongly on overall destination loyalty through the perceived value of their revisit intention. According to Aaker (1991), the perceived value was how consumers would engage with a brand.

Chi et al. (2020) and He et al. (2022) stated that the perceived quality of the destination was a tool for increasing and improving tourist behavior. Hence, the tourist's perception of destination brand equity would lead to their revisit intention.

Some previous studies pointed out that revisit intention was affected by the destination brand equity, such as Salehzadeh et al. (2016); Chi et al. (2020); Kurniawan (2020); Rahman et al. (2022); He et al. (2022) and Shi et al. (2022). Hence, this study proposed the third hypothesis as follows:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Destination brand equity has a positive influence on revisit intention

## METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the research objectives, the study approached qualitative and quantitative methods

This study is measured and analyzed via variables which almost was adopted from existing studies relating to this study. The authors modified slightly items to appropriate with the study context. Destination social responsibility concept and destination brand equity were approached as the second-order construct through four dimensions as mentioned above. Destination social responsibility was measured with 16 items, including Economic responsibility – 4 items; Environmental responsibility – 4 items; Legal responsibility – 4 items; and Ethical responsibility – 4 items, which all were apoted from Lee and Kim (2013) and Tamajón and Font (2013). While a 16-item scale was used to measure the destination brand equity concept, which it was separated into a 4-item scale for each dimension, including brand awareness, perceived quality, brand image, and brand loyalty, which all were adopted from Boo et al. (2009) and Frías Jamilena et al. (2017).

In addition, revisit intention was measured through 4 items adopted from Su et al. (2020). This study was measured via Likert 5 from 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – average, 4 – agree, and 5 – strongly agree. The questionnaire was designed into two parts, including the information part – age range, income range, occupation, travel frequency, and travel hobbies; and main part – the scale for measuring the main concept of the study relating to tourists' opinion. Observations were collected by in-paper and online via Google form. This study used non-probability sampling by collecting data from tourists. Hence, to minimize the rate of invalid responses, respondents had to answer the filter question, which it was "Have you ever visited destinations in the Southeast region, Vietnam?" Only observations were answered yes to this question, then respondents would complete the rest of the questionnaire depending on their experience. This questionnaire was designed in English and Vietnamese for foreign and domestic tourists. The sample size must be greater or equal  $n \times 5$ , with  $n$  being the number of observed variables. Hence, this study must have at least 180 observations with 36 items. However, to ensure reliability, authors distributed 700 online and offline questionnaires, but only 612 were collected. Among them, there were only 593 valid responses, and the remainder was to have many blank cells without answers.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

As mentioned above, this study included two multidimensional factors with four dimensions per factor. Hence, this study applied the two-stage approach (Sarstedt et al., 2019) to measure and analyze the data through 2 steps. Step 1 was the embedded two-stage approach by standard repeated indicator approach to measure higher-order construct, while step 2 was the disjoint two-stage approach to measure lower-order construct. To analyze these data, structural models, and test hypotheses through PLS-SEM via SmartPLS software. According to Hair et al. (2016), the measurement model would be estimated by the reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the research instrument. In addition, hypotheses and the structural model would be analyzed through the bootstrapping results with P-Value  $\leq 0.05$  was accepted.

### Respondent demographic profile

This study delivered 700 questionnaires to tourists. However, there were only 612 completed responses. Among them, only 593 questionnaires were valid, and the remainder was invalid. Among 593 valid questionnaires, there were 348 females (58.7%), while the rate of males was 245 respondents (41.3%). Regarding age, there were 95 people in 18-25 (16.0%), 317 people in 26-35 (53.5%) and the remainder in over 35 (30.5%) (Figure 2). Only 96 foreign tourists (16.2%) visited destinations in the Southeast region, Vietnam, and answered the questionnaires; the remainder of responses was domestic tourists (83.8%). Income range was also collected from respondents, specifically as below, 89 people answered income range under 10 million Vietnamdong (VND) or \$500 U.S. dollar (USD) (15.0%), 113 people had an income range 10 million VND to 25 million VND or over \$500 to \$1,100 (19.1%), 298 respondents were over 25 million VND to 35 million VND or over \$1,100 to \$1,500 (50.3%), the remainder was over 35 million VND or \$1,500 (15.7%) (Figure 3).

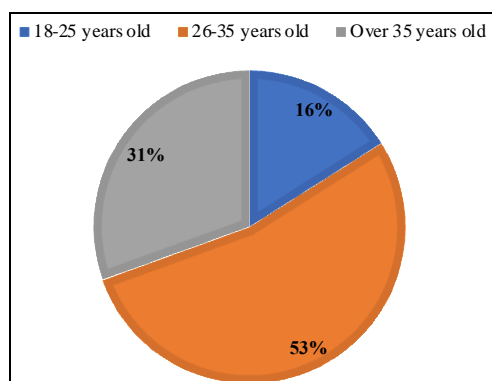


Figure 2. Age of respondents

(Source: Authors collected and analysed)

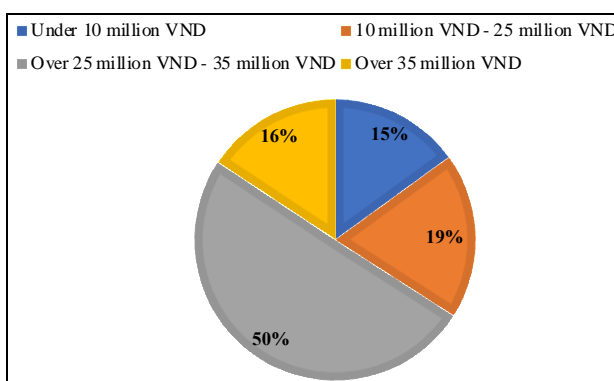


Figure 3. Income of respondents

### Scale Reliability Tests

As shown in Table 1, and Table 2, all Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scales were more significant than 0.6 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), meaning that all was accepted. In addition, the corrected item-total correlation coefficients are more significant than 0.3. This study used the Partial Least Square (PLS) algorithm, which tested the research model and hypotheses. Table 1 and Table 2 would present the internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity, and internal consistency of the reliability test. According to Hair et al. (2013), concerning internal consistency and convergent validity, composite reliability (CR) exceeds should be 0.4 – 1.0 in the specific context. Hence, all indicators in Table 1 and Table 2 were accepted.

Table 1. Reliability and the result of CFA – higher-order construct (Source: Authors collected and analysed)  
 Note: ECO: Economic responsibility; ETH: Ethical responsibility; EVI: Environmental responsibility;  
 LEG: Legal responsibility; BA: Brand awareness; BI: Brand image; BL: Brand loyalty; PQ: Perceived quality

	Cronbach's alpha	OL	AVE	CR		Cronbach's alpha	OL	AVE	CR
<b>Destination social responsibility</b>					<b>Destination brand equity</b>				
<b>ECO</b>	<b>0.840</b>		<b>0.675</b>	<b>0.893</b>	<b>BA</b>	<b>0.837</b>		<b>0.672</b>	<b>0.891</b>
ECO1		0.826			BA1		0.828		
ECO2		0.819			BA2		0.839		
ECO3		0.824			BA3		0.834		
ECO4		0.818			BA4		0.776		
<b>ETH</b>	<b>0.868</b>		<b>0.716</b>	<b>0.910</b>	<b>BI</b>	<b>0.720</b>		<b>0.549</b>	<b>0.827</b>
ETH1		0.865			BI1		0.655		
ETH2		0.841			BI2		0.836		
ETH3		0.844			BI3		0.621		
ETH4		0.835			BI4		0.827		
<b>EVI</b>	<b>0.885</b>		<b>0.744</b>	<b>0.921</b>	<b>BL</b>	<b>0.913</b>		<b>0.794</b>	<b>0.939</b>
EVI1		0.859			BL1		0.861		
EVI2		0.860			BL2		0.894		
EVI3		0.863			BL3		0.912		
EVI4		0.867			BL4		0.896		
<b>LEG</b>	<b>0.845</b>		<b>0.685</b>	<b>0.897</b>	<b>PQ</b>	<b>0.907</b>		<b>0.783</b>	<b>0.935</b>
LEG1		0.776			PQ1		0.895		
LEG2		0.887			PQ2		0.896		
LEG3		0.845			PQ3		0.875		
LEG4		0.797			PQ4		0.872		

Table 2. Reliability and the result of CFA – lower-order construct (Source: Authors collected and analysed)

	Cronbach's alpha	OL	AVE	CR
<b>Destination social responsibility</b>	<b>0.670</b>		<b>0.503</b>	<b>0.802</b>
Economic responsibility		0.691		
Ethical responsibility		0.734		
Environmental responsibility		0.702		
Legal responsibility		0.709		
<b>Destination brand equity</b>	<b>0.797</b>		<b>0.628</b>	<b>0.869</b>
Brand awareness		0.653		
Perceived quality		0.791		
Brand image		0.812		
Brand loyalty		0.894		
<b>Revisit intention</b>	<b>0.914</b>		<b>0.794</b>	<b>0.939</b>
RI1		0.888		
RI2		0.907		
RI3		0.885		
RI4		0.884		

### Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)

PLS-SEM is used to estimate the complex relationships of the causes – effects model with latent variables and observed variables. In addition, it is also enable to estimate multiple constructs, indicator variables and structural paths. This study used PLS-SEM with the two-stage approach to estimate the second-order constructs of destination social responsibility and destination brand equity. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the convergent validity would be greater than 0.5, and all the constructs need to meet the AVE criterion. With cross-loading, loading coefficient of observation must higher loadings on its parents constructs than other constructs (Chin, 2010).

Table 3 and Table 4 illustrated cross-loading which all the factor loading coefficients (Marked bold values in Table 3 and Table 4) are greater than 0.5 and higher than other constructs in this study. This results showed that the scales have discriminant validity in both higher-order construct and lower-order construct. The PLS-SEM algorithm illustrates the structural model's estimate and validation in Figure 4 and Figure 5. There was no multicollinearity in the higher-order construct and lower-order construct, which all indicators with VIF were less than 5 (VIF < 5).

Table 3. Outer loadings and cross loadings for the higher-order construct (Source: Authors collected and analysed)

Items	BA	BI	BL	PQ	ECO	ETH	EVI	LEG	RI
BA1	<b>0.828</b>	0.353	0.426	0.345	0.174	0.279	0.356	0.193	0.455
BA2	<b>0.839</b>	0.385	0.483	0.338	0.308	0.390	0.373	0.209	0.495
BA3	<b>0.834</b>	0.373	0.467	0.361	0.242	0.364	0.338	0.236	0.448
BA4	<b>0.776</b>	0.298	0.363	0.252	0.269	0.257	0.327	0.134	0.406
BI1	0.211	<b>0.655</b>	0.484	0.406	0.258	0.378	0.410	0.577	0.510
BI2	0.395	<b>0.836</b>	0.685	0.547	0.399	0.423	0.860	0.416	0.674
BI3	0.310	<b>0.621</b>	0.516	0.413	0.281	0.865	0.390	0.341	0.540
BI4	0.346	<b>0.827</b>	0.619	0.451	0.380	0.417	0.767	0.358	0.610
BL1	0.479	0.707	<b>0.861</b>	0.612	0.394	0.567	0.677	0.498	0.775
BL2	0.470	0.739	<b>0.894</b>	0.631	0.423	0.544	0.681	0.503	0.806
BL3	0.453	0.665	<b>0.912</b>	0.604	0.492	0.537	0.637	0.436	0.768
BL4	0.495	0.684	<b>0.896</b>	0.638	0.447	0.559	0.644	0.446	0.749
PQ1	0.342	0.568	0.621	<b>0.895</b>	0.324	0.443	0.536	0.406	0.661
PQ2	0.384	0.591	0.686	<b>0.896</b>	0.336	0.430	0.569	0.400	0.702
PQ3	0.333	0.493	0.574	<b>0.875</b>	0.315	0.466	0.455	0.331	0.623
PQ4	0.344	0.525	0.585	<b>0.872</b>	0.309	0.458	0.475	0.423	0.631
ECO1	0.253	0.370	0.394	0.295	<b>0.826</b>	0.279	0.331	0.237	0.415
ECO2	0.229	0.350	0.390	0.272	<b>0.819</b>	0.288	0.354	0.189	0.429
ECO3	0.224	0.354	0.364	0.278	<b>0.824</b>	0.261	0.352	0.198	0.381
ECO4	0.288	0.410	0.473	0.348	<b>0.818</b>	0.338	0.415	0.262	0.464
ETH1	0.310	0.621	0.516	0.413	0.281	<b>0.865</b>	0.390	0.341	0.540
ETH2	0.319	0.578	0.556	0.451	0.323	<b>0.841</b>	0.438	0.425	0.594
ETH3	0.359	0.553	0.514	0.414	0.304	<b>0.844</b>	0.424	0.367	0.556
ETH4	0.349	0.529	0.509	0.441	0.292	<b>0.835</b>	0.376	0.379	0.553
EVI1	0.389	0.700	0.614	0.498	0.393	0.429	<b>0.859</b>	0.385	0.620
EVI2	0.395	0.836	0.685	0.547	0.399	0.423	<b>0.860</b>	0.416	0.674
EVI3	0.339	0.692	0.636	0.490	0.351	0.391	<b>0.863</b>	0.375	0.624
EVI4	0.346	0.827	0.619	0.451	0.380	0.417	<b>0.867</b>	0.358	0.610
LEG1	0.271	0.494	0.461	0.413	0.192	0.370	0.384	<b>0.776</b>	0.480
LEG2	0.211	0.655	0.484	0.406	0.258	0.378	0.410	<b>0.887</b>	0.510
LEG3	0.167	0.553	0.439	0.320	0.242	0.363	0.378	<b>0.845</b>	0.464
LEG4	0.137	0.449	0.360	0.323	0.194	0.367	0.296	<b>0.797</b>	0.395
RI1	0.519	0.685	0.745	0.651	0.451	0.605	0.630	0.499	<b>0.888</b>
RI2	0.497	0.741	0.824	0.688	0.480	0.609	0.671	0.509	<b>0.907</b>
RI3	0.473	0.750	0.802	0.680	0.455	0.624	0.691	0.524	<b>0.885</b>
RI4	0.474	0.641	0.725	0.618	0.445	0.525	0.620	0.461	<b>0.886</b>

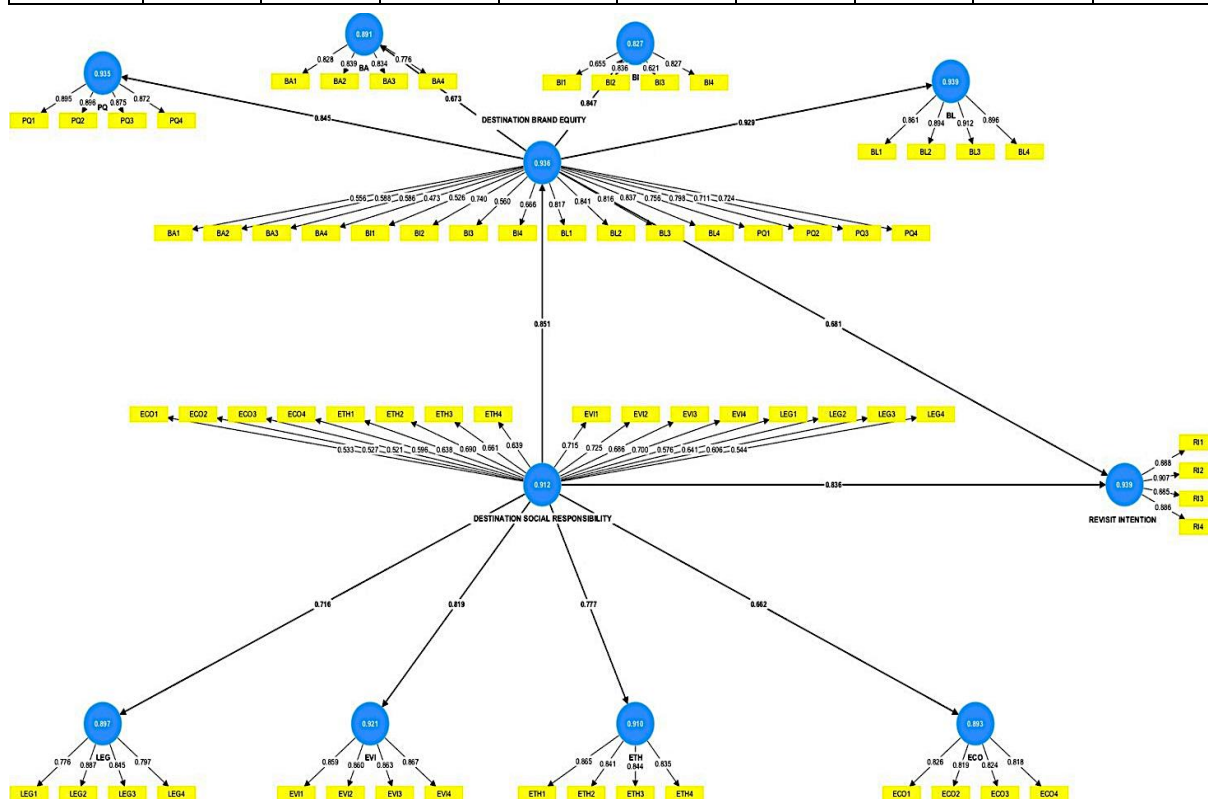


Figure 4. PLS-SEM – Higher-order construct (Source: Authors collected, analysed from SmartPLS software)  
 Note: ECO: Economic responsibility; ETH: Ethical responsibility; EVI: Environmental responsibility; LEG: Legal responsibility; BA: Brand awareness; BI: Brand image; BL: Brand loyalty; PQ: Perceived quality



Table 4. Outer loadings and cross loadings for the lower-order construct  
 (Source: Authors collected and analysed) Note (Table 3 and table 4): ECO: Economic responsibility; ETH: Ethical responsibility; EVI: Evironmental responsibility; LEG: Legal responsibility; BA: Brand awareness; BI: Brand image; BL: Brand loyalty; PQ: Perceived quality; RI1, RI2, RI3, RI4: revisit intention items; and others are items of each

	DBE	DSR	RI
BA	<b>0.653</b>	0.400	0.513
BI	<b>0.812</b>	0.791	0.736
BL	<b>0.894</b>	0.669	0.754
PQ	<b>0.791</b>	0.509	0.677
ECO	0.455	<b>0.691</b>	0.497
ETH	0.517	<b>0.734</b>	0.575
EVI	0.683	<b>0.702</b>	0.630
LEG	0.495	<b>0.709</b>	0.500
RI1	0.742	0.673	<b>0.888</b>
RI2	0.813	0.728	<b>0.907</b>
RI3	0.790	0.717	<b>0.885</b>
RI4	0.695	0.651	<b>0.886</b>

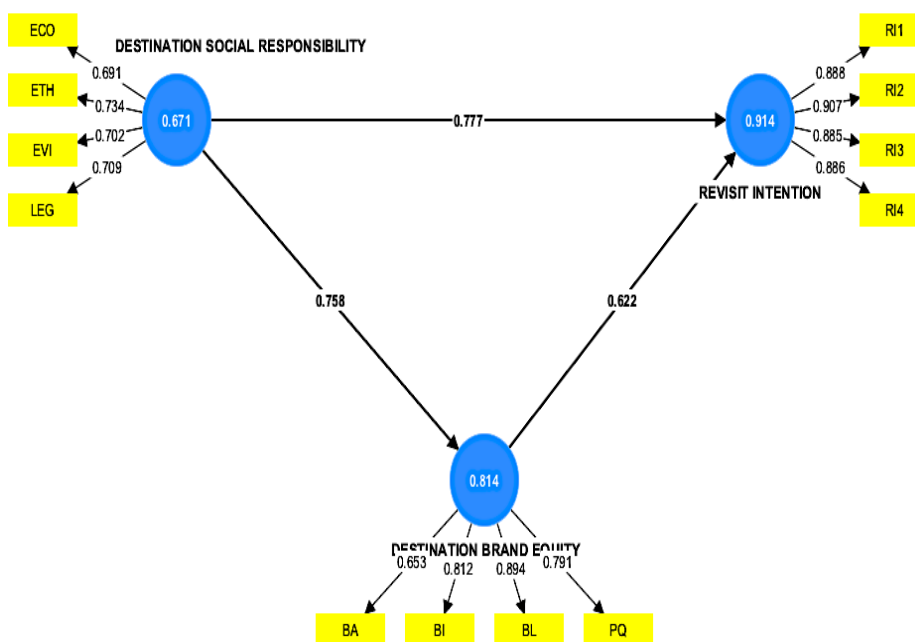


Figure 5. PLS-SEM – Lower-order construct (Source: Authors collected, analysed from SmartPLS software)  
 Note: ECO: Economic responsibility; ETH: Ethical responsibility; EVI: Evironmental responsibility; LEG: Legal responsibility; BA: Brand awareness; BI: Brand image; BL: Brand loyalty; PQ: Perceived quality

**Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis testing was realized so that the study examine the structural equation modeling (SEM) to accept or reject hypotheses. The path coefficients was used to identify the relationship between constructs in this study. After bootstrap procedure, the P-values less than 0.05, and T-values greater than 1.96.

The parameters were calculated using a 5000-sample bootstrap procedure; they were relevant in all cases (P-values < 0.05) (Table 5). In other words, The PLS-SEM model’s result is illustrated as Table 5, in which all hypotheses are accepted. The influence of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention is positive ( $\beta = 0.854$  and  $\beta = 0.225$ ). In addition, destination brand equity is also to affect revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.655$ ) positively.

Table 5. Path coefficients (Source: Authors collected, analysed from SmartPLS software)  
 Note: DSR: Destination social responsibility; DBE: Destination brand equity; RI: Revisit intention

Path	Coefficients	Standard deviation	T-values	P-values	Hypotheses
DBE -> RI	0.655	0.047	13.953	0.000	Accepted H <sub>3</sub>
DSR -> DBE	0.854	0.015	56.054	0.000	Accepted H <sub>1</sub>
DSR -> RI	0.225	0.052	4.334	0.000	Accepted H <sub>2</sub>

**DISCUSSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Discussion**

This study showed that destination social responsibility affected destination brand equity and revisit intention. Although the destination social responsibility concept has developed from the corporate social responsibility concept in recent years, previous studies extended the research scope to museums, heritage sites, and tourist attractions. From the

findings of previous studies on corporate social responsibility and brand equity in fields close to the tourism field, there were studies of Martínez and Nishiyama (2019), He et al. (2022); ChunYang et al. (2020), Esmaeilpour and Barjoei (2016), Gutiérrez Rodríguez et al. (2017); and Phung and Huynh (2022). This finding is appropriate with the research results of the mentioned studies that destination social responsibility influenced destination brand equity. On the other hand, the research results also showed the impact of destination social responsibility on revisit intention. This result is similar to findings from the previous studies of Hassan and Soliman (2021); and Su and Huang (2018).

However, almost all these studies examined destination social responsibility through three dimensions such as economic responsibility, ethical and legal responsibility, and discretionary (Gutiérrez Rodríguez et al., 2017); economics responsibility, ethical responsibility, and social responsibility (Phung and Huynh, 2022); and economics responsibility, ethical responsibility, and legal responsibility (Esmaeilpour and Barjoei, 2016), which studies were examined destination social responsibility and destination brand equity. Moreover, with the impact of destination social responsibility and revisit intention, the authors measured destination social responsibility through 5 items (Su and Huang, 2018) and six items (Hassan and Soliman, 2021). However, this study's findings showed a new contribution that destination social responsibility was measured through 4 dimensions, including economic responsibility, environmental responsibility, ethical responsibility, and legal responsibility, based on the literature review.

In addition, this study also pointed out the impact of destination brand equity on revisit intention. This finding is appropriate with the previous studies of Salehzadeh et al. (2016); Chi et al. (2020); Kurniawan (2020); Rahman et al. (2022) and Shi et al. (2022). However, to measure the impact of destination brand equity on revisit intention, this study measured four dimensions of destination brand equity, including brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and perceived quality based on the literature review while (Shi et al., 2022) measured destination brand equity through destination brand knowledge, destination perceived value and quality. Moreover, some previous study only examined the impact of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity, destination social responsibility on revisit intention, or destination brand equity on revisit intention, but no study has examined the destination social responsibility affecting both destination brand equity and revisit intention. Therefore, this study results also have shown the new contribution that destination brand equity and revisit intention were affected by destination social responsibility.

### **Managerial implications**

First, destination social responsibility affects both destination brand equity and the revisit intention of tourist. Hence, destination managers in the Southeast region need to generate more activities relating to social responsibilities connecting with economy, ethics, legal, and environment, which would build up well destination brand equity and improve their revisit intention. The destinations should improve and update the service or product quality, which they are to make tourists remember places and recommend to others. In addition, the destinations should realize campaigns that encourage tourists and residents to consume or use unique or local products to improve the local economy. Then, the destinations should replace, use, and offer environmentally friendly products or tours, and organize the protect environment programs in local communities to spread the environmental attitude such as "No Waste Day" or "Earth Hour Day." Next, the destination in the Southeast region, Vietnam, should also carry out legal responsibilities with the government such as tax or policies; protect tourists; and improve customer services to resolve service problems promptly. Finally, the destinations should be interested in advertising without exaggerated and false advertisements by providing information on full and accurate products or services and ensuring a healthy and safe environment.

Second, destination brand equity has a positive influence on revisit intention. Therefore, destination managers in the Southeast region should focus on planning strategies to improve the destination brand equity in tourists' minds via four aspects, including brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The managers should have strategies to rebuild or build up the destination brand equity through long-term investments. The destinations should frequently organize special traditional activities, advertise local services or products, and be interested in digital marketing via social media platforms to approach and increase brand awareness in tourists' minds. Boo et al. (2009) stated that brand image has been an important aspect in destination brand equity.

Hence, the managers should "spread" the unique image, cuisines, and activities at the destinations through advertisements to differentiate with other competitors or destinations and to attract tourists. In addition, the destinations should attach much importance to the perceived quality by training employees and staffs carefully to understand how important services are, evaluating the service or product quality frequently, innovating and investing more in facilities to maintain good quality. Finally, the managers should focus on tourist loyalty by launching promotions and discount policies for tourists who have visited the destination to increase revisit intention capacities. It also brings good experiences for tourists when they visit the destinations now and in the future.

### **CONCLUSION**

This research aims to examine the impact of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention of tourists at the destination in the Southeast region, Vietnam. The findings of this study are (1) destination social responsibility affecting destination brand equity, (2) destination social responsibility affecting revisit intention, and (3) destination brand equity affecting revisit intention. In addition, this study also emphasized the tourism advantages of the Southeast region, Vietnam appropriating to develop diverse tourism categories such as forest and eco-tourism, sea-island tourism, community tourism, cultural tourism, or cuisine with a 350-km coastline and mountain landscape. Therefore, tourism managers should focus there and plan sustainable development strategies to enhance all the region's advantages.



Finally, this study has proposed some managerial implications for the destinations that should implement strategies relating to destination social responsibility and brand equity to enhance tourists' revisit intention.

### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although this study had findings and contributions, it has several limitations as follows. First, this study did not explore the influence of each dimension of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention, which examined the impact of destination social responsibility and destination brand equity as a whole. Second, this study was conducted only from the destination perspective of the tourism industry, so it should be explored in more perspective. Third, the authors only researched the destinations in the Southeast region, Vietnam. Therefore, future research should contribute more for the sustainable tourism development as Vietnam's tourism development strategy in 2020, vision 2023. It will examine the impact of each dimension of destination social responsibility on destination brand equity and revisit intention to illustrate which dimension of each concept needs destination focus on. In addition, the research context will be extended to other perspectives of tourism, such as hotels, or restaurants, and other regions in Vietnam.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; methodology, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; software, P.N.K.K.; validation, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; formal analysis, P.N.K.K.; investigation, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; data curation, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; writing - original draft preparation, P.N.K.K.; writing - review and editing, P.N.K.K.; visualization, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L.; supervision, N.T.L.; project administration, P.N.K.K. and N.T.L. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** Not applicable.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not applicable.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data presented in this study may be obtained on request from the corresponding author.

**Acknowledgments:** The research undertaken was made possible by the equal scientific involvement of all the authors concerned.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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