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Article

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Key factors affecting enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency: a case study of tourism enterprises in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Vietnam's tourism business has been dramatically affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, leading to a considerable decrease in the number of tourists visiting the country. Tourism is vital in creating national income, attracting investment, encouraging exports, and stimulating growth in linked economic sectors. Therefore, this study examines the primary determinants that affect the competitiveness of tourist firms and their influence on business efficiency. The study utilizes qualitative and quantitative approaches, drawing on data collected from a sample of 870 corporate managers in five big cities in Vietnam. Quantitative analysis includes descriptive statistics and structural equation model performed using SPSS 20.0 and Amos. The key findings identified six crucial factors that determine the competitiveness and efficiency of tourism enterprises: (1) Quality of products and services, (2) Marketing capacity 4.0, (3) Organizational and management capacity, (4) Brand promotion, (5) Human resource quality, and (6) Social responsibility. These factors significantly impact the enterprises' competitiveness and efficiency, with a significance level 0.01. These findings emphasize the significance of strategic policy actions to enhance these elements to promote post-pandemic recovery and long-term competitiveness in Vietnam's tourism sector. The result provides valuable insights to policymakers and tourist stakeholders, facilitating evidence-based policy development to improve competitiveness and business efficiency in Vietnam's tourism industry after the Covid-19 pandemic.

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SUBJECTS

Business, management and accounting; tourism; finance; economics

1. Introduction

Vietnam has significant tourism advantages and potential. In addition to the government's interest in infrastructure investment, businesses focus on building new, high-quality tourism products. The tourism industry has quickly recovered after a long period of impact from the Covid-19 pandemic, essential to Vietnam's overall economic development achievements. The complex and prolonged development of the Covid-19 pandemic has directly and comprehensively affected socioeconomic activities, and tourism is one of the industries most heavily affected. The Covid-19 pandemic has put travel service businesses in crisis, with 90–95% of companies having to stop operations or change their business models. In 2021, the number of full-time workers will only account for 25% of the previous year, unemployment will increase, and income will decrease, causing a significant impact on people's lives.

Sharma et al. (2024) suggested that the Covid-19 epidemic and travel restrictions will pull tourists back to domestic tourism and travel close to home. The rise of domestic tourism has also promoted the need for outdoor activities close to nature and the countryside. Ecotourism trends will likely be announced shortly with diverse forms, limited purposes within family and close friends, and limited contact with strangers and outside society (Gao et al., 2022; Huseynli, 2022; Christofi et al., 2024). Vietnam has great

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potential for tourism development; however, Vietnam's competitiveness and tourism development capacity are only at an average level and mainly compete on price. Thus, it is time for this to change.

Tourism development contributes to and creates motivation for the socioeconomic development of a country or a specific locality. However, every tourism business faces intense competition from firms in the same country, region, and worldwide. Taking advantage of and realizing the tourism potential of each company will create a very effective interaction effect, thereby creating a competitive advantage not only for the locality but also for the country and region (Cao et al., 2022; Thukral, 2021). Therefore, studying the constituent factors and their influence on the competitiveness of developing tourism businesses will help policymakers and tourism managers. The calendar has well-founded references to guide development with medium- and long-term visions. Building a theoretical model for studying the competitiveness of tourism businesses is extremely important (Uwamariya et al., 2022; Vasanicova et al., 2021). This will be the premise for further green and sustainable tourism development research. In this research article, the author introduces some main content, such as the theory of competitiveness, and briefly reviews some domestic and foreign studies as a basis for proposing a research model. In addition, this study presents research methods, including those for conducting both qualitative and quantitative research. Based on the results of testing both the qualitative and quantitative models, there is a discussion and analysis of the research results (Baseri et al., 2022; Andi Auliya Hakim et al., 2021).

To successfully address the deficiencies in prior research and establish a distinction in this study, the author emphasizes the following aspects: (1) Prior research may have extensively examined the entire ramifications of the Covid-19 outbreak on the tourist industry. A distinct analysis will center exclusively on the recuperation stage of Vietnam's tourist sector following the pandemic. The research enhances comprehension of the difficulties and possibilities that arise throughout this recuperation stage. (2) Although previous research may have briefly discussed the overall effects on the economy and general patterns, this study aims to thoroughly examine the specific aspects determining the competitiveness of particular tourist businesses in Vietnam. This entails analyzing how organizations modify their strategy, product offerings, and operational models to recover competitiveness in an altered market environment. (3) The study by Madanaguli et al. (2022) primarily utilized qualitative or quantitative methodologies for their research. This study effectively integrates two methodologies, highlighting its originality. The qualitative insights in this study can give a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder viewpoints and adaptive tactics, while the quantitative data can offer statistical confirmation and a more significant examination of trends. (4) With the ongoing worldwide trend towards sustainable practices, such as green tourism and eco-friendly efforts, present your work as a valuable addition to this developing subject. Analyze the influence of sustainable practices on the competitiveness and customer preferences in Vietnam's tourist industry after the Covid-19 pandemic. (5) Policy suggestions and practical solutions: While certain studies may suggest theoretical frameworks, it is vital to ensure that the study offers concrete policy recommendations and practical solutions designed to improve competitiveness and company efficiency. This encompasses tactics for advancing infrastructure, inventive marketing techniques, and workforce education that align with sustainable tourism's objectives. By prioritizing these elements, this research may successfully fill in the missing information in the current body of literature and offer significant perspectives for policymakers, tourist executives, and stakeholders aiming to navigate the post-pandemic recovery period in Vietnam's tourism sector.

Based on assessments of competitiveness and the current competitiveness of Vietnamese tourism businesses, the author proposes an assessment model and solutions to improve the competitiveness of tourism businesses and the business efficiency of tourism enterprises after the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1. Enterprise competitiveness (EC)

Enterprise competitiveness is the capacity of a corporation or organization to compete effectively in its industry or market environment. It includes a range of qualities and talents that allow a company to stand out, attract consumers, and achieve long-term development and profitability (Aguiar-Barbosa et al., 2021).

The competitiveness of a business is the ability of a company to create a competitive advantage, create higher productivity and quality than competitors, capture a significant market share, generate a high income, and develop sustainably. The competitive ability of enterprises realizes the strength and advantage of a business compared to competitors in satisfying customer requirements to increase profits. The competitiveness of Vietnamese tourism businesses can also be understood based on this concept. Vietnamese tourism has exhibited notable advancements since it acceded to the World Trade Organization (WTO), as evidenced by a substantial surge in local and international visitor arrivals. This study examines the influx of international visitors to Vietnam and the establishment and growth of tourism enterprises within the market. The accession of Vietnam to the WTO has presented significant prospects for the overall tourism industry and individual enterprises operating within the tourism sector. In the global market, Vietnamese businesses face considerable competition from transnational and multinational companies with substantial financial resources, advanced technology, extensive experience, and high competitiveness. Consequently, Vietnamese enterprises are compelled to compete in a new environment characterized by international markets governed by stringent commercial institutions and laws. Vietnamese tourist enterprises now face several obstacles and complexities.

Other scientific researchers believe that enterprise competitiveness is identical to business capacity. Aguiar-Barbosa et al. (2021) showed that the business capacity of an enterprise is understood as the ability to manage activities within the enterprise, such as production, sales, marketing, human resources, and finance, and is the ability to cope with fluctuations in factors in the macro and micro business environment. In short, a business's competitive capacity is not a one-dimensional concept, and many factors must be considered. According to research, identifying these factors is essential, and companies can improve their competitiveness through these factors. The author believes the elements that enhance the enterprise's competitive capacity have been analyzed above.

Thus, in reality, many different concepts exist regarding enterprise competitiveness. Under market economic conditions, customer requirements must be taken as the standard for evaluating the competitiveness of tourism businesses. Customer requirements are both the goal and the driving force of production and trade. Different customer groups have different needs for the same product; to meet customer needs, businesses must create products and services according to their requirements, not what enterprises have. In the context of tourism businesses in general and Vietnam's tourism businesses in particular, which are small in scale and have limited production levels, applying the concept of competitiveness is based on external capabilities within the company, and the impact of factors outside the business is appropriate. The author used enterprise competitiveness (EC) scales based on the above analysis: EC1 met customers' needs. EC2: Enterprises increased sales. EC3: Enterprises have an expanding international market.

2.2. Business efficiency (BE)

Business efficiency measures how well a business utilizes resources to generate goods or services with the least expense while optimizing production and quality. Operational efficiency is a metric that quantifies the effectiveness of a corporation in utilizing its resources, such as human capital, technology, money, and materials, to accomplish its objectives (Zadeh Bazargani & Kiliç, 2021). The notion of business efficiency is significant within the realm of business. The statement above pertains to measuring the use of production resources, including personnel, machinery and equipment, raw materials, and capital, during an enterprise's production and commercial operations. The evaluation of business performance encompasses several methodologies, including the computation of profit margins, return on investment, and revenue per employee. An effective firm optimizes resource allocation, engages in product creation and service provision, and achieves its overarching objectives with minimal expenditures of time and resources. On the other hand, a firm that operates inefficiently would engage in wasteful utilization of resources, thereby impeding its capacity for expansion and exposing itself to the possibility of being outperformed by more efficient rivals (Biagi et al., 2017; Chi et al., 2019; Cunha & Lobão, 2022). The enhancement of corporate efficiency is contingent on optimizing many sub-models, such as marketing and customer service, as well as the synergistic connections between them, such as the integration of marketing and sales efforts.

Moreover, company efficiency may be defined as the extent to which resources are effectively utilized to accomplish predetermined corporate goals. Company firms strive to optimize earnings only, thereby necessitating an assessment of their entire company's performance. Business efficiency pertains to producing things or delivering services with minimal use of resources, including capital, the labor force, and energy usage. Efficient enterprises can generate commodities, provide services, and achieve shared objectives with optimal utilization of resources (Al-Hazmi, 2021; Gao et al., 2022; Huseynli, 2022; Nadalipour et al., 2019). The ultimate outcome of a company's operations is income generation. Therefore, business efficiency pertains to a firm's capacity to create a specific monetary return, either in revenue or profit, by utilizing a given input resource. Given the finite and costly nature of resources, the primary objective of a business proprietor is to establish an efficient enterprise that maximizes the income derived from available inputs. To attain this objective, enterprises must dedicate additional resources toward research and development, reinvest in their infrastructure, augment expenditures on marketing and sales, or enhance profit margins. Conversely, a firm that operates inefficiently allocates resources in a manner that is not optimal, constraining its capacity for expansion and exposing itself to the possibility of being outperformed by more efficient rivals (Santos et al., 2022; Kimbu et al., 2019; Gómez-Vega et al., 2022).

Thus, business is an activity carried out in all stages of the process, from investment to production to consumption or provision of services in the market to make a profit. Therefore, the issue that businesses are most concerned with is business efficiency. Business efficiency provides businesses with effective operations for survival and development. Business efficiency measures how well raw materials, labor, and capital can be converted into revenue-generating services and products. In other words, business efficiency represents a company or organization's capacity to produce the required time, money, and resources. Besides, it describes how efficiently a company has outputs such as products, services, and revenue relative to inputs such as capital, labor, and raw materials needed to produce them (Jia et al., 2022; González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). The author used the business efficiency (BE) scale based on the above analysis: BE1: Business efficiency based on profitability. BE2: Business efficiency based on labor efficiency. BE3: Business efficiency based on the efficiency of asset use.

2.3. Quality of products and services (QS)

Quality of products and services (QS): Yang and Li (2020) state that service quality is difficult to quantify. These two authors argue that the products and services of accommodation organizations are becoming increasingly homogeneous. This uniformity is critical when accommodation organizations can provide high-quality products and services to differentiate themselves from their competitors (Jones et al., 2017; Salinas Fernández et al., 2022). The provision of high-quality products and services aims to meet customer expectations. A quality product or service consistently aligns with the expectations of the consumer and individual-seeking services.

Furthermore, service quality measurement presents a challenge because of its subjective nature, rendering it an elusive and abstract concept that is difficult to quantify. Anabila et al. (2022) developed a composite measuring instrument called Servqual, encompassing five distinct components and 20 observed variables. The components of SERVQUAL are as follows: The dimensions of service quality can be categorized as tangibles, which refer to the physical aspects of facilities, equipment, personnel, materials, and information tools. Reliability pertains to the consistent and accurate performance of services following commitments or promises. Responsiveness denotes the level of willingness and promptness to serve customers. Assurance encompasses the knowledge, expertise, and professional demeanor of service staff, thereby instilling trust in customers and empathy, which involves demonstrating kindness and concern toward each individual customer as a means of evaluating service quality (Zadeh Bazargani & Kiliç, 2021; Sheppard & Fennell, 2019; Michael et al., 2019; Karimi et al., 2022). Based on the above analysis, the author had the quality of products and services (QS) scales as follows: QS1: Enterprise performs the service right the first time. QS2: Enterprises serve you quickly and on time. QS3: Business employees are always polite and courteous toward customers. QS4: Enterprises have modern equipment and understand their particular needs. Related studies have demonstrated that a tourist company's competitiveness and business efficiency are influenced by the quality of its products and services. The quality of products

and services (QS) is essential for improving firm competitiveness in the tourist sector. These points demonstrate how quality service (QS) has a beneficial impact on the competitiveness of enterprises in the tourist industry. QS improves customer happiness, differentiation, operational efficiency, financial performance, resilience, and sustainability. Incorporating these aspects into the research and thoroughly comprehending the influence of QS on tourist enterprises. Thus, the author proposed hypotheses H1 and 2 as follows:

H1: Quality of products and services (QS) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H2: Quality of products and services (QS) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.4. Marketing capacity 4.0 (MC)

Marketing capacity 4.0 (MC): Marketing is an activity that satisfies customers' needs to achieve business goals. Therefore, a business's marketing capacity is demonstrated through continuous monitoring and response to changes in customers and competitors (Javed et al., 2022; Geoffrey Deladem et al., 2021; Bo & Ningqiao, 2018). Marketing activities have shifted from a mixed marketing model to a relationship and 4.0. This improves the quality of relationships between members during business exchanges, such as relationships between customers and brands, between businesses and suppliers, and between the company and the distribution channel, which play an essential role in evaluating the marketing capacity of the business. Marketing 4.0 is a marketing strategy integrating digital and in-person interactions between companies and consumers. It emphasizes the fusion of style and practical values in the branding process, as well as the synergistic relationship between machine-to-machine connectivity and direct person-to-person contact to enhance customer loyalty to the business (Bilen et al., 2017; Amoako et al., 2022). Based on the above analysis, the author had a marketing capacity of 4.0 (MC) scale, which is as follows: MC1: Online for new products or services that meet customer needs. MC2: Online selling prices dramatically affect the brand's sales volume and competitiveness. MC3: An effective distribution channel strategy occurs when customers can easily find it on a website. MC4: A practical and low-cost form of online product promotion to the public. Related studies have shown that marketing capacity 4.0 affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness and business efficiency. Marketing capacity 4.0 (MC) encompasses contemporary marketing techniques and technology that utilize digital platforms, data analytics, and automation to improve competitiveness in the tourist industry. The author demonstrated how integrating these components in the research or debate highlights the favorable influence of Marketing capacity 4.0 on firm competitiveness in the tourist sector. This encompasses the improvement of client experiences, the maximization of marketing efficiency, the enhancement of operational performance, and the cultivation of resilience in the face of difficulties. Thus, the author gave Hypotheses H3 & 4 the following:

H3: Marketing capacity 4.0 (MC) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H4: Marketing capacity 4.0 (MC) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.5. Organizational and management capacity (OM)

Organizational and management capacity (OM): Firms' organizational and managerial abilities are widely recognized as crucial determinants of their survival and growth, as well as their competitive advantage (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Cao et al., 2022; Thukral, 2021). The degree of organization and management within a firm is demonstrated by the following facets: the expertise of management personnel is shown by their educational background and their understanding of the various aspects of the enterprise's business operations, including law, market dynamics, industry-specific knowledge, and societal and humanistic understanding.

The effectiveness of business organizations and management is also reflected in the structure and organization of the management hierarchy, as well as the precise allocation of responsibilities and tasks among different departments. Forming a compact and highly efficient enterprise management apparatus ensures quick and accurate decision-making and reduces business management costs (Albalate et al., 2017; Altinay & Kozak, 2021). Organizational and management capacities, such as strategic planning and

operational management, are vital in improving operational efficiency and significantly affecting the competitive ability of the enterprise. Management capacity is also reflected in the speed of personnel replacement in the face of change. Based on the above analysis, the author had the following organizational and management capacity (OM) scales: OM1: Enterprise has the expertise of management personnel. OM2: Effectiveness of business organizations in the enterprise. OM3: The business has planning and management capacity. OM4: Business uses human resources effectively. Related studies have shown that organizational and management capacities affect the competitiveness of tourism enterprises and business efficiency. Thus, the author gave Hypotheses H5 & 6 the following:

H5: Organizational and management capacity (OM) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H6: Organizational and management capacity (OM) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.6. Brand promotion (BP)

Brand promotion (BP): A brand encompasses many components, such as name, word, sign, symbol, design, or a combination thereof, which serve the purpose of differentiating the goods and services offered by a particular firm. Recent studies by Goel et al. (2022) and Kunst and Ivandić (2021) show that merchants possess rivals' products and services. The brand encompasses customers' collective perceptions and experiences, resulting from a distinct and well-defined position in their cognitive framework, established through tangible, functional advantages and intangible emotional connections. Therefore, brand marketing encompasses more than mere terminology; it entails a fervent dedication, unwavering devotion, and an ongoing resolve to fulfill promises daily.

A brand has tangible and intangible characteristics that represent a specific trade name. When managed effectively, a brand has the potential to generate influence and value. Promoting tourism brands is crucial for attracting tourists to a destination. Building and promoting Vietnamese tourism brands is one of the tasks of businesses and related parties (Mendieta-Peñalver et al., 2018; Uwamariya et al., 2022; Verkoeyen & Nepal, 2019). To effectively promote tourism brands, tourism marketing strategies include understanding tourist customers, planning 7P strategies in tourism marketing, building an online tour booking system, optimizing tourism marketing websites, promoting communication, advertising, and tourism promotion activities on social networking platforms, international media channels, promotion programs, and product promotion in key markets is launched (Zulvianti et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Díaz & Pulido-Fernández, 2021). Based on the above analysis, the author had the following brand promotion (BP) scale: BP1: Enterprise has optimized tourism marketing websites. BP2: Enterprises effectively promote online communication. BP3: Enterprises effectively implement online advertising and tourism promotion activities. BP4: Building good relationships with customers will bring high efficiency to businesses. Related studies have shown that brand promotion affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness and business efficiency. Thus, the author gave hypotheses H7 and 8 are as follows:

H7: Brand promotion (BP) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H8: Brand promotion (BP) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.7. Human resource quality (HR)

Human resource quality (HR): An organization's human resources include all the efforts, skills, and abilities of the people working for the organization (Núñez-Ríos et al., 2020; Eusébio et al., 2018). The quality of human resources in a business will impact the productivity they provide; employees will do their jobs well for the benefit of the organization and their own benefits if they are managed effectively. To achieve organizational goals, each employee must participate in creating and implementing solutions (Garcia et al., 2019; Vasanicova et al., 2021). Employees must understand how their work contributes to their business success. Human resources are critical factors for tourism development and competitiveness. In their research article, the results affirmed that the quality of human resources affects the quality of tourism services and the competitiveness of the tourism industry.

These authors emphasize that increasing the competitiveness of the tourism industry depends heavily on improving the quality of human resources (Zhang, 2021; Darsana & Sudjana, 2022; Sharma et al., 2024). Based on the above analysis, the author had the human resource quality (HR) scale: HR1: Building employees with solid professional capacity will lead to high work performance. HR2: Building a team of employees with professional skills. HR3: Social practice skills, such as English communication skills, are necessary in life and at work. HR4: Training and developing hard and soft employee skills to meet high customer needs. Related studies have shown that human resource quality affects the competitiveness of tourism enterprises and business efficiency. Thus, the author gave Hypotheses H9 & 10 the following:

H9: Human resource quality (HR) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H10: Human resource quality (HR) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.8. Social responsibility (SR)

Social responsibility (SR), or corporate social responsibility, refers to the ethical obligation of business proprietors to refrain from infringing upon the rights and interests of various stakeholders. Business owners must engage in acts of philanthropy and provide restitution for any detrimental consequences inflicted upon society by their commercial operations (Madanaguli et al., 2022; Wang, 2021). The social responsibility of a business is to raise business behavior to a level consistent with prevailing social norms, values, and expectations. Those who follow this point of view argue that corporations have no responsibility toward society because companies must pay taxes to the state when they conduct business activities. Therefore, businesses are only responsible for shareholders and shareholders and only employees of the enterprise.

Environmentally and socially responsible tourism is consistently understood as activities and processes that directly or indirectly minimize negative economic, social, environmental, and social impacts (Basera et al., 2022; Andi Auliya Hakim et al., 2021; Tambunan, 2021). Bringing more significant economic benefits to local residents and enhancing the prosperity of tourism destination communities. Responsible tourism is a viable solution to the complex issue of reconciling development and conservation. It represents a sustainable approach to development that prioritizes the well-being of individuals and strives to achieve harmonious equilibrium among many stakeholders, including local inhabitants, visitors, and companies. The three essential elements for engaging in and mutually benefiting from the implementation of socially responsible tourism practices are crucial for enhancing the competitiveness of tourist enterprises (Anabila et al., 2022; Zadeh Bazargani & Kiliç, 2021). Based on the above analysis, the author used the following social responsibility (SR) scales: SR1: Businesses are always customer-oriented. SR2: tax and financial obligations. SR3: Ethics and behavior toward employees, society, and the environment. Related studies have shown that social responsibility affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness and business efficiency. Thus, the author gave Hypotheses H11 & 12 the following:

H11: Social responsibility (SR) positively affecting the enterprise's competitiveness.

H12: Social responsibility (SR) positively affecting the business efficiency.

2.9. Enterprise competitiveness (EC) affecting business efficiency (BE)

A firm's competitiveness is determined by its capacity to sustain and grow its market presence and its ability to generate substantial profits. The prevailing notion in contemporary discourse posits that competitiveness entails the capacity to consume products and services vis-à-vis rival entities as well as the aptitude of enterprises to generate profits. Furthermore, tourist enterprises must possess a competitive advantage to attain effective competition, which may manifest through cost leadership, product differentiation, and prices exceeding the average obtained (Alvarado et al., 2021; Chin et al., 2017). The link between competitiveness, sustainable development, and efficient utilization of social resources is crucial. A firm's competitiveness refers to its capacity to sustain and augment its competitive edge in product sales, expand consumer networks, and attract and efficiently utilize resources.

Production elements are crucial for attaining substantial economic gains and fostering long-term, sustainable economic development. A theoretical model representing the impact relationship between the components of competitiveness on the business performance of tourism businesses is presented with research hypotheses that the six factors positively impact business efficiency (Chisadza et al., 2022). Based on the above scientific arguments and the assessment of competitiveness and the impact of competitiveness on the performance of tourism businesses. Several suggestions can be made to help policy-makers and business administrators in Vietnam improve competitiveness. Related studies show that enterprise competitiveness affects business efficiency. Thus, the author gave Hypothesis H13 as follows.

H13: Enterprise competitiveness (EC) positively affecting business efficiency (BE).

Some recent results and data on Covid-19's impact on Vietnam's tourism sector focus on how businesses have adapted compared to other regions. Implications for tourism arrivals and revenue in Vietnam: According to data from the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (2022), international tourist arrivals plummeted by 80% in 2020 compared to the previous year due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. This sharp decline severely impacted tourism businesses reliant on international visitors. Domestic tourism promotion: The highlights Vietnam's successful pivot towards domestic tourism promotion during the pandemic. Government initiatives and campaigns encouraged Vietnamese travelers to explore local destinations, helping to mitigate losses from international tourism. Adaptation of tourism businesses: Many Vietnamese tourism businesses implemented adaptive strategies such as digital marketing, offering flexible cancellation policies, and enhancing health and safety measures. These measures were crucial in rebuilding consumer confidence and attracting domestic tourists. Comparative studies by Chisadza et al. (2022) and Anabila et al. (2022) contrast Vietnam's tourism recovery strategies with those of neighboring countries. Vietnam's proactive handling of the pandemic, agile policy responses, and support for tourism businesses contributed to a quicker recovery than some regional peers. Adopting digital platforms and technology was pivotal in Vietnam's tourism recovery. Research by Uwamariya et al. (2022) discusses how businesses utilize virtual tours, online booking platforms, and digital marketing to engage with travelers and adapt to new consumer behaviors post-pandemic.

The factors above combine credibility built from researchers' theories with research methods that can understand and explain ideas. The reliability of the elements in the study was confirmed at each specific stage according to social change, and researchers have limited the scope of their research to a quantitative or qualitative approach (Gössling, 2018; Jones et al., 2017; Salinas Fernández et al., 2022). Based on the theoretical approach from the above research studies, the author offers research orientation on factors affecting the tourism enterprise's competitiveness and business efficiency, as follows in Figure 1.

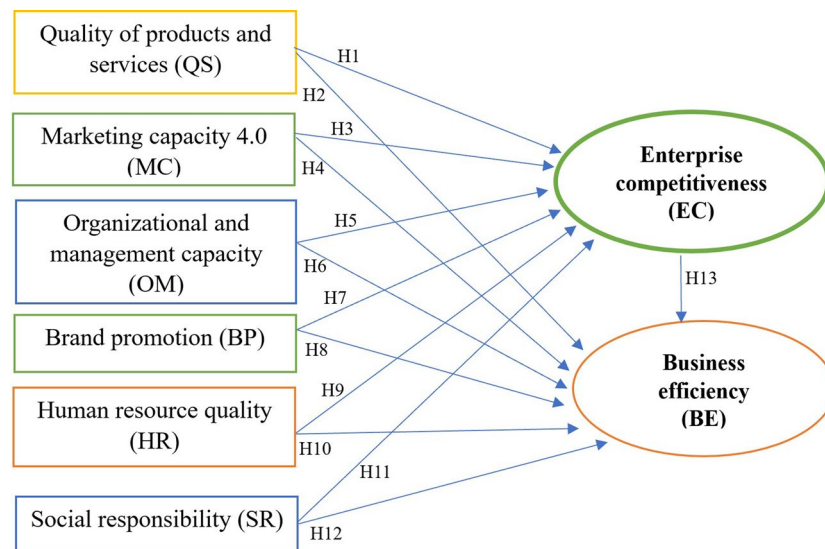


Figure 1. The research model for key factors affecting the enterprise's competitiveness and business efficiency.
Source: The author proposed.

3. Research methods

The research was designed to include two main steps: (1) research documents, proposing a theoretical research model, and completing the preliminary scale, the research stage of qualitative research, and (2) quantitative research. All respondents agreed to participate in this study after being fully informed about the research objectives, procedures, and potential implications. Consent to participate was obtained in written forms. Written consent was obtained by having participants sign a consent form that detailed the study's purpose, their rights as participants, and assurances of confidentiality. All respondents agreed to participate and answer the author's questions in Table A1. Besides, questionnaires had ethics approval from the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies at Lac Hong University (LHU), Vietnam (<https://lhu.edu.vn/244/Khoa-Sau-dai-hoc.html>). Thus, the specific steps are as follows:

(1) The author conducted a literature review and previous research projects to identify attributes that serve as a basis for building expert interview outlines and group discussions to establish a model. Theoretical research model and preliminary survey questionnaire design. Document research is a crucial component of the research process as it aims to acquire knowledge about prior studies conducted by local and international scholars concerning the article topic. Based on this premise, the author understands the current state of research and identifies the pertinent characteristics of the issue. This is a foundation for constructing a framework for conducting expert interviews and group discussions (Hair et al., 2018). In addition, synthesizing previous research streams' achievements helps identify gaps to guide the research topic. Previous studies have demonstrated that the concepts included in the article model have been researched and tested. However, to try the ideas in the theoretical model in a locality like Vietnam, with the characteristics of an ecotourism area, the educational level is still limited, tourism service business activities are minimal on a small scale, and interviews with experts and group discussions are essential. The purpose is to collect experts' opinions on whether the factors affecting competitive competence, synthesized from theory and inherited from previous studies, are suitable for specific business characteristics. The expert interviews and group discussions also aimed to discover new research factors. Based on these results, the author set up a preliminary survey.

Accordingly, qualitative research was conducted through discussions with 11 experts and 11 leaders from five cities. The author plans to use an in-depth interview method to achieve a qualitative research goal in this study. This is a fundamental technique for exploiting information, especially for sociological research. Interviews with experts and subjects related to the research problem, specifically the enterprise competitiveness affecting business efficiency, and the knowledge, experience, or feelings of people participating in the interviews help the researcher discover new issues, go deeper, and understand the research problem.

(2) Official research is based on investigating businesses and tourism service establishments in five big cities in Vietnam: Can Tho City, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hai Phong, and Hanoi. The main objects of investigation are the management levels of these qualitative businesses and tourists attending large, famous tourist areas in the five cities mentioned above. The concepts in the research model were evaluated and tested using survey data with a sample size of 870. Two main steps were carried out in this official research step: (i) statistical analysis of the model description and (ii) testing the research model using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which was used to test the model and research hypotheses. The minimum sample size must have five observations per estimated parameter (ratio of 1:5). In practical research applications, a sample size of 150 or larger is often required to obtain parameter estimates with standard error. Hair et al. (2018) proposed a commonly used formula to calculate the sample size as $n \geq 50 + 8m$ (n : minimum necessary sample size; m : number of independent variables in the model), which is relatively suitable if $m < 7$.

Thus, the study's research model has six independent and two dependent variables; the minimum sample size for the survey must be 98 persons (Hair et al., 2018). However, the larger the sample size than the required minimum, the higher the reliability of the study (reducing sampling biases). From the arguments on the official research program of the study, 870 survey questionnaires were issued, 815 valid questionnaires were collected, and the rate reached 93.67%. Choosing the subject of investigation, also known as the informant, is essential in research. Unlike consumer market research, which focuses on customer satisfaction with the information provider's answers, the questionnaire gives consumers

feelings of use or happiness. In this study, the information provider represents the business that answers the investigation questions. Therefore, the person providing information needs to be knowledgeable about the field related to the research problem. To investigate the factors affecting the competitiveness of tourism businesses, the survey subjects were individuals holding management positions with positions from the head, deputy department head, or higher, and employees who have worked for many years in the tourism industry. The person surveyed must be the director, deputy director, or people authorized by the director to directly participate in leadership tasks, work management, and business operations, and must understand the business situation. The sampling scope was businesses and tourism service establishments headquartered in the above five cities.

The independent variables included QS: Quality of products and services, MC: Marketing capacity 4.0, OM: Organizational and management capacity, BP: Brand promotion, HR: Human resource quality, and SR: Social responsibility. The dependent variable, EC, is the tourism enterprise's competitiveness, and BE is business efficiency. Moreover, the author proposes the following hypothesis. Based on the research mentioned above goal, the author's methods described: (1) The targeted population for this research includes businesses and tourism service establishments located in five big cities in Vietnam: Can Tho City, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hai Phong, and Hanoi. Additionally, tourists visiting prominent tourist destinations within these cities are also included. (2) Sampling strategy: the author had a stratified sampling strategy to ensure representation from different sectors and locations within each city. This approach helps capture diversity across different management levels of businesses and tourists visiting various tourist areas. (3) Sample size: The research utilized a sample size of 870 respondents. This size was determined to ensure adequate representation across the targeted cities and sectors, allowing for meaningful statistical analysis and generalization of findings. (4) Instrument development: The research instrument, likely a survey questionnaire, was developed based on established theoretical frameworks and prior literature on factors affecting enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency. It aimed to capture perceptions and experiences related to management practices in qualitative businesses and tourist behavior. (5) The author had the survey instrument employed the 5-point Likert scale consisting of the following points: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly agree to assess concepts such as enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency. These scales are structured to gauge respondents' attitudes and perceptions on various factors relevant to the study objectives. Finally, this structured approach ensures that the research methodology is robust and capable of providing valuable insights into the management dynamics of businesses and the tourism experience in the specified cities in Vietnam.

To solve the problems posed by the theories and models mentioned above, the author continues to present the research method of the results mentioned in the following contents: preliminary quantitative research; evaluate the reliability coefficient Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.6$; exploratory factor analysis (EFA) based on KMO coefficient (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) is $0.5 \leq \text{KMO} \leq 1$; Sig Bartlett's Test < 0.05 ; Eigenvalue > 1.0 (Hair et al., 2018). In addition, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used to test the proposed research model. The process of testing the above hypotheses and research models using this tool, in addition to having advantages over traditional methods such as multivariate regression due to calculating the proposed error, also allows the combination of potential concepts implicit with their proposal to the theoretical model at the same time (Hair et al., 2018). To measure the fit of the research model to the data, the primary indicators used were Chi-square (CMIN), chi-square adjusted for degrees of freedom (CMIN/df), good fitness index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI – Comparative FitIndex), Tucker and Lewis Index (TLI), and RMSEA index (Root Mean Square Error Approximation) < 0.08 . A research model is considered suitable for market data if the chi-square test has a P-value $> 5\%$; CMIN/df ≤ 2 ; in some cases, CMIN/df can be ≤ 5 (Hair et al., 2018); Average variance extracted (AVE) can be > 0.5 and GFI, TLI, CFI ≥ 0.9 .

In conclusion, the author applied mixed-method techniques to facilitate the gathering of both quantitative data and comprehensive textual or observational data from discussions with 11 experts and 11 to establish a research model. This enhances the understanding of the research issue by including the wide range and profound nature of the occurrences. In addition, triangulating data from many sources and methodologies can enhance the accuracy and dependability of the conclusions. This method can improve the study's credibility by cross-verifying data using diverse approaches, which helps reduce

biases. Quantitative data may reveal overarching trends and patterns, whereas qualitative data can offer context by delving into the underlying causes, motives, and mechanisms. This combination enables a more intricate comprehension of intricate occurrences. The knowledge acquired through mixed-method techniques can ultimately enhance decision-making and policy creation. By comprehending statistical patterns and individual anecdotes, academics and practitioners may develop policy recommendations that are more finely customized to tackle intricate difficulties, such as Vietnam's tourist industry.

4. Research results and discussions

4.1. Current status of tourism under the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam

The tourism industry plays a significant role in the overall economic output of several countries globally and is often regarded as a fundamental sector of the economy. The tourism business in Vietnam is recognized as one of the three primary economic sectors, facilitating the advancement of ancillary economic sectors and making significant contributions toward executing social security measures. Hence, Vietnam's strategic objective is to restore and enhance the tourism sector in the foreseeable future. Following a prolonged period of substantial deterioration owing to the pervasive influence of the Covid-19 epidemic, it is noteworthy that recent tourist policies have shown favorable outcomes. Vietnam's tourism sector has demonstrated a robust resurgence, establishing a foundation for significant advancement in the latter parts of 2022 and 2023. Nevertheless, given the ongoing global prevalence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the inherent risks of emerging mutations, many agencies, departments, and sectors must devise effective strategies and remedies. Implementing prudent and cohesive policies and plans is essential to systematically and comprehensively revive Vietnam's tourism sector.

The Covid-19 epidemic has significantly impacted the overall growth of global tourism. Based on statistical data provided by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2023), it is evident that the Covid-19 epidemic has resulted in a significant decline of approximately 73% in global visitor arrivals by the conclusion of 2020, as compared to the corresponding timeframe in 2019. This signifies a reduction of over one billion international tourists to global locations, resulting in a total income loss of more than 1.1 trillion USD for the worldwide tourism sector from overseas visitors. These results exceed the losses incurred by the worldwide tourist sector due to the 2009 global economic crisis of more than ten. In 2021, the global tourism industry observed a marginal increase in international visitor arrivals, reaching 415 million, as opposed to the previous year, 2020, which had 400 million arrivals. This represents a growth rate of 4%. In contrast to the figures recorded in 2019, the influx of international tourists saw significant 73% and 72% declines in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

The Covid-19 outbreak has had a significant influence on Vietnam's tourism industry. Vietnam's tourist business faces significant challenges due to implementing stricter rules such as blockade policies and travel restrictions. As a result, the development objectives of Vietnam's tourism sector have experienced a notable fall. Since March 2020, Vietnam has implemented a policy of ceasing to receive foreign visitors, resulting in a substantial decline of over 80% compared to the previous year, with nearly 3.7 million visitors. Concurrently, domestic tourism fell by 34% during the same period in 2019, amounting to 56 million domestic tourists. The total revenue generated from tourism activities had a significant decline of 59% compared to the figures recorded in 2019, ultimately amounting to 312,200 billion Vietnamese dong.

Vietnam's tourist sector has seen significant adverse effects in 2021, resulting in a notable decline in attaining tourism development objectives. According to the General Statistics Office (2020-2021), the total number of foreign visitors to Vietnam in 2021 was 3,500. In contrast, domestic tourists reached a substantial figure of 40 million. Furthermore, the total income generated from tourism activities during this period reached 180,000 billion. The Covid-19 epidemic has significantly influenced travel service firms, leading to a crisis in 90-95% of these enterprises have ceased operations, with only a small number of organized businesses continuing to offer intra-provincial excursions. Business enterprises must undergo industry transitions, modify business strategies, or implement significant workforce reductions. In 2020, 338 of the 2,519 foreign travel enterprises submitted requests for the revocation of their licenses, resulting in a closure rate of 90%. In 2021, more than 35% of licensed travel firms submitted applications for the revocation of their travel business licenses, while

the remaining establishments ceased their operations. The cessation of tourist transportation enterprises ensued due to a lack of clientele.

The tourist accommodation industry has the most significant impact. In 2020, there was a notable decline in the average room capacity of the nation, with a reduction ranging from 70% to 80% compared to the previous year (2019). In 2021, hotels saw a significant decline in client occupancy with limited facilities catering to confined individuals. The average yearly room capacity was predicted to reach 5%. In 2020, it is anticipated that firms will be compelled to reduce their workforce by 70% to 80%. In 2021, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of workers engaged in full-time employment, accounting for just 25% of the previous year.

Furthermore, approximately 30% of workers voluntarily sign or terminate their labor contracts. Additionally, approximately 35% of workers were subjected to temporary layoffs. Finally, only 10% of the workers are now employed. In several regions, the role of tourism as a catalyst for the advancement of various sectors and professions, including agricultural production (such as food and specialty items), craft (such as souvenir manufacturing), and transportation, has diminished. The image, competitiveness, and investment efficiency of tourism goods that were formerly branded and highly competitive experienced a substantial drop.

In 2022, following two years of significant stagnation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of various pilot policies, such as travel bubbles, vaccine passports, reinstatement of international flight routes, and the revision of tourist visa policies and tourism opening policies led to a notable resurgence in international tourist arrivals in Vietnam. Specifically, the total number of international tourists visiting Vietnam has surpassed 228,358. In total, 365,305 individuals from various countries visited their destinations. The growth rate of global tourist arrivals in Vietnam exhibited a significant surge compared with the pre-opening era. Notably, the statistical data for international tourist arrivals in 2022 showed a remarkable increase of 8,728.1% compared with the figures reported in 2021. In contrast to the corresponding timeframe in 2019, before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the aggregate number of international travelers in 2022 constituted a minor proportion of 3.1%.

4.2. Descriptive statistical results for tourism enterprise competitiveness

The tourism sector is actively pursuing the government's directives for safe and adaptable management of the Covid-19 outbreak. This includes the facilitation of domestic and international tourist endeavors that are closely linked to the ongoing pandemic by ensuring safety measures, implementing early and remote preparations, and devising strategies to gradually adjust to the new normal situation, the objective of simultaneously avoiding and combating epidemics while promoting economic recovery and development can be achieved. In addition, the study was conducted with 870 questionnaires sent directly to the five big cities. The official quantitative research sample included 870 leaders and other people working in tourism enterprises. Each city surveyed 174 managers working in tourism enterprises. However, 815 valid votes were collected, reaching a rate of 93.67%, which is also the data included in the descriptive statistical analysis.

Table 1 presents the mean values of all components, approximately 3.0. Moreover, the standard deviation approached 1.0. The data provide significant potential for enhancing tourism enterprises'

Table 1. Descriptive statistical results for enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency.

Factors affecting enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency	N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation
QS: Quality of products and services	815	1.00	5.00	3.0515	0.93514
MC: Marketing capacity	815	1.00	5.00	3.0279	0.91763
OM: Organizational and management capacity	815	1.00	5.00	3.0423	0.90422
BP: Brand promotion	815	1.00	5.00	2.4129	0.58051
HR: Human resource quality	815	1.00	5.00	3.3840	0.79612
SR: Social responsibility	815	1.00	5.00	3.2961	0.91136
EC: Enterprise competitiveness	815	1.00	5.00	3.3027	0.91489
BE: Business efficiency	815	1.00	5.00	2.3787	0.57402

Source: Author's calculations with SPSS 20.0 and Excel.

Notes: Average values for the determinants of tourism enterprise competitiveness; n=870 (815 samples valued, 55 samples lacked information). The standard deviation is given in parentheses, and the value is approximately 1.0.

competitiveness in Vietnam. Furthermore, the data in Table 1 indicate that transitioning from a linear economy to tourism enterprise competitiveness is a prevailing worldwide phenomenon, with Vietnam also aligning with this general trend. Businesses and related parties must restore and develop tourism, which must be identified as one of the critical contents of the socio-economic recovery and development programs for 2022 and 2023. Organizing the implementation synchronously, drastically, and effectively deploys the tourism development recovery program, contributing to achieving the goals set out in the program. Effective and safe implementation of international and domestic tourism in 2022 in the new everyday context by air, road, and sea, ensuring safety and synchronization by implementing the government's socioeconomic recovery and development program. Based on the situation and results of the Covid-19 epidemic, prevention, control, and evaluation of the effects of welcoming international tourists in the new regular periods to fully open international and domestic tourism activities.

Furthermore, Ministries and branches continue to research, propose, and promulgate fiscal, monetary, social security, and other policies to support tourism businesses and workers in industries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Some guidelines suggested for continued support are tourism development must have a legal basis and sufficient resources for implementation. It is necessary to promulgate policies to facilitate tourism, such as setting up Vietnamese tourism representative offices abroad, digital transformation in tourism, promotion, market exploitation, and tourism product development, attracting international visitors from key markets to Vietnam, promoting domestic tourism, stimulating tourist spending, increasing the proportion of the tourism industry in the service sector, and promoting Vietnamese tourism development into a key economic sector. The investigation program was implemented from March to June 2023. The research method chosen for this study was face-to-face interviews through a previously sent survey questionnaire.

Figure 2 shows the research results are over 50 percent from level 3 to level 5. In 2020 and 2021, despite being heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, Vietnamese tourism still made its mark with a series of prestigious international awards, such as Vietnam as a Cultural Destination, Destination Heritage, Asia's Leading Culinary Destination, Asia's Best Golf Destination. The Vietnam National Administration of Tourism was voted Asia's leading tourism management agency award through the World Travel Awards (WTA). Vietnam is also ranked 16th in the list of 20 destinations for personal travel in 2021 by the US Travel and Leisure magazine. CNN Travel selected Vietnam as the 13th out of the 21 best destinations for travel in 2021 based on the assessment of reasonable control of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, we can completely trust the leadership and direction of the Party and Government, as well as the smooth coordination of ministries, branches, and localities, especially the efforts of business community tourism. The tourism sector in Vietnam is anticipated to undergo revitalization, exhibiting enhanced appeal, professionalism, and sustainability. It is poised to emerge as a pivotal economic domain, playing a significant role in fostering the nation's recovery and socio-economic advancement.

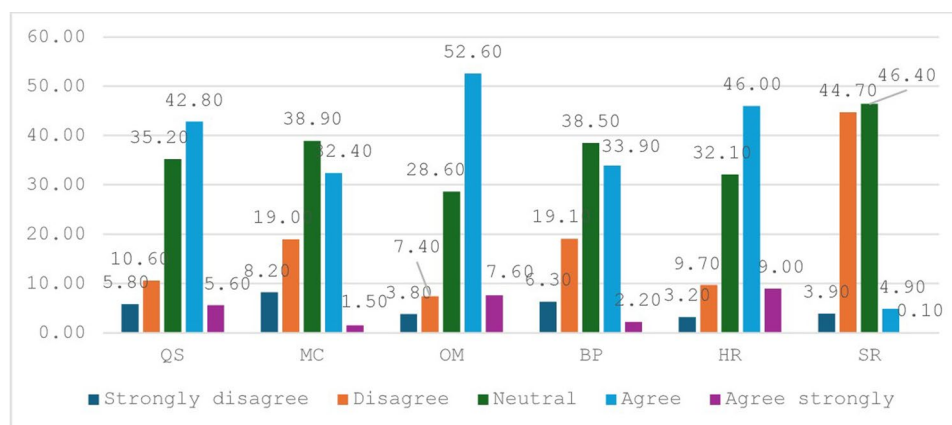


Figure 2. Frequency of statistical results for factors affecting enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency.
Source: Author's calculations with SPSS 20.0 and Excel.

Table 2. Testing Cronbach's alpha for factors affecting enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency.

Code	N	Cronbach's alpha
QS (QS1, QS2, QS3, QS4)	4	0.944
MC (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4)	4	0.929
OM (OM1, OM2, OM3, OM4)	4	0.942
BP (BP1, BP2, BP3, BP4)	4	0.882
HR (HR1, HR2, HR3, HR4)	4	0.860
SR (SR1, SR2, SR3)	3	0.917
EC (EC1, EC2, EC3)	3	0.912
BE (BE1, BE2, BE3)	3	0.847

Source: Data processed from SPSS 20.0.

Table 3. Factors affecting the tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency.

Relationships	Unstandardized estimate	Standardized estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Results
EC←MC	0.558	0.583	0.032	17.233	***	Accepted
EC←OM	0.087	0.094	0.028	3.078	0.002	Accepted
EC←QS	0.086	0.101	0.026	3.344	***	Accepted
EC←SR	0.072	0.052	0.034	2.121	0.034	Accepted
EC←BP	0.145	0.078	0.054	2.669	0.008	Accepted
EC←HR	0.156	0.154	0.032	4.820	***	Accepted
BE←HR	0.059	0.102	0.019	3.050	0.002	Accepted
BE←MC	0.171	0.316	0.023	7.333	***	Accepted
BE←OM	0.051	0.097	0.017	2.961	0.003	Accepted
BE←QS	0.050	0.103	0.016	3.171	0.002	Accepted
BE←SR	0.043	0.054	0.021	2.079	0.038	Accepted
BE←BP	0.117	0.110	0.033	3.531	***	Accepted
BE←EC	0.191	0.336	0.025	7.584	***	Accepted

Note *** 1%; Source: Author's calculations with SPSS 20.0 and Amos.

4.3. Testing Cronbach's alpha for factors affecting the enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency

Table 2 demonstrates the support of the city's culture, sports, and tourism departments. The official investigation process conducted a survey of 870 questionnaires sent to tourism businesses. Number of ballots issued: 870; number of votes collected: 815 questionnaires; 55 questionnaires had errors in the data entry and processing. The main mistakes were not answering all the questions in the questionnaire, answering the same answers, and answering multiple responses to the same question. As a result, 815 valid questionnaires were forming the sample for the official research program; the results are below. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient just signifies the presence or absence of a relationship between the measurements. However, this does not provide information on the variables. Calculating the correlation coefficient between the total variables will aid in eliminating observed variables that have minimal impact on describing the idea being assessed. Alpha levels may be categorized as follows: a scale more than 0.8, considered good; a range of 0.7 to 0.8, considered beneficial; and a value of 0.6, which may be employed if the study notion is novel or unique in the research setting. Extraction refers to removing or obtaining information from a source or location. The sum of the squared loadings was 85.267, and the KMO and Bartlett's test yielded a result of 0.834.

4.4. Testing results for factors affecting the enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency

Table 3 shows testing results for six factors affecting the tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency with sig. 0.05. Besides, the results of model testing show that the set of scales in the research model meets the level of fit with the data through the criteria of convergent validity, discriminant validity, composite reliability, and variance quote. Therefore, the hypotheses in the official research model have no adjustment changes.

Moreover, Table 3 shows that testing SEM allows researchers to explore measurement errors and integrate abstract, difficult-to-distinguish concepts. The method of testing hypotheses and research models using this tool, in addition to having advantages over traditional methods such as multivariate regression because of calculating the proposed error, also allows the combination of potential concepts hidden

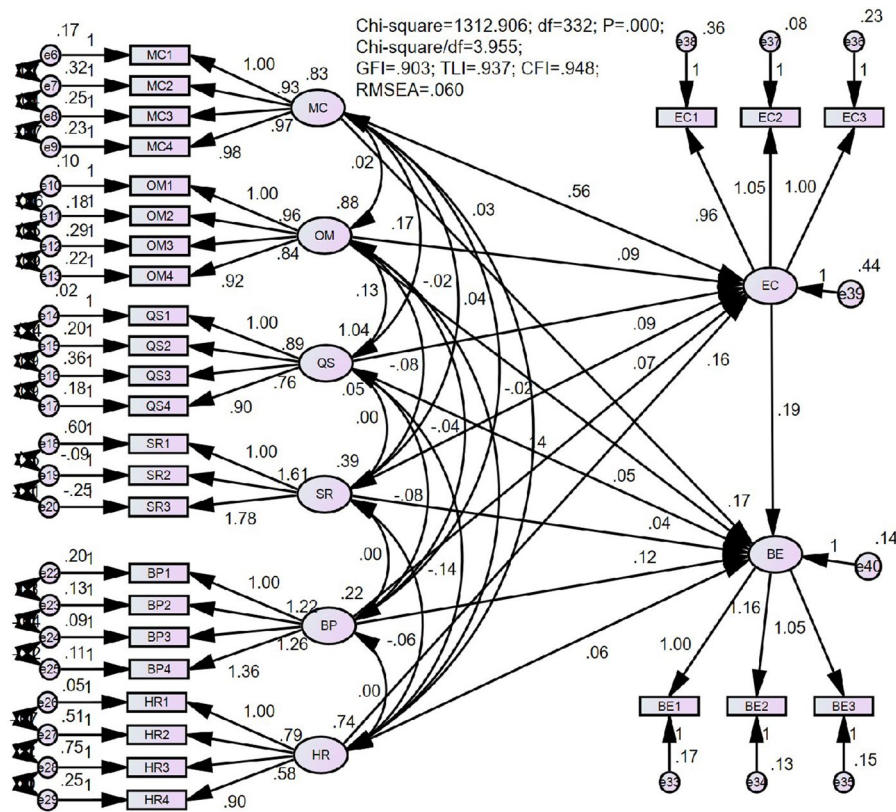


Figure 3. Testing results for factors affecting the tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency.
Source: Author's calculations with SPSS 20.0 and Amos.

Table 4. Testing the research model estimates using Bootstrap (N=50000 samples).

Relationships	SE	SE-SE	Mean	Bias	SE-Bias	C.R	Results
EC←MC	0.037	0.001	0.556	0.002	0.003	0.67	Accepted
EC←OM	0.029	0.001	0.077	0.010	0.007	1.43	Accepted
EC←QS	0.025	0.001	0.080	0.007	0.004	1.75	Accepted
EC←SR	0.038	0.001	0.066	0.006	0.004	1.50	Accepted
EC←BP	0.088	0.002	0.091	0.004	0.003	1.33	Accepted
EC←HR	0.037	0.001	0.151	0.004	0.003	1.33	Accepted
BE←HR	0.020	0.000	0.055	0.001	0.001	1.00	Accepted
BE←MC	0.024	0.001	0.168	0.003	0.002	1.50	Accepted
BE←OM	0.025	0.001	0.051	0.000	0.001	0.00	Accepted
BE←QS	0.026	0.001	0.046	0.004	0.003	1.33	Accepted
BE←SR	0.025	0.001	0.035	0.008	0.006	1.33	Accepted
BE←BP	0.063	0.001	0.093	0.003	0.002	1.50	Accepted
BE←EC	0.029	0.001	0.195	0.004	0.003	1.33	Accepted

Note *** 1%; Source: Author's calculations with SPSS 20.0 and Amos.

from the theoretical model simultaneously. The Maximum Likelihood method estimates the parameters in the research model if the data have a normal distribution.

Figure 3 displays the testing outcomes for the six factors affecting tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency, with a statistically significant result at a significance level of 0.05. Six components need to be considered: quality of products and services, marketing capacity 4.0, organizational and management capacity, brand promotion, human resource quality, and social responsibility

All standardized regression weights in the critical model reached the significance level ($p=0.000$, so it is statistically significant) and had large values varying from 0.052 to 0.583 (Table 3). This result indicates that the components in the model are unidirectional and have convergent validity. The results of testing the discriminant value between variables in the critical model in Table 3 show that all estimated correlation coefficients associated with the standard error (SE) for the p-value were less than 0.05. Therefore,

each concept-concept pair's correlation coefficient differs from one at the 95% confidence level. Thus, the concepts in the critical model achieved discriminant validity.

Table 4 evaluates the reliability of estimates in quantitative research using sampling methods. Studies usually have to divide the sample into two subsamples. Half is used for estimating the model parameters and half for re-evaluation. It is also possible to repeat this study using a different approach. The above two methods are unsuitable for this research because the linear structural model requires a large sample; therefore, the above two methods are time-consuming and costly. Bootstrapping is a suitable alternative in this case. Bootstrapping is a resampling method with replacement, in which the initial sample acts as the crowd. Therefore, in this study, the author used the bootstrap method with the number of replicate samples $N=50000$. The results estimated by bootstrapping with $N=50000$ are averaged and show that although there is, the bias appears tiny (details according to Table 4, $C.R < 2$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the estimates in the research model were reliable.

4.5. Research discussions

In the present challenging epidemiological environment, visitor habits and expectations have also changed, which the tourism sector has noted and is attempting to adapt to—that is, picking a tourist location. Thus, travel is safe and amicable, and healthcare and insurance are provided. Travelers frequently want specific information about their destination's healthcare system and travel insurance policies. The focus of tourism has shifted from international to domestic demand. Use package travel items like predesigned combination packages for small parties or family vacations. Use information technology, artificial intelligence, and the Internet to learn more about trips ahead of time. Tourism is adaptable to service utilization. Besides, the tourist sector has directed enterprises, tourism units, and tourism service providers to shift courses to satisfy client expectations as soon as possible (González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Take better care of visitors, especially by using more information technology and artificial intelligence in the administration, introduction, and advertising of products, services, and images to fulfill the demands of tourists. To meet the needs and attract the attention of visitors, despite rapid and remarkable development, the competitiveness of Vietnamese enterprises still has many limitations, as shown in the following aspects. Challenges in investment costs and technology application: Investment costs are a significant challenge for Vietnamese businesses in implementing digital transformation. According to a survey by the Department of Enterprises, 50.0% of tourism businesses believe that the biggest challenge in digital transformation is the high cost of investment and technology application. Technology application effectiveness in production and business activities is not evident in the short term.

Tourism businesses face challenges in changing business habits and practices, and digital transformation requires changing business habits and practices; while this factor is considered long-term, making changes difficult and highly dependent on the head of the business. More than 50.0% of tourism businesses believe that changing business habits and practices in digital transformation is a significant challenge (Al-Hazmi, 2021). Many enterprises have applied software, but employees and workers have not used or only partially applied it, causing businesses' digital transformation goals to fail. Based on the observed variables of human resources factors, although the working age force is tremendous, ensuring tourism development, it is still limited in qualifications and lacks professionalism. The speed of attracting labor for tourism activities still faces many difficulties, partly due to the characteristics of the service industry (Darsana & Sudjana, 2022).

Tourism enterprises face a scarcity of human resources for digital transformation. Over 50.0% of these enterprises reported encountering challenges at the onset of their digital transformation endeavors, primarily stemming from a dearth of proficient, well-informed, and skilled personnel capable of executing the digital transformation project. The limited presence of in-house specialists and a lack of human resources with expertise in digital technology pose significant challenges for organizations, diminishing their capacity to effectively undertake digital transformation and attain success (Darsana & Sudjana, 2022).

Tourism businesses lack digital technology infrastructure, considered one of the most critical factors when companies carry out digital transformation. However, high investment costs can lead to a lack of necessary infrastructure for businesses to implement digital transformation effectively and comprehensively.

Currently, up to 40.0% of the surveyed enterprises reflect on this challenge (González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Therefore, the human resources for tourism businesses today are not on par with the tasks set and are limited in professional qualifications and professional skills, leading to the ability to compete in meeting demand for tourists being very limited. Vietnamese tourism businesses that effectively utilize digital platforms for customer engagement post-pandemic would illustrate the practical implications of Marketing 4.0. Vinpearl Group, a leading accommodation and tourist business in Vietnam, restructured its digital marketing methods after the epidemic. They implemented customized marketing automation systems to customize offers according to client preferences obtained from online interactions and booking records. This technique enhanced client involvement and operational effectiveness by simplifying booking procedures (Altınay & Kozak, 2021). Besides, tourism in New Zealand refers to traveling to different places for leisure, recreation, or business purposes. New Zealand adopted a digital-first strategy to advertise the country as a secure and appealing vacation destination after the Covid-19 pandemic. A virtual reality (VR) campaign was initiated to enable prospective tourists to remotely experience the many attractions of New Zealand. This immersive encounter not only maintained the location as a prominent consideration but also motivated tourists to strategize for their subsequent journeys, demonstrating the influential impact of digital engagement in the revival of tourism (Gössling, 2018).

Tourism businesses have difficulty accessing information about digital technology and integrating digital technology solutions, which are diverse, abundant, and continuously updated according to market needs. Not knowing information about available solutions and technology and their suitability for business can cause difficulties in applying technology to their production and business activities. Up to 40.4% of companies have difficulty accessing complete digital technology information (González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). In addition, the sporadic and unplanned use of management software to serve production and business activities makes it difficult for businesses to integrate technological solutions into a system and implement digital transformation. More than 30.0% of tourism businesses have difficulty integrating digital technology solutions (Altınay & Kozak, 2021).

When implementing digital transformation, tourism businesses lack commitment and understanding of the Board of Directors, management, and employees. Leaders must be committed to digitally transforming, from the CEO to management staff and workers. This ensures that digital transformation is appropriately invested and fully implemented. The fact that workers do not accept risks and are afraid of change makes implementing digital transformation more difficult. Currently, 32.1% of businesses lack commitment from the board of directors and managers, and 26.6% lack commitment from employees. In addition, tourism businesses fear personal/business data leaks: digital transformation is no longer a new concept; however, fear of information security issues when using technology solutions makes businesses not dare to step out of the world (Altınay & Kozak, 2021). The safety limit for change is 23.4% of companies are worried about personal/business data leaks when implementing digital transformation. In general, products and services provided by tourism businesses are affluent and diverse, meeting the needs of tourists. However, there are still many limitations, specifically regarding ecotourism. There are few attractive tourism products, and the main one is still garden ecotourism associated with islands and rivers: boat trips on the river, visiting orchards, and listening to amateur music. Craft village tourism is a tourism model that thrives through green and sustainable tourism development. However, the current situation of developing traditional craft villages to serve this type of ecotourism has many limitations (Gössling, 2018).

Tourism businesses lack organizational and management capacity at the current level; their administrative and management capability is inadequate at the direct distribution stage, reflected in advertising, promotion, and branding activities for tourism products and their characteristics for domestic and foreign tourists. The indirect distribution stage lacks initiative in connecting routes and tourist destinations inside and outside the province; alliances and connections lack sustainability and rely mainly on intermediary tour operators (González-Rodríguez et al., 2023). Tourism businesses always ensure hygiene, food safety, and customer rights and are conscious of protecting the environment and natural resources, but some units still rip off customers, product quality is not guaranteed, and environmental hygiene is not good. Most tourism businesses, tourist resorts, and tourist facilities are still limited in quantity and quality of services in many provinces, with spontaneous development and lack of cohesion and coordination between businesses in a chain, requiring the integration of tourism businesses to become an urgent requirement (Altınay & Kozak, 2021).

Tourism businesses lack tourists to evaluate business marketing activities, and the industry level is less than 50.0%, which is not high. This shows the current situation of tourism businesses that have not implemented marketing strategies, customer relationships, and the ability to attract customers. Cause: The current state of marketing activities to understand customer needs to meet diverse customer needs is still limited due to lack of capital, reduced business will, and lack of opportunities to access modern technology, market information, and means of promoting brands for products that are not highly professional (Altınay & Kozak, 2021; González-Rodríguez et al., 2023).

These are the everyday challenges of tourism businesses when implementing digital transformation to improve the tourism enterprise's competitiveness and efficiency. However, depending on their size, tourist enterprises and large-scale organizations face various obstacles. Small and micro-scale businesses with limited financial resources have the most significant investment and technology implementation challenges (Thukral, 2021). Although medium and large-scale enterprises have tremendous revenue potential, they face the most critical challenges in altering corporate attitudes and procedures. This is partly because medium and large-sized businesses have more sophisticated systems and processes than small- and micro-businesses, making it more challenging to adjust to change (Christofi et al., 2024).

5. Conclusions and policy recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

The development of Vietnamese tourism has new advantages and challenges. Under the impact of globalization, Vietnam is becoming increasingly profoundly integrated into the region and the world. Vietnam's industrialization, modernization, and rapid urbanization significantly impact the natural and socioeconomic environment. The service quality at some destinations is not high, and the accommodation system is not synchronized. Travel businesses are small in scale, making the international tourism market challenging. The quantity and quality of tourism human resources are limited, especially regarding foreign-language proficiency and professionalism. The tourism infrastructure and roads that access tourist destinations are poor. Implementing some tourism development projects is still slow, leading to a lack of large-scale entertainment and resort areas, affecting the goal of attracting tourists to Vietnam for a long time. Vietnam's potential to develop and attract tourists is generally massive in promoting this strength, and contributions from businesses in this field are needed. However, tourism businesses, particularly the tourism industry, still have many limitations in their ability to compete and attract tourists to Vietnam. In addition, the research results show that the article's result is to discover critical factors affecting the competitiveness of the tourism enterprise and its impact on business efficiency. The author provides policy recommendations for improving Vietnam's tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency. The article's novelty has six determinants of the tourism enterprise competitiveness and business efficiency. Descriptive statistical tools were used to measure the mean value, standard deviation, and structural equation models of 815 valid votes, reaching a rate of 93.67%. Finally, the study's findings can help policymakers and tourism managers apply research results to develop policies for tourism enterprises' competitiveness and business efficiency. To improve the competitiveness of Vietnamese tourism businesses, it is necessary to focus on recommendations, such as enhancing the quality of products and services, marketing capacity 4.0, organizational and management capacity, brand promotion, human resource quality, and social responsibility. These solutions will help Vietnamese tourism businesses improve competitiveness and attract international tourists.

5.2. Policy recommendations

To promote the competitiveness of their tourism businesses and attract international tourists to Vietnam, the following solutions must be implemented synchronously:

(1) Improve the quality of products and services; this factor has an average value of 3.0515, and the standardized estimate is 0.101 with sig. 0.000 (Tables 1 and 3). The results showed that the quality of products and services affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness with a significance of 5% (Jones et al., 2017; Salinas Fernández et al., 2022). Despite the growth in the number of tourists every year, the

appearance of travel companies, ecotourism areas, and tourism products is still just self-copying of local businesses and localities in the region without any orientation to develop their own advantages, create their own nuances, and diversify their tourism products. Tourism products lack diversity, often associated with ecotourism, such as boating on the river, visiting orchards, and listening to amateur music, most of which are found in the activities of tourist attraction businesses in the area of the province. Therefore, tourism businesses have not exploited the potential and advantages of regional specialties and have not made a difference in service quality tourism characteristics compared with other countries in the region. Tourism businesses have proactively renewed and improved service quality and launched new product packages with preferential prices to stimulate the demand for tourism by people and tourists. Improving service quality is vital for satisfying tourists in any service business, especially tourism services. Fully aware of this, tourism businesses will constantly improve and enhance service quality to meet the increasing needs of tourists in the future. Tourism businesses need to develop and diversify tourism products, especially chain links and services, to meet international tourism standards, preserve, design, and promote the tourism industry's image and the role of historical relics, destinations, and tourist areas. Build images and brands, and identify national tourism with depth and height.

(2) Improve the marketing capacity to 4.0, which has an average value of 3.0279; the standardized estimate is 0.583 with sig. 0.000 (Tables 1 and 3). The research showed that marketing capacity 4.0 affects the tourism enterprise's competitiveness with a significance of 5% and the same results (Javed et al., 2022; Geoffrey Deladem et al., 2021; Bo & Ningqiao, 2018). Promotion and advertising in marketing activities: Investment in building brands for businesses and Vietnam's tourism industry still lacks policy mechanisms, resources, and professionalism, leading to ineffectiveness and not being proactively positioned firmly in the market target. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, also called Industry 4.0, significantly influenced several dimensions of socio-economic existence, including the government, enterprises, organizations, persons, and security. Without exception, there are Vietnamese travel enterprises. Vietnam is currently confronted with many difficulties and possibilities arising from the advent of the fourth industrial revolution. This revolution entails the integration of advanced technologies into products and services, thus enabling additional value generation. Consequently, Vietnamese travel enterprises are augmenting the Internet of Things in their operations. The Internet of Things (IoT) utilization in consumer engagement activities and fostering connections with partners, suppliers, and agencies has become increasingly prevalent. Moreover, the tourism management agency sector embraces the integration of IoT technologies. For customers, Vietnamese travel businesses apply the Internet of Things along their journey, from creating inspiration with information displayed on attractive websites to many promotional programs and individually displayed information. Personalize and select from thousands of hotels and tour programs to pay by credit card or directly, encourage sharing customer feedback on Facebook, and maintain customer experience with the fastest electronic interaction and safety. Proactively innovate management and service models, improve competitiveness by making strategic plans, and apply information technology to those plans to establish an intelligent tourism ecosystem and increase the budget for digitalization. However, diversity is at the core of the 4.0 industrial revolution. Vietnamese travel businesses want to grasp the trend of the 4.0 revolution, which can radiate in many directions without limiting their thinking to mobile or smart devices. Therefore, the creativity and acumen of businesses are required. Increase budget for significant data digitization activities: The 4.0 revolution is leading to the need to personalize consumer products, including tourism. To do this, we must better understand the needs of tourists through technologies such as the Internet of Things and big data. Digital transformation is necessary, but businesses will encounter many difficulties because their understanding of digitalization is uneven. Implementing digitalization will lead to the restructuring of businesses and business processes. Therefore, Vietnamese travel businesses must supplement their digitalization budgets to promote these activities.

(3) Improve organizational and management capacity; this factor has an average value of 3.0423 and a standardized estimate of 0.094 with sig. 0.002 (Tables 1 and 3). The research results show that organizational and management capacities affect the tourism enterprise's competitiveness with a significance of 5% (Andrades & Dimanche, 2017; Cao et al., 2022; Thukral, 2021). Organizing and managing travel business activities for a company's travel business to be successful must be organized scientifically and reasonably. Specific responsibilities must be clearly assigned, and the implementation stages and

coordination between marketing departments, administration, and guidance must be strictly managed. Most tourism businesses and resorts still have a limited quantity and quality of management of human resources and lack cohesion and coordination between firms in a chain, requiring the integration of tourism businesses to become an urgent requirement. Therefore, in the future, companies need to strengthen their training to foster and build a team of officials, civil servants, leaders, and managers of businesses and individuals working in tourism with the necessary knowledge about tourism management. Management, business, law, and social responsibility gradually ensure the quality of human resources to meet the requirements of tourism development and enhance the competitiveness of enterprises, thereby contributing to improving business efficiency. Additionally, the tourism industry continues to review the current status of human resources to develop and plan to train and retrain tourism staff. Tourism businesses focus on upgrading, supplementing, and perfecting facilities and equipment for vocational training. Apply appropriate policies to attract experienced and highly qualified lecturers to work and teach at tourism vocational training establishments and spend a proper portion of the budget to send many business managers and state management agencies to train at several reputable schools for tourism training abroad.

(4) To improve brand promotion, this factor had an average value of 2.4129 and a standardized estimate of 0.078 with sig. 0.008 (Tables 1 and 3). The results showed that brand promotion affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness with a significance of 5% (Mendieta-Peñalver et al., 2018; Uwamariya et al., 2022; Verkoeyen & Nepal, 2019). To enhance the effectiveness of promoting tourism products, the tourism industry in many localities focuses on organizing marketing programs and campaigns according to focus, key, theme, and scale, thus creating a high spillover effect. Recovering and developing tourism, the tourism industry, accommodation, and travel businesses focus on building and innovating products and services to increase destination value. Strengthening promotion is necessary, contributing to promoting the spread and positioning Vietnam as the leading attractive tourist destination in Southeast Asia, realizing the Campaign's goals with Vietnam's tourism development strategy. Therefore, it propagates and promotes tourism through media and television. Develop and organize focused tourism promotion programs associated with cultural events, festivals, fairs, conferences, and seminars. Actively implementing socialization work and strengthening cooperation with provinces and cities in tourism advertising and promotion activities. In addition, there is close coordination between the state and businesses, localities, and the Central Government in promoting tourism through many different activities. Promote the development of the international tourist market and the market of foreign tourists living in Vietnam: Develop a plan to promote and attract international tourists in each stage and follow each key market; actively participate in general international tourism promotion activities of the whole country; build a tourist information system (website, maps, guides, tourist information counters, leaflets) that is convenient and diverse in information, in major international languages; develop programs to promote provincial tourism internationally (advertise on media agencies, participate in major international tourism events, promote Vietnamese tourism in international events); and simplify procedures for foreign tourists. In addition, businesses need to attach importance to the domestic tourist market: research domestic market segmentation to have appropriate and effective promotion campaigns, combine promotion in localities to develop tourism to attract tourist exchange and develop regional tourism brands, thereby building suitable tourism products to attract domestic tourists, and policies to stimulate demand for the domestic market.

(5) To improve human resource quality, this factor had an average value of 3.3840; the standardized estimate was 0.154 with sig. 0.000 (Tables 1 and 3). The results showed that human resource quality affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness with a significance of 5% (Garcia et al., 2019; Vasanicova et al., 2021). Although human resources for tourism have grown significantly in quantity and quality, they still do not meet the requirements of businesses and are limited in awareness, foreign language ability, communication ability, and so on. In general, professionalism is limited. Human resources play an essential role in tourism development. However, the current tourism situation in terms of human resources faces many difficulties. In the context of the 4.0 industrial revolution, Vietnam's tourism industry faces many challenges, including human resources. Over the years, tourism has made efforts to develop human resources and has initially achieved specific results. However, some problems remain to be addressed.

Therefore, in the foreseeable future, the tourism sector intends to collaborate with training institutions and local entities to continue offering training programs that enhance the caliber of human capital and local communities in prominent tourist locations. This is the fundamental framework for improving operational efficiency within the tourism industry, benefiting individual tourism enterprises and the broader tourism business community. Subsequently, they play a role in fostering tourism growth in regions that appeal to tourist attractions. Cultivating heightened community consciousness at tourist locations and amicable conduct toward tourists will facilitate a positive perception in the minds of visitors. Conversely, tourism enterprises with competent management teams and well-trained service workers have superior tourism offerings. These offerings are the fundamental foundation for enhancing tourist satisfaction and fostering visitor loyalty, resulting in an increased tourist influx. At the same time, extending the stay of tourists is the core element of building and developing the brand and image of a tourist destination. Invest in developing tourism human resources with high professional expertise and good professional ethics; develop a system of tourism vocational training schools in the province; encourage quality-managed private training establishments; prioritize the development of on-site training systems for businesses; strengthen professional training programs for tourism management skills, disseminate provincial tourism development policies; and policies to encourage and support high-quality tourism workers working in the province. Enhance community awareness of tourism product development: organize training programs on tourist service skills for community tourism development areas; develop a force of on-site tour guides who are local people for cultural tourist attractions and craft villages through training and support programs for people; propaganda and dissemination to raise awareness and tourism business ethics of individual tourism service business households in the province, and disseminate the code of conduct to tourists.

(6) Improve social responsibility: this factor has an average value of 3.2961; the standardized estimate is 0.052 with sig. 0.034 (Tables 1 and 3). The results showed that social responsibility affects tourism enterprises' competitiveness with a significance of 5% (Basera et al., 2022; Andi Auliya Hakim et al., 2021; Tambunan, 2021). Tourism growth can generate employment opportunities and financial gains for several individuals, including constructing essential infrastructure and providing tourist-related services. Tourism plays a significant role in bolstering national and local budgets by fulfilling tax responsibilities. Consequently, this financial contribution aids local governments in enhancing infrastructure and services for locals and visitors. Nevertheless, tourism's unregulated expansion and advancement in several regions adversely affect natural ecosystems, the environment, and indigenous populations. The potential adverse effects encompass the expropriation of extensive land tracts for tourism purposes, alteration of natural habitats, and encroachment of visitors into ecologically fragile ecosystems. Negative environmental impacts encompass a range of detrimental consequences, such as the disruption of natural landscapes owing to infrastructure development, excessive use of water and energy resources, contamination of water bodies, abrupt escalation in trash generation, and several other harmful effects. Tourism has the potential to disrupt a town's native culture and social fabric, leading to the emergence of social divisions. Hence, tourist firms must establish responsible tourism practices, widely recognized as tourism activities and procedures that mitigate adverse economic, social, environmental, and cultural effects directly or indirectly. The objective is to maximize economic advantages for the local population and foster prosperity within towns that serve as tourist destinations. Responsible tourism is a viable solution to the complex issue of reconciling development and conservation. It represents a sustainable approach to development that prioritizes the well-being of individuals and strives to achieve harmonious equilibrium among many stakeholders, including local inhabitants, visitors, and companies. The components above are essential for collective participation and mutual benefits in implementing responsible tourism. When businesses engage in sustainable tourism development, they must adhere to specific standards. These requirements mostly revolve around minimizing their influence on the environment and ensuring that adverse consequences are avoided, particularly in vast geographical areas. Simultaneously, it is imperative to prioritize the development of localized regions, such as villages and residential communities, which are comparatively less influenced by cultural and societal factors. The profit distribution is allocated to local individuals and the surrounding community. Responsible and sustainable tourism aims to attain sustainable

development. Hence, the fundamental tenets, including responsible and sustainable tourism, are environmental preservation, equitable social practices, economic advancement, and cultural conservation. In conclusion, acknowledging the significance of ecological protection in promoting tourism, the Vietnamese Government has officially proclaimed responsible tourism as the foremost objective of the industry's prospective growth plan. Within this particular context, it is essential to note that responsible tourism encompasses more than just certain types of tourism, such as beach, historical, and community tourism. On the other hand, responsible tourism pertains to examining the effects and repercussions of tourism on the environment, community, and local economy. Responsible tourism extends beyond protected natural habitats, encompassing all enterprises, regardless of location in metropolitan regions, provincial centers, or typical settings. Responsible tourism can develop in remote areas, such as villages and islands. Responsible tourism is how individuals, enterprises, and organizations coordinate and execute tourist endeavors.

The author's six policy implications are suggested above; moreover, the author studied the empirical evidence of the successful development of the tourist business during the Covid-19 epidemic in New Zealand and Thailand. The following provides a full breakdown: (1) Amidst the Covid-19 outbreak, the New Zealand government implemented a salary subsidy program to assist businesses impacted by the lockdowns, especially those in the tourism industry. The program offered monetary assistance to aid firms in retaining their personnel. This assistance provided crucial support to tourist firms, enabling them to withstand the immediate economic consequences, keep their employees, and enhance their prospects for recovery. (2) Thailand implemented several domestic tourist stimulus programs to incentivize local travel, including incentives for lodging, meals, and transportation costs. These packages were designed to offset the decline in foreign tourists by increasing domestic tourism. To support tourism enterprises during crises, Vietnam should adopt the successful government initiatives implemented by the two countries. By doing so, Vietnam can enhance the credibility of these recommendations and implement practical and proven strategies tailored to different situations. This will increase the relevance and potential impact of these initiatives in supporting tourism enterprises in the future.

5.2.1. The limitations and further research

Besides the positive scientific and practical contributions, the research also has certain limitations that need to be further researched and supplemented to make the research content more comprehensive, specifically: (1) Currently, previous studies related to the competitiveness of tourism businesses are still minimal, most of them are studies on the competitiveness of destinations. Therefore, searching for and analyzing relevant previous studies to identify research gaps is limited. (2) Research on factors affecting competitiveness is developed to test research hypotheses for tourism businesses. However, tourism businesses remain limited in number and scale. Therefore, the research results are only specific to tourism businesses and do not represent other localities in the country. The research only stops at identifying the factors affecting the competitive capacity of tourism businesses in five cities in Vietnam. This research has not gone into a deep analysis of the relationships between businesses in the chain of tourism businesses in other localities across the country to see the current situation in the entire tourism industry system. From there, the author proposes solutions to link and develop a brand that is familiar to Vietnam's tourism business system.

Based on the study's limitations, further research must be supplemented as suggested. First, research on factors affecting competitive capacity for tourism businesses will be expanded to the Mekong Delta provinces and other localities throughout the country. Second, further research should not only focus on the factors affecting the competitiveness of businesses but also consider the relationship between these businesses in the tourism business chain of other localities to see the reality status of the system. Third, future research should explore the factors affecting the competitive competence of firms in different business fields and other localities.

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Author contributions

Phan Thanh Tam did everything, such as the conception and design, analysis of the data, revising it critically for intellectual content, and the final approval of the version to be published.

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Ethical statement

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Data availability statement

The data support the findings of this study and are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Appendix

Table A1. Research questionnaires.

Measured items	5-point Likert scale				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
QS1: Enterprise performs the service right the first time	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
QS2: Enterprise serves you quickly and on time	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
QS3: Business employees are always polite and courteous to customers	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
QS4: Enterprise has modern equipment and understands your particular needs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
MC1: Online for new products or services that meet customer needs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
MC2: Online selling price dramatically affects the sales volume and competitiveness of the brand	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
MC3: An effective distribution channel strategy is when customers can easily find it on the website	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
MC4: A practical and low-cost form of online product promotion to the public	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
OM1: Enterprise has the expertise of the management personnel	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
OM2: The effectiveness of business organization at the enterprise	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
OM3: The business has planning capacity and management	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
OM4: Business uses human resources effectively	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BP1: Enterprise has optimized tourism marketing website	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BP2: Enterprise has promoted communication online effectively	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BP3: Enterprises implement advertising and tourism promotion activities online effectively	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BP4: Building good relationships with customers will bring high efficiency to businesses	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
HR1: Building employees with solid professional capacity will lead to high work performance	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
HR2: Build a team of employees with professional skills	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
HR3: Social practice skills are necessary not only in life but also in work, such as English communication	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
HR4: Training and developing hard and soft skills for employees to meet high customer needs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
SR1: Businesses are always customer-oriented	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
SR2: Regarding tax and financial obligations	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
SR3: Ethics and behavior toward employees, society, and the environment	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
EC1: Enterprise had meeting customers' needs	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
EC2: Enterprise had increasing sales	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
EC3: Enterprise had an expanding international market	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BE1: Business efficiency based on profitability	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BE2: Business efficiency based on labor efficiency	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
BE3: Business efficiency based on efficiency in asset use	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Note: A 5-point Likert scale indicates the level of agreement at five points. The 5-point Likert scale consists of the following points: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) disagree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (4) agree, and (5) Strongly Agree.