

Tourism Development in Associated with Environmental Protection in Mekong River Delta in Vietnam: Part 1_Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

All over the world, the relationship between tourism and environmental protection has been of particular interest to researchers at an early stage. Currently, the tourism industry of Mekong Delta is not only facing development opportunities but also vital risks and challenges such as sea level rise, which has caused a heavy impact in recent years. The study aims to systematize the theoretical basis and determine the influence of tourism development in Mekong Delta in association with environmental protection. Based on the synthetic research methods selected to analyze and perform qualitative and quantitative research, the author conducted literature review as a basis for further studies to determine the influence of tourism development in the area in association with environmental protection and building up a research model. The research results show that the proposed model includes 07 factors: (1) Tourism management policy associated with environmental protection; (2) Tourism human resources; (3) Tourism environment and environmental protection; (4) Accessibility; (5) Infrastructure; (6) Tourism resources; (7) Tourism products that affect development in Mekong Delta are associated with environmental protection through an intermediate variable, called Tourism development.

Keywords: Tourism development, Environmental protection, Mekong River Delta (Mekong River Delta in Vietnam), Literature review

1. Introduction

Along with today's economic development and deep integration, tourism has always been evaluated as an economic sector with potential in terms of finance, revenue, profit and other social issues. With the importance of tourism, many in-depth studies on tourism development have been carried out by researchers, managers have made certain contributions to the development of the smokeless industry. Hence, tourism activities and organizations always receive great attention and interest from researchers, experts, managers and even tourism lovers. The strong development of the world economy in general and the boom in global tourism in particular have gradually appeared negative impacts on the long-term socio-economic development of countries, especially environmental issues. Recent studies have identified the basic issues of tourism, tourism development, sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism development, the content related to tourism development associated with protection. This paper aims to build up a research model in Mekong Delta. The new features in the model are:

- Developing factors affecting tourism development associated with environmental protection. The study focuses on the dependent variable, which influencing tourism development associated with environmental protection in Mekong River Delta. Next, the authors built up an intermediary variable, which is the tourism development. This variable is formed based on emphasizing the factors affecting the tourism development associated with environmental protection in the area, thereby creating a completeness for the research model.
- The higher tourism development is, the better, in Mekong River Delta, tourism development associated with environmental protection.

- Proposing a number of implications to help the governing body as well as the local tourism administrators to supply more appropriate policies implications and solutions on tourism management associated with environmental protection, tourism human resources, tourism environment and conservation, environmental protection, accessibility, infrastructure, tourism resources

2. Literature review

2.1. Tourism development

2.1.1. Tourism

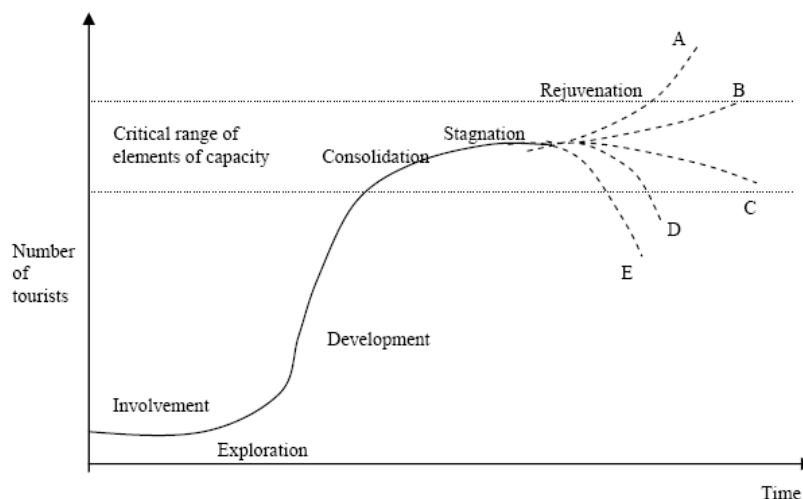
Tourism means activities related to people's trips outside their regular places of residence for a period of no more than 01 consecutive year in order to meet the demand for sightseeing, relaxation, entertainment, learning and discovery of natural resources. tourism resources or in combination with other lawful purposes (Law on Tourism, 2017). Tourism is an activity essential to the life of nation because its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and their international relations. Its development is linked to the social and economic development of nations and can only be possible if a man has access to creative relaxations and holidays and enjoy freedom to travel within the framework of free time and leisure whose profound human characterit underlines. Its very existence and development depend entirely on the existence of a state of lasting peace to which tourism is required to contribute (Dikemann, 2012). The term of "tourism" was first developed by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in 1980. It is defined as "all activities of tourists, including temporary stays for the purpose of sightseeing, exploring, and learning. Excluding the tourists whose primary goal is to make money, tourism is also a form of rest and dynamism in a different living environment from their community, whether it is for experiencing or for leisure, recreation, as well as for working and other purposes for a consistent period not exceeding one year outside their settlement. A common definition of a tourist from the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), is "any person residing in a country, regardless of nationality, travelling to any country outside of his or her usual residence for a period of time not less than 24 hours or a night for a purpose other than the paid activity in the destination." The motivation of such a journey may be (1) rest (entertainment, leisure, health, research, religion, or sport); or (2) business, family, mission, or meetings. (WTO 1981 page 89; quoted in Shaw & Williams 1994). According to Vietnam Encyclopedia 1 (1995), Tourism is a general business with high efficiency in many aspects; improving understanding of nature, historical traditions and national culture, thereby contributing to increasing love for the country; for foreigners, tourism is friendship with their own nation; in economic field, tourism is a business area that brings great efficiency which can be considered as a form of exporting goods and on-site labor and services".

In order to deliver economic, political, and social benefits to the nation and the community, tourism is a broad and specialised activity that involves several different entities, including tourists, transportation, and a variety of other socio-economic disciplines. The activities combined with people travelling outside of their usual habitat to rest, recover, develop physically and mentally, and raise knowledge of cultural levels or engage in sport while utilizing natural, economic, and cultural resources are referred to as tourism.

2.1.2. Tourism development

The process of advancing and improving every facet of the entire travel industry is known as tourism development. It comprises the expansion in scope and volume while also raising the level of excellence in tourism-related activities. Tourism has been promoted as a development strategy to produce foreign currency, improve the balance of payments, boost GDP, draw in investment and development, increase technology transfer, boost employment, and promote prices for contemporary values in life similar to those in Western nations (Shaw & Williams, 1994). Tourists have contributed to improving the state of the social structure in the context of managing and using experiences passed on to future generations (Wang, 2000) and fulfilling their ego needs (Greene, L., & Burke, G., 2007).

Butler's Tourism Destination Cycle Model, born in 1980, which was developed in 2006 and 2011 is one of the prominent theories reflecting the life cycle of a tourist destination and the promotion and upgrade of the brand for tourism development. According to this theory, the life cycle of a destination goes through six stages: exploration, penetration, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or rejuvenation (Breakey, 2006) (see graph below).



Graph 1: Tourism area life cycle (Butler, 1980)

For the final stage, Butler suggested multiple possible scenarios, including:

- A - Successful development leads to growth and expansion.
- B - Minor modifications may include protection of existing resources and price increases.
- C - Some adjustments to meet current demand may include increasing guest rates to prevent further growth.
- D - Through the use of resources leading to a decrease in destination mainly due to competition with other regions.
- E - War, political crisis or some other disaster prevents tourism.

The studies of Agarwal (1994), who argued that with the spiral of development, an additional stage, the reorientation phase is needed to attract more visitors instead of focusing exclusively on tourist destinations in the Pacific as the original model argued that represent the restructuring efforts made prior to the recession (Carlsen & Butler, 2011) have contributed to, modified, and extended Butler's model over time. A complete decline is unlikely to occur since the tourism stakeholders will make a lot of effort to keep up tourism-related activities, assisting in prolonging the advantages that result in continuous or progressive economic exploitation to a level that is compatible with the tourist site. As a result, there has to be a surplus phase of reorientation for activities related to tourism growth (Agarwal, 1994). Furthermore, Agarwal (2002) pointed out that it is necessary to study the destination in its global context and it is important to consider the endogenous and exogenous factors that have stimulated the tourism development of the region (Sahli, 2020), who shared this meaning, advised that the analysis should be strengthened by integrating characteristics of destination context in order to understand the causes and impacts of tourism destination development (Sanz-Ibáez & Anton, 2014).

The author claims that as time goes on, the inside-out spiral of the Butler model will demand a more rigorous selection procedure the market requirements will be higher and higher. A brand-new product will be marketed and sold in a completely different way than an existing product. Manufacturers will concentrate on increasing awareness for new items, while retaining awareness for current products. Generally speaking, the authors, when analyzing Butler's theory, have made recommendations to the environmental control of management agency that can plan promotion, control the structure of the visitor market steadily and sustainably; minimizing the risk of overload and environmental pollution will contribute to tourism development in a justifiable way.

2.2. Environmental protection

2.2.1. Environment

Research requirements on global environmental issues are currently becoming increasingly urgent. The concept of environment has been very diverse, depending on different research approaches that use different concepts such as environment, natural environment, ecological environment, geographical environment, and living environment.

Human habitat, as defined broadly by Smyth (1987), is comprised of all social and environmental elements required for human survival and productivity. In a narrow viewpoint the term "living environment" refers to only those social and natural elements that directly affect how well people live their lives, such as residential floor area, the quality of daily

meals, clean water, atmosphere for living, conditions for entertainment and recreation, environment for learning activities, working environment Environment is a system of natural and man-made material factors that have an impact on the existence and development of humans and organisms," states Article 3 of the Law on Environmental Protection of Vietnam (2020).

The author defines the environment as the entire system of natural and artificial factors that directly or indirectly influence human life, activities, and development at a certain point in history.

2.2.2. The concept of environmental protection

Environmental protection in tourism is a practise that lowers costs, increases benefits, safeguards the local community and the environment, and allows for long-term implementation without having a negative impact on the ecological resources that support tourism. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation Network (UNWTO, 1980) states that the exploitation of tourism in the direction of environmental protection should ensure (Portney, 2016):

Firstly, about the environment: minimizing human impact on the surrounding environment as the environment plays a key role in tourism development, maintaining the ecological development process, preserving the natural heritage and natural biodiversity.

Secondly, about the society and culture: preserving cultural heritage, honoring social and cultural integrity of local communities, conserving traditional values, contributing to understanding an inclusive diverse culture.

Thirdly, about the economy: providing socio-economic benefits to all beneficiaries and sharing equitably, creating opportunities for stable profits for local communities.

The concept of tourism development focuses not only on protecting the environment, but also on preserving the regional culture, fostering economic growth, and bringing equal benefits to the target groups.

In the 1960s-1970s, environmental problems were early recognized in the Malthusian (Mellos, K., & Mellos, K.,1988), about the population explosion in developing countries leading to the depletion of natural resources and increase environmental pollution. The significance of environmental issues was, however, not formally acknowledged until the United Nations conference on the environment - people (Stockholm, 1972). In the report "Our Common Future, 1987" of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), it was recognized that there is the close connection between the environment and development through definition of sustainable development. Since then, this concept has been constantly developed and perfected, especially since the Earth Summit on Environment and Development (1992, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil) and the Earth Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development (2002, South Africa). The core issue of sustainable development is to ensure the feasible progress in all three aspects: economy, society and environment (Truong, 2012).

According to the author, environmental protection refers to human actions that take place through specialized methods to assure environmental quality by preserving, preventing, and overcoming adverse effects on the environment.

2.2.3. Tourism development and environmental protection

As the global tourism industry enters the 21st century, many countries around the world recognize it as a "hinge" year to bring the economies of developing countries to "take off" with millennium goals". For that reason, the governments of many countries, including Vietnam, have had to put their top priority on tourism businesses and tourism operators. As tourism is now considered a "smokeless industry", the environment is at the heart of tourism development. In addition to being a significant economic force, tourism is also in the natural environment.

The environment is impacted by all types of industrial growth. Tourism can have detrimental effects on the environment, as several authors have demonstrated. Extreme environmental issues are also brought on by development of divisive nature. This reduces the standard of living for both residents and visitors and may ultimately jeopardise the survival of tourism sector (Williams & Shaw, 1991). It is unavoidable that visitors will have an impact on the environment because they must travel to the location and engage in recreational activities there (Cooper et al., 1998). Therefore, a scarcity of water can result from the loss of natural resources, which also puts a lot of pressure on other local resources like food and energy and threatens to lessen or ruin attractive landscapes. Pollution from tourists has a global impact on local population

disturbances in the community. The preservation of natural places, however, can benefit from tourism. Conservation of the natural, cultural, and environments is often a crucial need for a project to be assessed for viability when it is licenced. Furthermore, a number of government projects that tend to discourage the illegal use and abuse of natural resources by local communities by allowing the closure of many harmful projects to environmental damage, or financial deterrence in natural areas. Therefore, tourism can and should contribute favourably to environmental preservation. This action makes more sense when thinking about the motivation to travel in a particular place.

According to Cooper et al. (1998) there are many evaluation models of the impact of tourism on the environment. In order to grow tourism as carefully as possible and account for the wide range of potential effects, basically it is necessary to have a broad overview. Environmental effects are neither specific to tourism, nor is it a driving force behind unfavorable environmental effects.

The potential contribution that tourism could make to the overall socioeconomic growth of a location is frequently used to justify tourism development. Although tourism is frequently viewed as a successful tool for development, the definition and aim of "development" and the degree to which it may be accomplished through tourism are rarely questioned. Additionally, research on the connection between tourism and development is still sparse Church, A. (2004).

Ritchie et al. (2003) stated his concern about the pollution and resource depletion of the land. Resource depletion has had negative long-term impacts. Over the next few decades, the tourism industry could experience impacts, such as:

First, political instability or land-use conflicts may result in the loss of new potential tourist destinations and the decline of existing ones.

Then, customers' satisfaction with tourism products might be lowered by landscape and animal loss.

Finally, higher fuel prices can lead to greater travel expenses and a decline in tourism.

WTTC (2003), however, also offered commendable remarks if the countries knew how to integrate tourism development with the environment, such as:

First, global awareness of environmental damage is growing rapidly.

Second, environmental goals can be and must be achieved by utilising the resources of the largest industry in the world.

Third, the industry has the potential to influence customers to achieve beneficial environmental effects.

Fourth, environmental protection corridors will create pressure to develop good environmental practices.

The environment and natural resources are generally affected by tourism in both positive and negative ways. The good side will contribute to the rational use of the environment, restoration of the environment, and at the same time create the basis for its sustainable development; on the other hand, the bad side will result in resource waste and environmental deterioration.

In a nutshell, the development of tourism activities based on planned exploitation of natural resources, attention to investment in enhancing, preserving and maintaining the integrity of natural resources, and ensuring a clean environment are all components of tourism development and environmental protection. It is also necessary to attach the responsibilities and interests of the community in utilizing and protecting natural resources and the environment.

2.3. The previous studies on tourism development associated with environmental protection

A workshop was hosted by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism in 2016 to create a strategy for the growth of tourism products in Vietnam to 2025, with a focus on 2030. Vietnam will build a system of tourism products, according to the workshop. Developing regionally specific tourism products to create uniqueness, differentiation, and product diversification based on the tourism product system of seven regions, including the Northern Midlands and Mountains, Red River Delta and Northeast Coast, North Central Region, South Central Coast region, Central Highlands region, and Mekong Delta, requires highly sustainable, extremely competitive tourism with four main products, namely sea and island tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism, and urban tourism. The workshop emphasized the cooperation between aviation and tourism, the role of businesses and the importance of attracting and training human resources, proposing initiatives

for responsible tourism development and tourism growth go hand in hand with environmental conservation (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2016).

In order to understand the variables influencing the tourism environment in the East of Taiwan, Huang and Perng (2018) conducted a study. Data were gathered from the cities of Hualien, Taitung, and Yilan, according to the research team. The used factors include the awareness of tourists in recent years, when the B&B tourism type has developed, which has an impact on the native culture and natural ecological environment. Regression analysis research findings are summed up as follows: (1) Environmental measures positively affect how valuable tourists view their experiences; (2) Environmental responsibility significantly improves the effectiveness of environmental measures; and (3) Environmental responsibility significantly improves the perceived value of tourism. Finally, the group concluded that (1) in order to consider the B&B ecotourism development and environmental protection, the government should develop complete ecotourism regulations, with environmental measures to the place to provide tourism service. (2) The implementation of environmental measures can help enhance the perceived value of visitors and promote this competitive advantage and increase the number of environmentally conscious consumers and tourists using eco-tours, responding to the travel trend towards environmental protection. (3) Proposing ideas about “green” consumption and even when thinking of tourism, visitors will immediately think of ecotourism; nevertheless, not every visitor is willing to sacrifice pleasure and comfort in tours in response to protecting the environment. (4) The best practices for sustainable tourism include environmental preservation, environmental responsibility, awareness of core values, local culture, and naturalism.

When a nation, like Nepal, aligns its tourist development strategy with its development aim and long-term economic development, 1.56% of the increase in visitors contribute to a 1% rise in GDP, according to a quantitative model developed by Rabindra et al. (2019). The empirical study is further predicated on the idea that negative economic and environmental effects can be lessened if tourist development is carefully planned and managed in accordance with the tenets of sustainable tourism. To lessen the pressure on the natural environment caused by the process of developing tourism, recommendations include combining the sensible use of fuel sources like firewood and fossil fuels and gradually replacing them with renewable energy sources.

Vu et al. (2020) evaluated the relevance and value of tourism's environmental impact. Moreover, using indicators of environmental quality, waste, typical ecosystems, and environmental sanitation issues, his study also examined the current situation of the tourism environment in Vietnam in general and in specific popular tourist locations. Since then, the study has created remedies for the conflicts between the demands of tourism development and environmental protection, ensuring the sustainability of the environment and tourism economic activities.

Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) have examined the evaluation criteria and factors affecting sustainable tourism development in Vietnam, the authors have analyzed the evaluation criteria of sustainable tourism development based on the Global Sustainable Tourism Standards set by the Global Tourism Council (GSTC), Tourism Standards, Global sustainability is developed by the Global Tourism Council (GSTC), including 4 groups of indicators, specifically as follows:

- Improve effective and sustainable management.
- Boost local communities' socioeconomic benefits while reducing adverse effects.
- Increase positive effects on cultural heritage and reduce negative ones.
- Maximize benefits to the environment and minimize negative effects.

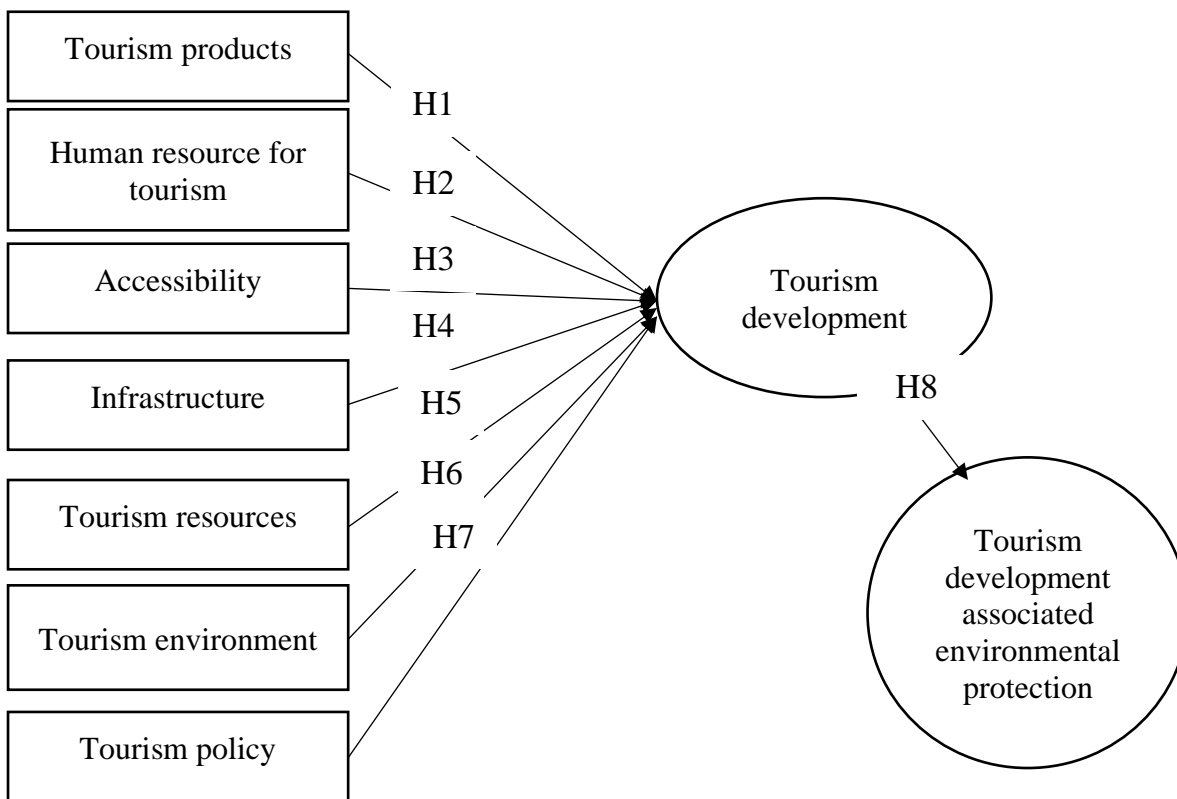
Nguyen (2021) has concentrated on analysing and assessing the current state of tourism economic development in conjunction with guaranteeing environmental security through a questionnaire survey of 135 employees working in the tourism industry in Ninh Binh Province. These four contents are as follows: These four contents are as follows: Local management factor, Economic and social factors, Environmental factor, and Cultural factor. The current status of closely linking planning for tourism growth with planning for ecological environment protection; The current status of sustainable tourism development (responsible tourism, eco-friendly tourism - green tourism); A tension between tourism economic development and environmental security occurs given the current status of tourism development to the fight against climate change, which highlights both its successes and shortcomings; Resources and conditions for environmental protection are limited; Natural resources, and the environment deteriorated; Insufficient awareness and subjects'

awareness of the tourism industry's economic development connected to promising environmental security are the root reasons of these restrictions; The planning of ecological environment protection and tourism development are not truly related; local government and state administration are not always successful; and the influence of climate change on tourism economic development is still relatively limited.

3. Proposed research model and research hypothesis

3.1. Research model

Based on domestic and foreign research combined with the theory of sustainable tourism development as well as expert opinion such as Cooper et al. (1998), Ritchie et al. (2003), Vu (2000), Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (2016), Huang, H.-C., & Perng, Y.-H. (2018), Rabindra et al. (2019), Nguyen and Nguyen (2020), Nguyen (2021),... authors propose a research model for environmental protection tourism development as follows:



Hypothesis 1: Tourism product has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 2: Human resources for tourism has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 3: Accessibility has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 4: Infrastructure has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 5: Tourism resources has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 6: Tourism environmental protection has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 7: Tourism management policy associated with environmental protection has a positive effect on the Tourism development.

Hypothesis 8: Tourism development has a positive effect on the Tourism development in associated with environmental protection.

4. FOR FUTHER RESEARCH

This literature review may be helpful in providing policies, business strategies, and more comprehensive solutions for tourism management and tourism development related to environmental protection, as well as in helping them comprehend the factors influencing tourism development related to environmental protection in the Mekong Delta.

a) In the Mekong Delta, there are numerous practical factors that must be taken into account that have an impact on the development of tourism in relation to environmental protection, such as the level of tourist awareness regarding environmental protection, the fact that local governments manage tourism differently, the need for increased effort in monitoring environmental protection, and public investment and public investment management for tourism. The necessary criteria need to be expanded and further researched, which will reinforce the research model in the thesis.

b) The conceptual framework in this study can be applied not only in the Mekong Delta but also to cities throughout Vietnam.

c) This conceptual framework can be used by some government officials and tourism companies in Vietnam to inform their business plans and management strategies.

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