

# APPLICATION OF IMPORTANCE - PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS MODEL IN EVALUATION SERVICE QUALITY OF DIVING TOUR OPERATOR IN NHA TRANG (VIET NAM)

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study is to improve service quality for dive tour operators in Nha Trang (Viet Nam), so the objectives were set to understand the divers' opinion on dimensions of service quality of diving experiences in Nha Trang, and their evaluation of the diving tour operators' performance. Analysis employed the Importance - Performance analysis (IPA) paradigm based on five dimensions and twenty five attributes of service quality (Parasuraman, 1988). The results are significant to dive tour operators because it showed clearly the managerial implications in order to provide a quality service during the dive tourism experience. In details, it indicated that Tangibles, Responsiveness and Reliability were in the quadrant "Low Priority", which means low importance and low performance. Moreover, Assurance and Empathy dimensions had high importance and high performance, so they were in the quadrant of "Keep Up The Good Work".*

**Key Words:** *Diving tourism, service quality, importance - performance analysis*

## 1. Introductions

Since the first design in 1943, diving has been developed quickly around the world. PADI report that there are over 20 million divers around the world nowadays. With its great impact to the world tourism industry, it should be considered as mass tourism with adventure tourism spirit (van Treeck & Schuhmacher, 1999)

Started from 1995, Nha Trang is considered as the first diving place in Viet Nam. Compare to others diving destinations in the same region of South East Asia, Nha Trang is just a new player, and obviously facing with very high competition. Service quality has been proved to be a factor that help service firms to differentiate, and leave behind their competitors, so improving service quality become a critical mission for Nha Trang diving tourism industry.

Follow that mission, the first objective of this study is to understand diver

opinion about importance of diving trip based on five dimension of service quality (Tangibles, Responsiveness, Assurance, Reliability, Empathy) (Parasuraman, 1988). Second objective is to examine divers' evaluation of service quality provided by dive tour operator. After addressing the current situations from the Importance - Performance Analysis, this study would deliver recommendations for improving service quality.

## 2. Literature review

Diving tourism is group under most active adventure tourism with non-competitive. The diving tourist motivations are: risk-seeking, discovery, self-actualization, nature contact, social contact and activities in the nature. Like most of service business, diving tourism service has the same characteristic of tangibility, inseparability, perishability, variability. However, there are still some different points. Firstly, in adventure tourism, personal motivations

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