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## Factors Affecting Parents' Intention of Sending Children to Study Abroad: A Study From Vietnam

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**Abstract:** In recent years, there is a growing number of Vietnamese students applying to study abroad at a younger age. Instead of waiting until adulthood, many Vietnamese parents decide to send their offspring to study abroad early from high school. This study was conducted to analyze the factors affecting the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad. The dataset includes 350 responses, in which parents of middle and high school students having the intention and willingness to send their children to study abroad are respondents. The research results show that perceived value, perceived risk, and three variables of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) model affect the intention to send their children to study abroad with the ability of explanation 53.4%. In detail, Attitude (influenced by Success, Modern self, and Traditional self) has the most significant influence (30.9%) on the dependent variable. On that basis, some suggestions are proposed for international educational organizations and study-abroad counseling centers to help them give the right orientation to Vietnamese parents about studying-abroad. Besides, proposing some recommendations for domestic educational institutions, international educational institutions, and educational management agencies in Vietnam, in order to improve the quality of education and training, creating an ideal learning environment that meets international standards for students, and simultaneously attracting international students to Vietnam.

**Keywords:** Children, international education, study abroad, Vietnamese parents.

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### Introduction

Globalization and internationalization of education are spreading their influence to most countries and regions. This trend creates opportunities for developed countries by attracting learners from other countries, however, it also brings many challenges in education innovation and training high-quality human resources to meet the requirements of society, particularly in developing countries. The future generations will not only need to be equipped with foundational knowledge but also need innovative thinking and the ability to learn new skills to succeed in a globally competitive environment (Minh, 2021). In response to these opportunities and difficulties, over the past ten years, the government's focus has increasingly shifted to the promotion of cross-border study, training connections with other nations, and developing international programs to bring a global learning environment and development opportunities to domestic students (Tu, 2020). This helps the Vietnamese young generation absorb the quintessence from many different educational backgrounds all over the world and enhance their adaptive capacity to become global citizens. As of December 2021, Vietnam had five foreign-invested universities and more than 400 transnational programs associated with more than 30 countries around the world, mainly in economics and management (Hien, 2021). The expansion of these transnational programs also contributes to "retaining foreign currency", creating capital for domestic growth. It is not only an economical solution, studying abroad in place is also a breakthrough strategy to improve the quality of Vietnamese human resources and reduce the risk of brain drain (Hien, 2021).

Although there have been positive changes in many aspects, international training programs still do not have enough diversity in fields of study, so they cannot fully meet the learning needs of many Vietnamese students. Therefore, instead of choosing to study in their home country to save money and be more convenient in terms of time and space, many families still look for opportunities and decide to send their children to study abroad. Although studying abroad is a difficult decision (Mazzarol, 1998); or might contain many risks and challenges (Relyea et al., 2008), and requires parents

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to consider carefully before deciding (Pimpa, 2005; Relyea et al., 2008), the number of Vietnamese students studying abroad still increases sharply every single year, even more and more parents intend to send their children to study abroad earlier. They prepare the necessary conditions and are ready to send their children abroad whenever the opportunity comes. According to the Department of International Cooperation (Ministry of Education and Training), by December 2020, Vietnam will have about 190,000 students studying abroad in developed countries and this amount is still increasing (Hien, 2021). In particular, the age to study abroad in Viet Nam tends to be younger and Vietnamese high school students are considered potential customers of the international education market. With the desire to provide the best conditions for their children's development, many parents have sent their children to study abroad from high school instead of waiting until adulthood (after 18 years old) as before. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study about the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad in the current context to thoroughly answer the question of why more and more parents tend to send their children to study abroad early instead of studying in Vietnam.

Currently, there are numerous domestic and international studies on the intention to study abroad. However, these previous studies focused on international undergraduate and graduate students over the age of 18, who are responsible for their decisions and have a clear orientation, and are conscious of their choices. In contrast, high school students between the ages of 12 and 18 are still dependent on and controlled by their parents. Consequently, their study abroad is not only their choice but also their parents' choice. As a result, when researching studying abroad in Vietnam at the secondary and high school levels, it is critical to consider the behavioral intentions of Vietnamese parents.

Furthermore, previous studies have mainly focused on studying overseas students in developed countries where children live independently from a young age and parents have less influence over their children's future orientation. Due to cultural and belief differences, when studying international education in Asian countries, typically Vietnam or China where parents have a significant influence on their children's educational orientation and future, many differences must be carefully studied (Fongkasira & Pupat, 2018; Leung, 2013).

Based on the research gaps mentioned above, it is necessary to conduct a research project on the intention of sending their children to study abroad in middle and high schools in Vietnam. The research findings can be used to propose solutions for international educational organizations and study-abroad counseling centers to help them give the right orientation to Vietnamese parents about studying-abroad. Besides, proposing some recommendations for domestic educational institutions, international educational institutions, and educational management agencies in Vietnam, in order to improve the quality of education and training, creating an ideal learning environment that meets international standards for students, and simultaneously attracting international students to Vietnam.

## Literature Review

### *International Education*

The phrase "international education" has existed for more than a century and until now the term has not had a general definition (Walker, 2002). From the perspective of educational service providers, Hayden and Thompson (1998) argue that "International education is the delivery of a country's curriculum beyond its borders". International education promotes the trend of internationalization in all aspects of society, culture and economy. It facilitates the movement of individuals, minds, thoughts and ideas across borders and cultures.

Currently, three waves of globalization have been identified in the international education sector. The first wave is when overseas students go to another country to study abroad. The second wave is when educational institutions cooperate with each other through affiliate programs and teacher exchange programs. This was the wave of popularity in Asia during the 1990s when students could receive a foreign degree while studying in a domestic institution or receive a degree from another country outside the country they studied. The third wave was when new training branches were established in foreign markets and information technology was used to deliver online courses (Mazzarol et al., 2003). Within the scope of this study, the first wave of international education will be mentioned, which is going beyond national borders to take a course at a foreign training institution.

### *Overseas Student*

According to the Government of Vietnam (2013), Vietnamese overseas students are Vietnamese citizens studying abroad. They may include: Students, trainees, graduate students, postgraduates, interns and people who attend training courses for 6 consecutive months or more. This concept refers to individuals who move to another country to acquire knowledge and skills in order to satisfy their own learning needs or at the request of their financial institutions and support organizations. This form is different from "studying abroad in place" in which the learners study the training program of a foreign institution in their home country.

### *Research approaches on the factors affecting the intention of parents to send their children to study abroad*

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) of Ajzen (1991), which is widely used in studies on studying abroad behavior (Goel et al., 2010; Petzold & Moog, 2017; Presley et al., 2010; Schnusenberget al., 2012; Zhuang et al., 2015), is the ground

theory in this research. TPB theory indicates that “attitudes”, “subjective norms” and “perceived behavioral control” are three important antecedents that predict behavioral intention (Pham et al., 2021). In which, the intention to send children to study abroad can also be considered as a consumption behavior (Chen & Zimitat, 2006). According to Moogan and Baron (2003), the process of choosing and deciding to send children to study abroad is a complicated process. It is also seen as a problem-solving process to find and select the best solution (Maringe, 2006). This is also one of the most complex and expensive educational options that international students and families can face (Mazzarol, 1998).

With different research contexts, Ajzen (1991) believes that the theoretical model of planned behavior can add new factors affecting behavioral intention to help effectively apply TPB theory. Therefore, when researching the intention to send their children to study abroad of Vietnamese parents who stress the importance of education and greatly influence the educational orientation of their children, the addition of new factors in the TPB research model is reasonable and necessary.

In a developing country with fast economic growth like Vietnam, "self-perception" and "materialism" are considered potential factors when researching the intention to study abroad. These two factors are both considered beliefs in terms of personal characteristics (Goel et al., 2010; Nguyen & Tambyah, 2011). According to Ajzen (1991), beliefs are the input of attitudes towards behavior. Anh (2020) also affirmed that self-perception and materialism have a strong influence on the attitude towards the behavior of Vietnamese parents when sending their children to study abroad. In which, perceiving yourself as a traditional person or modern one is considered a personal trait and has a significant influence on the attitude (Hung, 2019). International education, which is considered an expensive service compared to the average income of Vietnamese consumers. However, modern and open-minded young parents tend to send their children to study abroad at an early age. In contrast, parents who are older and have an honest and thrifty lifestyle (Nguyen & Tambyah, 2011) consider that studying abroad at a young age will affect their love for their children and are afraid their child has to tackle difficulties when studying abroad. This is also consistent with the findings of Nguyen et al. (2017) that young people tend to have modern lifestyles while traditional lifestyles often exist in older people.

In previous studies of consumer behavior, researchers have considered materialism as a personality trait (Belk, 1984; Ger & Belk, 1996) and as a consumption value (Fournier & Richins, 1991; Richins, 1994; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Empirical results from previous research papers suggest that materialistic factors including achievement, centrality goal, and happiness have a significant impact on behavioral intentions of consumers (Nguyen et al., 2017). The above research contexts have many similarities and are consistent with our research context when considering the influence of materialism on the intention to send their children to study abroad and predicting that younger parents tend to be more open-minded when choosing education approaches for their children. The findings of Nguyen et al. (2019) provide empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that “Success” has a significant positive impact on the behavioral attitudes of young consumers. Thus, young materialistic people who value success are more likely to have a more positive attitude towards branded products. This is similar to the Vietnamese context, where most parents sending their children to study abroad tend to show off their modern and trendy lifestyle, and also their status in society.

Sending your child to study abroad is an expensive decision (Mazzarol, 1998). Therefore, parents always carefully consider the benefits that children will receive compared to what they have to trade-off (i.e., higher tuition fees, living expenses, long distance to their family). The higher the perceived value of studying abroad, the higher the intention to study abroad (Zhuang et al., 2015). Therefore, apart from the impact of factors in the TPB theory, the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children study abroad is also influenced by the "Perceived value", or in other words, the benefits that studying abroad will bring to their children.

Along with "perceived value", "perceived risk" is also a factor that has a significant influence on sending children to study abroad. Bauer (2001) suggested that perceived risk consists of two components: uncertainty and negative influence related to the result. In his research, Bauer (2001) refers to perceived risk beliefs as a major factor relating to consumer purchase intention. Sending children to study abroad is inherently a difficult decision (Mazzarol, 1998) with many potential risks and challenges during the study abroad process (Relyea et al., 2008) such as the geographical distance, expensive expenses, and adaptability concerns. All of these factors can make parents hesitate to send their children to study abroad. Additionally, children are also considered the biggest asset of each Vietnamese family. Therefore, the factor named “Perceived risk” needs to be included in the research model when studying the factors affecting the intention to send children to study abroad.

### *Research Model and Hypotheses*

Based on the theoretical basis and research overview, research models and hypotheses have been proposed. Specifically, the hypotheses will be stated as follows:

Hypothesis H1: Parents' attitudes about sending their children to study abroad have a positive influence on the intention to send their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H2: Subjective norms have a positive influence on the intention to send their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H3: Parents' perceived behavioral control has a positive influence on the intention to send their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H4a: Traditional self has a negative influence on parents' attitudes about sending their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H4b: Modern self has a positive influence on parents' attitudes about sending their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H5: Success has a positive influence on parents' attitudes about sending their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H6: Perceived value of sending their children to study abroad has a positive influence on the intention to send their children to study abroad.

Hypothesis H7: Perceived risk of sending their children to study abroad has a negative effect on the intention to send their children to study abroad.

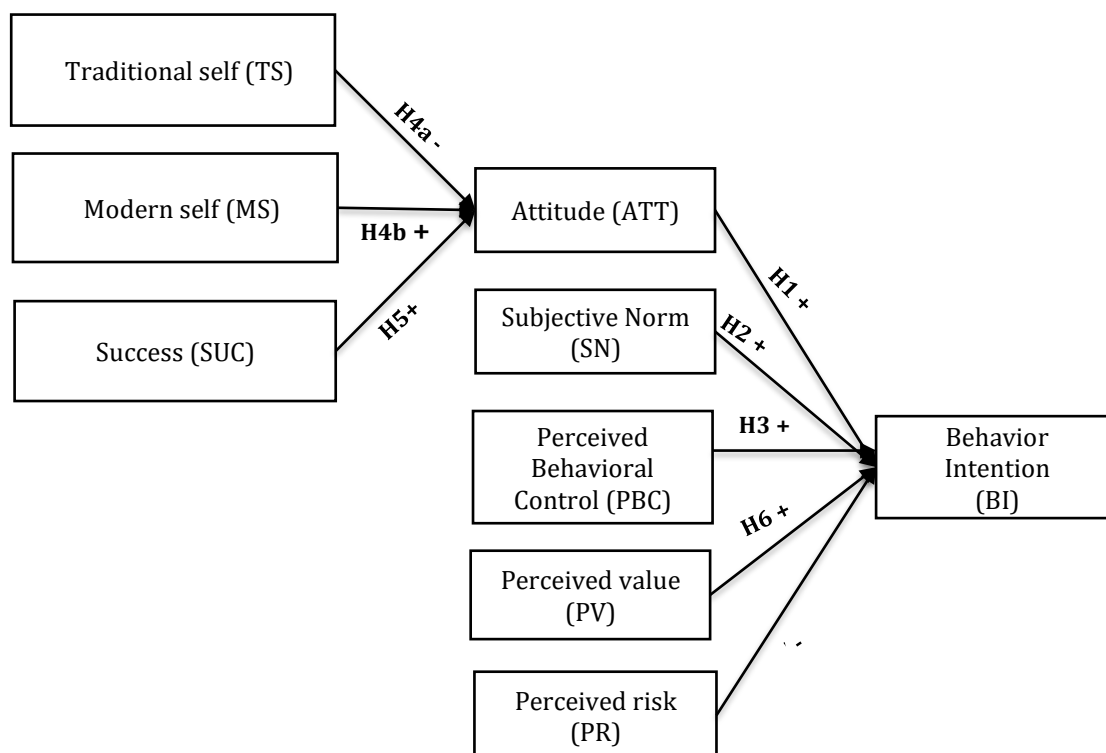


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study used two methods: (1) Qualitative research and (2) Quantitative research. The research object is Vietnamese parents who are intending to send their children to study abroad.

**Qualitative Research:** Based on an overview of theories in previous studies, the authors identify research concepts, reference the scales of Nguyen et al. (2017), Nguyen et al. (2019b); Richins and Dawson (1992), Schnusenberget al. (2012), adjust them and add some other scales to suit the actual research context. Then, the authors then wrote questions and designed a questionnaire. In order to complete this questionnaire, qualitative research is carried out by an in-depth interview method with the participation of six parents intending to send their children to study abroad and four experts in the field of international study. In-depth interviews with parents were conducted to check the feasibility of the scale and explore more perspectives on factors affecting their intention to send their children to study abroad. Besides, experts were interviewed about the applicable writing style and content of the variables in the research model. Then, the research team has more basis to calibrate the scales and add the variable "Perceived risk" to the research model. From there, a questionnaire is built for the next phase. Based on the results of the in-depth interview, the questionnaire was edited and adjusted accordingly.

**Preliminary Quantitative Research:** The authors continued to carry out preliminary quantitative research and collected 80 observations by offline survey in order to assess the ease of understanding of the questionnaire contents for the respondents and evaluate its effectiveness through data set analysis. Of these, 68 answer sheets meet the requirements used to analyze the reliability of Cronbach's alpha scale. The results show that 38/43 scales achieve reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient at an acceptable level and reach .6 or more and are eligible to be used for the next analysis

steps. After implementing preliminary qualitative and quantitative research methods, the authors continue to adjust the scales and complete the official questionnaire to implement official quantitative research.

*Official Quantitative Research:* The official questionnaire consists of three main parts, in which: Part 1 includes two filter questions, part 2 is the evaluation scales on factors affecting the intention to send children to study abroad and the third part is personal information about the respondents. The authors combined the method of distributing the questionnaire offline and online through the Google Form to collect data.

#### *Sample and Data Collection*

The research results collected 350 observations who are the parents of middle and high school students having the intention and willingness to send their children to study abroad, of which 307 valid answer sheets were used. Most of the parents live and work in big cities in Vietnam. In which, 47.2% of parents are under 45 years old and 52.8% are over 45 years old. The research sample was collected with the participation of male and female parents in different families, in which fathers accounted for 48.2% and mothers accounted for 51.8%. The survey results also show that 53.7% of parents graduated from university and higher, the rest graduated from vocational school and high school. Simultaneously, the married accounted for 66.1%, and the divorced accounted for 18.6%, while the remaining were widowed or single mom/dad (<9%). The most common household size is 4 people (45.6%), followed by 5 or more people and 3 people with 22.8% and 22.5% respectively. In terms of monthly income, the majority of parents have an income of 15 to 20 million VND (~ 537 - 717£/month), accounting for 24.4%. Next is the income level of over 27 million VND (~ 968+ £/month) accounting for 20.5%, the remaining levels are ranging from 17.3% to 19.5%. The above data also partly explain and add more evidence about the trend of parents sending their children to study abroad in Vietnam today.

#### *Analyzing of Data*

After collecting research data, it was classified and coded to continue to perform quantitative analysis using SPSS26 and AMOS24 software. Specifically, the data were conducted with descriptive statistical analysis, reliability testing of Cronbach's Alpha scale, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), model fit test and SEM research hypotheses.

## Results

#### *Measuring the Reliability of Cronbach's Alpha Scale*

Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient is used to evaluate the reliability of the scales through each factor in the research model. The reliability of the scale was assessed on the survey sample with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which correlates with the total variable in the range of .552 to .831. In order to improve the reliability of the factors affecting Vietnamese parents' intention to send their children to study abroad, the author has omitted a scale of "success" (SUC) and two scales of "perceived risk" (PR). The final results (Table 1) show that the variable measurement scales are reliable and the data correlation is consistent with the built scales. The scales met the criteria for continued use for exploratory factor analysis.

*Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Analysis Result*

Factor	Symbol	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Number of Scales Eliminated
Attitude	ATT	.866	.691 - .801	0/3
Subjective norm	SN	.793	.604 - .688	0/3
Perceived behavioral control	PBC	.857	.716 - .763	0/3
Traditional self	TS	.911	.753 - .831	0/4
Modern self	MS	.853	.552 - .758	0/5
Success	SUC	.841	.661 - .689	1/5
Perceived value	PV	.856	.616 - .732	0/5
Perceived risk	PR	.834	.558 - .718	2/6
Behavioral intention	BI	.935	.718 - .823	0/4

#### *Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)*

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) helps the authors detect latent variables in the proposed research model. The author chooses the method "principal axis factoring" and the rotation "promax" to test the convergence and discrimination of the dependent and independent variables in the research model.

In the first run, KMO coefficient = .846; Sig. (Bartlett's Test) = .000 (< .05); total variance extracted is 61.641% > 50%. This result is still not as expected, the authors observe the Pattern Matrix rotation matrix when analyzing the first EFA exploratory factor, there is an observed variable MS5 that is uploaded at the same time by 2 factors but with a difference.

The loading factor is equal to the calculated load factor:  $.508 - .331 = .177 (< .3)$ , so it violates the discriminant value. Therefore, the observed variable MS5 was removed and the EFA exploratory factor analysis was re-analyzed. The second EFA test was performed with the results obtained meeting the criteria to ensure the discriminant value and the convergence value with the KMO coefficient of  $.842 > .5$ ; Sig. =  $.000 (< .05)$ ; the total variance extracted is  $61.985\% > 50\%$  and the loading coefficients are all  $> .5$ .

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis Result

	Factor								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
TS2	.912								
TS4	.876								
TS3	.850								
TS1	.743								
PV5		.847							
PV3		.765							
PV1		.693							
PV2		.689							
PV4		.672							
MS1			.816						
MS2			.785						
MS4			.752						
MS3			.704						
PR5				.809					
PR2				.802					
PR3				.798					
PR4				.570					
SUC4					.786				
SUC2					.772				
SUC1					.732				
SUC5					.724				
PBC3						.846			
PBC1						.808			
PBC2						.797			
BI1							.771		
BI4							.751		
BI2							.641		
BI3							.621		
ATT3								.940	
ATT1								.806	
ATT2								.691	
SN2									.890
SN3									.705
SN1									.629

After analyzing EFA exploratory factors, the authors extracted 9 factors in the research model with 34 observed variables. The 9 factors in the research model satisfy the convergence value, so the names of the factors are kept as they were.

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

CFA analysis was used to assess model fit, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the research model. The scale of the independent variables grouped into groups including: “traditional self” (TS), “perceived value” (PV), “modern self” (MS), “perceived risk” (PR), “success” (SUC), “parents’ perceived behavioral control” (PBC), “parents’ attitudes” (ATT), “subjective norms” (SN).

*Model Fit Measures:* Based on the results of the normalized graph, the data in Figure 3 show that TLI =  $.952$  and CFI =  $.958 \geq .9$ ; GFI index =  $.887$  is smaller than the requirement in the study by Hair et al. (1998). However, this study also notes that GFI is strongly influenced by sample size, so this index has many limitations. Besides, according to Forza and Filippini (1998) and Greenspoon and Saklofske (1998), the GFI index between  $.8$  and  $.9$  is acceptable, so the GFI index =  $.887$  is accepted in the study. Chi-square/df =  $1.437$  ranges from 1 to 3; RMSEA =  $.038 \leq .08$ , so it can be concluded that the research model is appropriate.

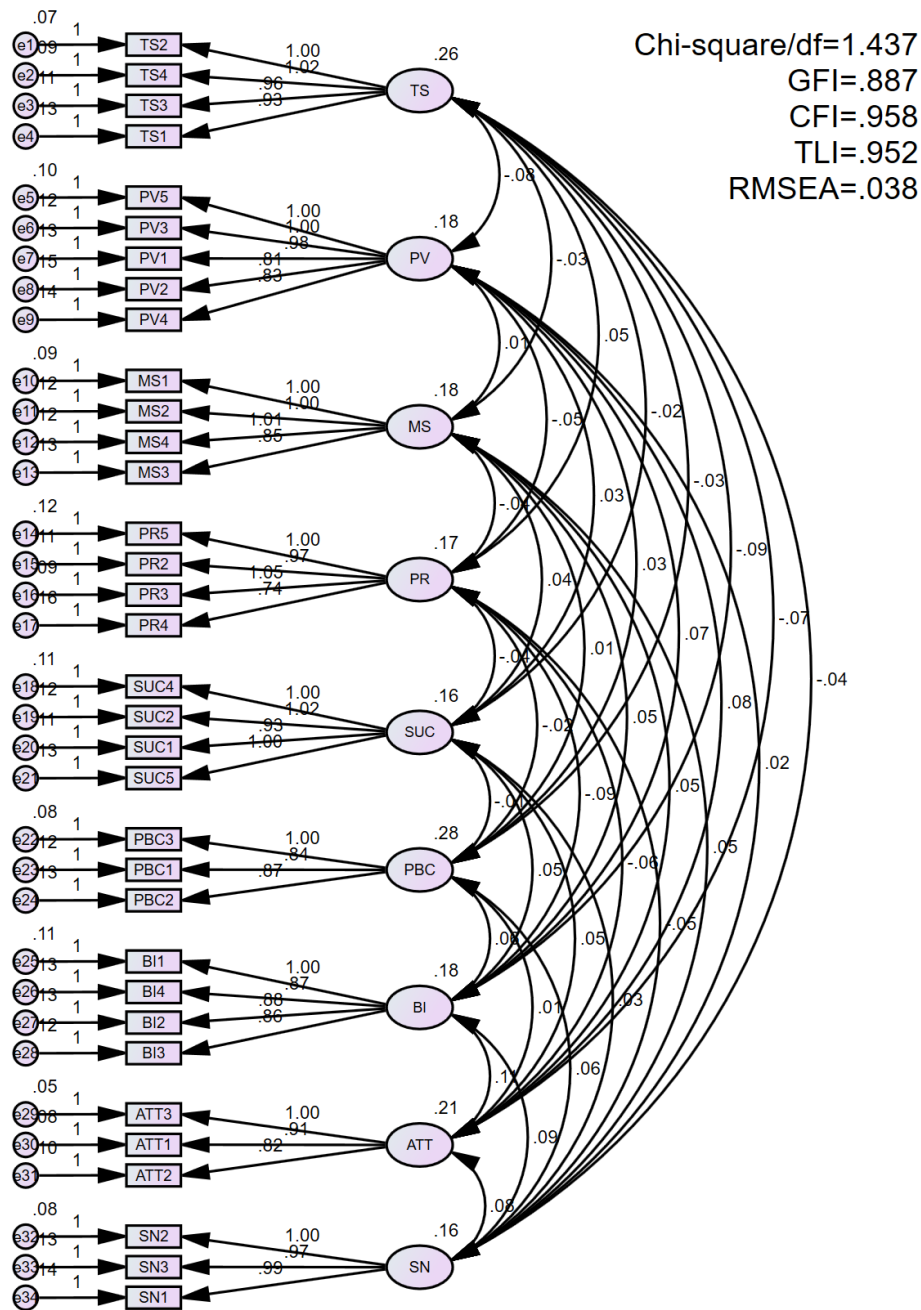


Figure 2. Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis CFA

*Master Validity Analysis:* Convergent validity and discriminant validity between the groups of variables are also tested. The scales of the factors in the model have the ability to explain well for the representative variable itself. The author obtained the results according to the Table 3 with the validity indexes:

- (1) The AVE index > .5 in all variables ensures the convergence value of Convergent Validity.
- (2) The index MSV < AVE and square root of AVE > correlation in the independent variables also ensure the discriminant Validity value.

Table 3. Model Validity Measures

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	TS	PV	MS	PR	SUC	PBC	BI	ATT	SN
<b>TS</b>	.912	.721	.179	.917	<b>.849</b>								
<b>PV</b>	.857	.546	.161	.863	-.356***	<b>.739</b>							
<b>MS</b>	.851	.589	.087	.856	-.139*	.077	<b>.768</b>						
<b>PR</b>	.837	.565	.253	.852	.220**	-.255***	-.242***	<b>.752</b>					
<b>SUC</b>	.841	.570	.079	.842	-.098	.154*	.222***	-.255***	<b>.755</b>				
<b>PBC</b>	.858	.668	.094	.870	-.105	.139*	.052	-.085	-.050	<b>.818</b>			

<b>BI</b>	.828	.546	.329	.831	-.423***	.384***	.282***	-.503***	.282***	.287***	<b>.739</b>
<b>ATT</b>	.869	.690	.329	.886	-.287***	.401***	.242***	-.334***	.257***	.028	<b>.831</b>
<b>SN</b>	.799	.570	.292	.805	-.219***	.109	.295***	-.318***	.203***	.306***	<b>.755</b>

Thus, the results of the model fit and validity tests in CFA have shown that the author’s proposed research model is completely consistent with the theory. The author will use the results of CFA analysis to further test the hypothesis and evaluate the relationship between the factors affecting Vietnamese parents’ intention to send their children to study abroad.

*Structural Equation Modeling Results*

*Research model testing:* SEM results show that this research model meets the standard of compatibility with market data with TLI = .939 > .9; CFI = .946 > .9. GFI index = .876 < .9 but still acceptable according to Greenspoon and Saklofske (1998); Chi-square/df = 1,552 satisfies the condition in the range 1 to 3; RMSEA = .042 < .08.

In terms of the dependent variable “parents’ attitude about the behavior of sending children to study abroad”, R2=.186 shows that the factors “traditional-self”, “modern-self” and “success” explain 18.6% of the variation of parents’ attitude about the behavior of sending children to study abroad.

In terms of the dependent variable “intention to send children to study abroad”, R2=.534 indicates that the factors “perceived value”, “perceived risk” and 03 factors of the TPB model explain 53.4% of the variation of Vietnamese parents’ intention to send their children to study abroad. Vietnamese parents’ intentions to send their kids to study abroad vary by more than 50%, and the explanation provided by the research model demonstrates that both academic and practical implications are drawn from the findings.

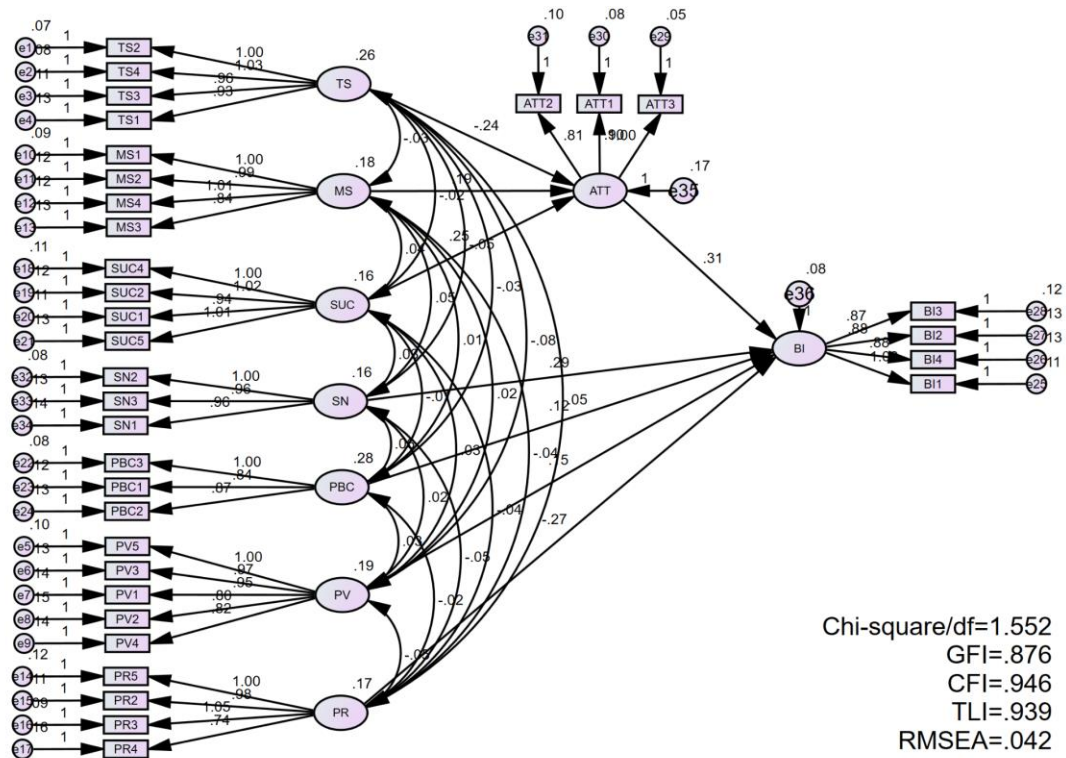


Figure 3. Structural Equation Modeling Result

*Hypothesis testing:* The test results are divided into two parts, corresponding to two dependent variables, which are “Parents’ attitudes about the behavior of sending their children to study abroad” (ATT) and “Intent to send their children to study abroad” (BI). The P-Value indexes of all variables are <.05, reaching the 95% confidence level, so the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is significant. The research results show that hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4a, H4b, H5, H6 and H7 are accepted.



Table 4. Summary of SEM Results

Hypothesis		Unstandardized Estimate	P-Value	Evaluation
H1	BI ← ATT	.309	***	Accepted
H2	BI ← SN	.291	***	Accepted
H3	BI ← PBC	.122	.007	Accepted
H4a	ATT ← TS	-.236	***	Accepted
H4b	ATT ← MS	.191	.006	Accepted
H5	ATT ← SUC	.249	***	Accepted
H6	BI ← PV	.152	.005	Accepted
H7	BI ← PR	-.272	***	Accepted

For the dependent variable “parent’s attitudes about the behavior of sending their children to study abroad”, the impact levels of these factors are success (SUC); self-modern (MS) and self-traditional (TS). For the dependent variable “intention to send children to study abroad”, the impact level of the factors is shown as follows: attitudes of parents towards the behavior of sending their children to study abroad (ATT); subjective index (SN); perceived value (PV); perceived behavioral control (PBC) and finally perceived risk (PR).

### Discussion

Success (SUC) accounts for around 25% of the change in “Parent’s attitude about the behavior of sending their children to study abroad”, making it the factor that has the greatest impact on the dependent variable (ATT). The idea of materialism is made up of the notion of success connected to Western society and industrialized nations worldwide (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2017). People with materialistic tendencies who value achievement in life, especially those in a growing country like Vietnam, frequently have a favorable opinion of luxury goods made using foreign components. Customers feel more sophisticated and successful as a result. For every Vietnamese family, sending their children to study abroad is rather difficult due to the requirement of a solid foundation for studying abroad; parents are always a companion to their children in many ways such as sponsors, financial supporters, dream nurturers, and guides. Sending children to study abroad has also become a symbol of social class and is becoming a trend among young parents in Vietnam.

The second most powerful influencing factor, “Self-perception as a modern person” (Modern-self), can account for 19.1% of the shift in attitudes about the behavior of sending children overseas to study. According to Nguyen et al. (2009), people who perceive themselves as modern people have more open-mindedness, prefer Western cultured goods, and they approve of luxury products, originating from foreign. This result supports the study of Nguyen et al. (2009) and Hung (2019).

Self-perception as a traditional person (Traditional-self) has an influence on attitudes towards the behavior of sending children to study abroad with beta index = -.236; this factor has a negative estimator indicating that the higher the parent's perception of themselves as a traditional person, the higher the negative influence on the attitude towards giving behavior. According to Nguyen et al. (2009), those who perceive themselves as traditional are often older parents. People who perceive themselves as traditional people conform to these norms, values, and beliefs associated with traditional culture. They often support collective behavior and tend to consume domestic products. In guiding their children's education, they are more supportive of sending their children to educational institutions in the country.

Parents’ attitude about the behavior of sending children to study abroad (ATT) is the factor that has the strongest influence on Vietnamese parents’ intention to send their children to study abroad, with the ability to explain 30.9%. It is true that previous studies have confirmed that attitudes towards behavior always occupy an important role in the TPB. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1977), when people have a positive attitude and approve of a certain behavior, they will have the intention to perform that behavior. Similarly, when parents of students have a positive attitude towards the behavior of sending their children to study abroad, they are more likely to send their children to study abroad. In a similar vein, parents of students are more inclined to send their children to study abroad when they have a favorable opinion toward the conduct. This outcome is in line with the experimental study conducted by Li and Bray (2007), Shaw et al. (2007), and qualitative research findings. The majority of the interviewees believed that sending their children to study abroad will bring many benefits to their children and family reputation.

“Subjective norm” (SN) is the second strongest factor affecting the dependent variable, explaining 29.1% of the variation of intention to send children to study abroad. Research shows that subjective norms have a significant influence on the intention to send their children to study abroad. Similar to previous studies, the subjective norm was found to be an important predictor of intention to study abroad in the study of Goel et al. (2010); Presley et al. (2010); Schnusenberg et al. (2012); Zhuang et al. (2015). The results from the qualitative study also revealed that parents will be motivated to send their children to study abroad if they receive advice, sharing or suggestions from relatives and friends.

“Perceived value” (PV) is the next factor that affects the intention to send children to study abroad with  $\beta = .152$ , and  $p\text{-value} = .005 (< .05)$ . The results of this study do not support the previous conclusion from Zhuang et al. (2015) that perceived value explains behavioral intention well and is the mediator between the factors of TPB and behavioral intentions. It may be due to the difference in the research context between Vietnam, which is a country with a new economic transformation, compared to countries with strong economic development and cultural openness like the US in the study of Zhuang et al. (2015). This shows that the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad is always researched and prepared in advance, carefully considered before deciding.

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) with  $\beta = .122$ ; and  $P\text{-value} = .007 (< .05)$  has the weakest impact on the intention to send children to study abroad. It's possible that the parents' maturity and thoughtfulness allow them to know how to plan for sending their kids abroad to study. This is also consistent with the findings of Nguyen and Nguyen (2017), Shaw et al. (2007) when that perception of behavioral control has a negligible impact on planning to send your child to study abroad.

“Perceived risk” (PR) has a negative effect on the intention to send children to study abroad with  $\beta = -.272$ . This factor has a negative estimator, showing the opposite effect between perceived risk and intention to send children to study abroad. This can be explained that parents who are afraid of risks or their perception of risks about studying abroad are too high, and their intention to send their children to study abroad will be reduced. This result is also consistent with the conclusion in the study of Luethge (2004) and Relyea et al. (2008).

### Conclusion

Based on the TPB of Ajzen (1991) and previous studies on the intention to study abroad, the authors have succeeded in building and designing a research model suitable for the practical context in Vietnam. Adding more factors to the TPB research model helps to have more certainty of the research results and better explain the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad. As can be seen, the research's findings have important implications for understanding factors that promote and hinder the intention of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad in the current context. This will be a solid foundation for the authors to propose some solutions for management agencies, international education in Vietnam and domestic educational institutions to improve the quality of education and training. Thereby promoting Vietnamese parents and students to choose domestic education and attracting the flow of international students into Vietnam.

### Recommendations

#### *For International Educational Organizations and Study-abroad Counseling Centers*

“Attitude” is the factor that has the greatest impact on their intention to send their children to study abroad and is influenced by “Success”, “Traditional self”, “Modern self”. In which, the role of “traditional self” is most prominent and has the opposite effect on “Attitude”. Therefore, international educational organizations and study-abroad counseling centers need to pay attention to the communication messages and spread the messages about study destinations as happy countries with healthy living environments, friendly people, a Vietnamese community that always loves and helps each other, social security and good quality education. Besides, the success factor of materialism is also an important factor to motivate students' parents to have a positive attitude towards the behavior of sending their children to study abroad. Therefore, in order to attract the attention of parents, international educational institutions and study-abroad counseling centers need to uphold the value of international qualifications. Also show them proof of the success of high school students who have been studying abroad.

The research results also show that “Subjective norm” has a significant impact on the intention of parents to send their children to study abroad. This is a suggestion to international educational organizations and study-abroad counseling centers that besides parents, they need to transmit information to relatives, friends, colleagues of parents and students. The influence of friends, relatives, and colleagues also suggests that they should have promotion plans by giving vouchers to reduce tuition fees and discounts when customers register and participate in groups.

“Perceived risk” has a significant impact on intention to send children to study abroad only after the influence of “Attitude” on intention to send children to study abroad in the research model. Moreover, this is a factor that has the opposite effect. Therefore, international educational organizations and study-abroad counseling centers need to consider and evaluate the risks that parents are concerned about when sending their children to study abroad to find ways to propagate and explain to parents more about international educational institutions or can offer study abroad insurance packages.

*Domestic Educational Institutions and International Educational Institutions in Vietnam* need to (i) Improve the quality of education through training programs and creating an international learning environment; (ii) Strengthen international cooperation to develop new disciplines to meet the learning and professional development needs of students in the world's development trend; (iii) Establishing good relationships with prestigious training institutions in other countries to enhance cooperation, cultural exchange, extra-curricular activities or study abroad sessions to help learners can

connect and become a global citizen in Vietnam; (iv) Building an international learning environment in training institutions, encouraging teachers to participate in exchanges with international partners, strengthen international cooperation on intensive training for foreign teachers

#### *For Educational Management Agencies in Vietnam*

The research results also show that "Attitude" is the factor that has the strongest positive influence on the intention to send children to study abroad. In particular, this "Attitude" factor is influenced by "Success", "Traditional self", "Modern self" so educational management agencies in Vietnam need to actively communicate and educate parents and young people about the traditional values of the homeland and culture of Vietnam. Innovation must be associated with the inheritance of the cultural quintessence of the nation. This helps the parents of students have a more in-depth and comprehensive view of studying abroad, thereby having the right attitude toward sending their offspring to study abroad. Sending children to study abroad must come from the needs and abilities of the child, and should not force the child to completely follow the parents' thoughts, feelings and orientations.

Besides, the research results indicate that "Perceived risk" is a factor that hinders the intention to send children to study abroad. Specifically, the risks may be the lack of transparency about information, the safety of sending children to study abroad, social evils such as violence, racism, robbery, even rape. Therefore, educational management agencies in Vietnam should work closely with foreign regulatory agencies in the host country to take timely measures to reduce risks, ensure safety and help parents feel secure when sending their children to study abroad. Simultaneously, it is necessary to build strong and deterrent sanctions, strictly enforce them so that fake international educational institutions and poor quality study-abroad counseling centers will be eliminated, helping the international education market healthier competition, and bringing confidence to students and parents.

#### **Limitations**

The authors have tried to ensure that the research results are reliable and clearly reflect the intentions of Vietnamese parents to send their children to study abroad. However, the study also has unavoidable limitations. Initially, the article studied some influencing factors and their influence on Vietnamese parents' attitudes and intentions to send their children to study abroad. However, the authors found that there are many other factors related to "Belief" that can be added to the research model to increase understanding of parents' behavior of sending children to study abroad and supplement the research results. Secondly, the article did not compare the intention to send their children to study abroad among demographic groups to find out the differences between these groups. We do hope that the above limitations can be taken care of and improved in future studies.

As a result, future studies can incorporate other factors relevant to the actual context into the research model to enrich the research findings. Furthermore, these studies can incorporate demographic variables, such as regional factors, into the model to better understand the differences between survey groups. Future authors should also broaden the scope of the study to ensure that the research findings are more comprehensive. To further investigate this research topic, the authors hope to investigate the relationship between intention and behavior in sending their children to study abroad.

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Thi Huyen: Conceptualization, methodology, project management, critical revision of manuscript, secure funding, final approval. Vu: Writing - drafting manuscript, data analysis and interpretation, analysis - qualitative and quantitative, data acquisition, supervision. Doan: Writing - drafting manuscript, analysis - quantitative, visualize, data acquisition, format, filter data. Nguyen Thi: Writing - drafting manuscript, analysis - qualitative, visualize, data acquisition, format, filter data.

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