

## **CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT, BRAND AWARENESS, AND SERVICE QUALITY AFFECTING CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION IN THE 5-STAR RESORTS IN DANANG, VIETNAM**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the impact of celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, and service quality on consumer purchase intention in 5-star resorts in Danang, Vietnam. The independent variables are divided into sub-factors: celebrity endorsement (traditional celebrities, social media influencers), brand awareness (recognition, recall, differentiation), and service quality (reliability, responsiveness, empathy). Using a quantitative approach, 400 respondents from Ho Chi Minh City participated via online surveys, and data analysis employed descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression with a 0.05 significance level. Findings confirmed that each factor had p-values below 0.05, indicating statistically significant positive effects on purchase intention and supporting the proposed hypotheses.

**Keywords:** Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness, Service Quality, Consumer Purchase Intention, 5-star Resorts, Hospitality Industry

### **Introduction**

The hospitality industry has transformed significantly due to technology, demographic shifts, and changing consumer preferences. To adapt, brands have adopted strategies like influencer collaborations, digital engagement, and loyalty programs to boost visibility and profitability (Glion Institute of Higher Education, 2023). In Vietnam's luxury sector, 5-star resorts in Danang have become popular tourist destinations, especially post-COVID-19.

Marketing strategies greatly influence consumer behavior. Celebrity endorsements, brand awareness, and service quality are key factors in purchase decisions. Celebrity endorsements increase brand recognition and credibility (Jha et al., 2021). Brand awareness influences consumer choice through familiarity and differentiation (Novita & Sengguruh, 2019), while service quality affects satisfaction and purchasing decisions (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

This study examines how celebrity endorsements, brand awareness, and service quality impact purchase intention among Vietnamese tourists in luxury Danang resorts, providing insights into marketing strategies within the luxury hospitality sector.

### **Objective of the study**

1. To study the impact of Celebrity Endorsement factors (Traditional Celebrities and Social Media Influencers) on Consumer Purchase Intention in the 5-star Resorts in Danang, Vietnam.
2. To study the impact of Brand Awareness factors (Brand Recognition, Brand Recall, and Brand Differentiation) on Consumer Purchase Intention in the 5-star Resorts in Danang, Vietnam.
3. To study the impact of Service Quality factors (Reliability, Responsiveness, and Empathy) on Consumer Purchase Intention in the 5-star Resorts in Danang, Vietnam.

## Scope of the study

This study investigates three independent variables: celebrity endorsement (traditional celebrities and social media influencers), brand awareness (recognition, recall, and differentiation), and service quality (reliability, responsiveness, and empathy) concerning consumer purchase intention. The sample comprises Vietnamese tourists in Ho Chi Minh City, with 400 respondents chosen through convenience sampling. Given Ho Chi Minh City's population exceeding 9 million, a sample size of 400 is suitable for a precision level of  $\pm 5\%$ .

## Literature Review

The hospitality and tourism sector includes various economic activities related to travel, with Vietnam featuring a mix of international and domestic brands such as Vinpearl and Accor Hotels. Danang has seen a notable resurgence, attracting over 1.6 million international visitors in early 2023, a 5.8-fold increase from the previous year, though still achieving only 67% of pre-pandemic figures (VnExpress, 2023). The luxury hospitality sector, particularly 5-star resorts, is experiencing rapid growth due to rising domestic reservations and global demand. Noteworthy establishments like the InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort have earned prestigious accolades, while consumer preferences have shifted towards wellness tourism, prompting resorts to enhance their offerings (Hanoitimes, 2022).

Purchase intention is influenced by various factors affecting a consumer's decision to buy a brand and serves as a reliable predictor of purchasing behavior (Ghosh, 1990). Key theories include the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), focusing on beliefs, attitudes, and intentions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which incorporates perceived behavioral control (Fishbein, 2002). Recent studies highlight the challenges faced by the luxury hospitality sector due to the pandemic, emphasizing the roles of influencer marketing, brand awareness, and service quality in shaping consumer purchase intentions (Hung et al., 2021). Research shows that hotel ratings and perceived value significantly impact purchasing decisions in luxury tourism (Leung et al., 2017).

Celebrity endorsement is a potent marketing strategy, where well-known figures promote products, significantly influencing consumer behavior (McCracken, 1989). Celebrities utilize their popularity and appealing traits to effectively convey brand messages. The Source Attractiveness Model suggests that attractive endorsers can enhance product appeal (McGuire, 1985), while the Source Credibility Model highlights the importance of trustworthiness (Hovland & Weiss, 1952). In today's digital landscape, social media influencers also play a crucial role by using their authentic online presence to build trust and influence consumer opinions in the luxury hospitality sector (Li & Peng, 2021).

and emotional dimensions (Lewis, 1993). Key models provide frameworks to measure service quality based on reliability, responsiveness, and empathy, all crucial for enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Improving service quality in luxury hospitality can help differentiate brands and foster stronger consumer relationships (Kumar, 2023).

## Hypotheses Test

1. H1: Celebrity Endorsement (Traditional Celebrities and Social Media Influencers) has a significant impact on Consumer Purchase intention in the 5-star resorts in Danang, Vietnam.

2. H2: Brand Awareness (Brand Recognition, Brand Recall, and Brand Differentiation) has a significant impact on Consumer Purchase intention in the 5-star resorts in Danang, Vietnam.

3. H3: Service Quality (Reliability, Responsiveness, and Empathy) has a significant impact on Consumer Purchase intention in the 5-star resorts in Danang, Vietnam.

## Methodology

### Population and Sample

The population of this study encompasses Vietnamese tourists living in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The World Population Review (2023) reports that the population of Ho Chi Minh City is 9,320,866. As indicated in Yamane's table for sample size, with a population size above 100,000, it is necessary to collect 400 samples with a precision level of  $\pm 5\%$ .

### Type of Research and Tool

This research examines the impact of Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness, and Service Quality on consumer purchase intention in 5-star resorts in Danang, Vietnam. Data was collected using closed-ended and multiple-choice questions with nominal, ordinal, and Likert scales. The survey, administered via Google Forms, consists of 48 questions across six parts: demographics (13 questions), Celebrity Endorsement (9 questions on traditional celebrities and influencers), Brand Awareness (9 questions on recognition, recall, and differentiation), Service Quality (9 questions on reliability, responsiveness, and empathy), and Purchase Intention (8 questions).

### Validity Test

The online questionnaire was checked for validity and approved by the advisor Associate Dean Nisit Manotugvorapun, PhD.

### Reliability Test

36 samples, the data from the questionnaires were analyzed by using Cronbach's Alpha in the statistical software, with a total reliability of 0.941. The required value to be accepted is 0.6-1.00.

### Statistics

1. Descriptive statistics consisted of frequency, mean, and standard deviation.
2. Inferential statistics consisted of multiple regression analysis tests.

## Research Results

The survey shows that 58% of respondents are female, 34% male, and 8% declined to disclose their gender. Most are aged 22-26 (54%), 72% are married, and 78% have a Bachelor's degree. About 66% are employed, and 72% earn \$401-\$600 monthly, indicating a middle-income group. Respondents mainly travel for leisure (22.1%) and family vacations (20.1%), usually 1-3 times a year, preferring 5-star resorts with a focus on room quality, service, reputation, and reviews.

This study examines how Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness, and Service Quality impact consumer purchase intention in Danang's 5-star resorts. These variables are further divided into subcategories for detailed analysis. Regression analysis shows that these factors explain 50% of the variation in purchase intention, with an F-statistic of 132.059 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming a statistically significant relationship.

Table 1 ANOVA Result Between Independent Variables (Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness, and Service Quality) and Dependent Variable (Consumer Purchase Intention)

<b>Residual</b>	190.963	396	0.482
<b>Total</b>	382.011	399	

The coefficients show that Celebrity Endorsement positively impacts Consumer Purchase Intention (coefficient: 0.424, p-value: 0.000), meaning more endorsement leads to higher purchase intention. Brand Awareness also has a positive effect (coefficient: 0.198, p-value: 0.002), indicating that greater awareness increases purchase intention. Service Quality has the strongest influence (coefficient: 0.529, p-value: 0.000), emphasizing its key role in consumer decision-making.

Table 2 Model Coefficients Between Independent Variables (Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness, and Service Quality) and Dependent Variable (Consumer Purchase Intention)

	Unstandardized B	Coefficient Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
<b>(Constant)</b>	-0.415	0.199		-2.089	0.037
<b>Celebrity Endorsement</b>	0.424	0.057	0.315	7.451	0.000*
<b>Brand Awareness</b>	0.198	0.063	0.139	3.139	0.002
<b>Service Quality</b>	0.529	0.054	0.413	9.828	0.000*

The derived regression model represented as  $\text{Consumer Purchase Intention} = -0.415 + 0.424 \text{ Celebrity Endorsement} + 0.198 \text{ Brand Awareness} + 0.529 \text{ Service Quality}$ , illustrates that all three factors significantly and positively affect Consumer Purchase Intention, with Service Quality being the most influential.

### Conclusion and Discussion

This study, involving 400 participants (primarily females aged 22-26), reveals that travel motivations are driven by leisure and family vacations, with a preference for moderate spending on short stays at 5-star resorts in Danang, emphasizing room and service quality. The analysis found that celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, and service quality significantly affect purchase intention, with traditional celebrities and brand recognition as key influences, while social media influencers and brand differentiation were less impactful (Erdogan, 1999; Friedman & Linda, 1979; Mehreem et al., 2018; Rizwan et al., 2021). Although celebrity endorsements and brand awareness have a neutral impact overall, established brand familiarity and reliable service emerged as more critical (To & Phong, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2022).

Service quality, particularly reliability and empathy, was crucial to purchase decisions, while responsiveness held lesser importance, reflecting luxury clientele's preference for dependable, personalized service over rapid responses (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Huy, 2019; Casalo et al., 2015). Brand awareness impacted purchase intention more through recognition and recall rather than differentiation, suggesting that luxury brands' established reputations make overt differentiation less essential.

These findings underscore the importance of credibility, consistent service, and brand recognition in shaping luxury hotel perceptions. Traditional celebrities and brand recognition strongly influence consumer perceptions, while service reliability and empathy are critical to purchase intent. The study suggests further research to examine these factors across various markets to understand luxury consumer expectations more broadly.

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