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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DA NANG CITY

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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale for the Study

In the context of deepening globalization, increasing climate change, global pandemics, and the rapid advancement of digital transformation, tourism is no longer a sector that develops steadily along a linear growth trajectory. Instead, it has become increasingly sensitive, vulnerable, and profoundly affected by external shocks. This reality creates an urgent need to rethink the tourism development model, shifting from the goal of rapid growth toward sustainable development that is adaptive, resilient, and capable of maintaining effectiveness in the long term. From an academic perspective, sustainable tourism development (STD) has become a central research direction. However, the connotation of this concept continues to be expanded and refined, particularly in integrating approaches related to destination governance, carrying capacity, risk management, and adaptation in volatile contexts.

From a theoretical perspective, most current studies on STD still adopt a relatively static model, focusing on balancing the three pillars of economy, society, and environment. Meanwhile, increasingly decisive factors such as institutional capacity, multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, local community participation, and the impacts of economic, social, and environmental shocks have not yet been fully and systematically integrated into the analytical framework of STD, especially in contextualized studies of rapidly developing tourism cities. This gap indicates the need to approach STD as a dynamic process closely associated with the governance, coordination, and adaptive capacity of destinations, in which resident communities are not merely affected subjects but also participating actors and co-creators of development.

From a practical perspective, tourism has played and continues to play an important role in Vietnam's economic structure, with strong recovery and growth after the COVID-19 pandemic. The rapid growth of tourism has also revealed increasingly profound contradictions, particularly from the perspective of local communities, who directly preserve cultural and environmental resources and provide labor for the industry. In reality, tourism employment in many destinations is often seasonal, unstable, and low-paid, while most of the added value is concentrated in large enterprises, including foreign corporations.

In light of these challenges, STD is increasingly recognized as an inevitable requirement in both academic research and policymaking. According to Fennell and Cooper (2020), STD emphasizes the simultaneous consideration of economic, cultural-social, and environmental impacts in both the present and the future, aiming to harmonize the interests of tourists, the tourism industry, the natural environment, and local communities. Today, sustainable tourism has become a fundamental orientation for national tourism policies in many developing

countries, where tourism is expected to promote economic growth while limiting negative social and environmental consequences.

However, a notable paradox is that government-initiated sustainable tourism strategies often fail to gain broad consensus from local communities, a factor considered essential to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the industry. In Vietnam, residents of Hoi An have publicly criticized heritage conservation policies because they believe these policies prioritize tourists and economic interests over the preservation of living cultural values. In Thailand, many local communities perceive the “7 Greens” initiative as a tool serving the interests of elites rather than meeting the genuine needs of residents. Similarly, in Costa Rica, large-scale resorts promoted as “sustainable” have faced strong opposition from coastal residents due to land loss and restricted access to resources.

This reality raises a fundamental research question: What mechanisms govern local community support for STD in the context of developing countries? Community support is not merely symbolic but also plays a decisive role in the success or failure of sustainable tourism policies and initiatives. However, most existing studies still focus on the context of developed countries, while studies examining developing countries remain relatively limited. This imbalance is particularly concerning because developing countries often have distinct characteristics, such as livelihood-dependent economies, fragile ecosystems, limited governance capacity, and widespread poverty. These factors may profoundly influence how local communities perceive and respond to STD.

Da Nang represents a typical case of rapid tourism development in a coastal urban context, where both opportunities and challenges of sustainable development converge. The city has affirmed its position as an important tourism center of the Central region and of Vietnam as a whole, and has been internationally recognized as a dynamic, high-quality destination. However, tourism development in Da Nang has also revealed many concerning issues, such as pressure on resource exploitation, the risk of overcrowding in public spaces, increasing inequality in access to tourism benefits, and the possibly limited participation of resident communities in planning and decision-making processes. For city residents, tourism brings employment and income opportunities, while also posing direct challenges to their living environment, cultural identity, and social stability. These issues indicate that the extensive tourism development model has revealed clear limitations and needs to be reassessed from the perspective of sustainable development. In this context, studying STD in Da Nang City is not only of urgent practical significance but also of important theoretical value.

2. Research Objectives

2.1. General Objective

Based on the systematization of the theoretical framework on STD, the dissertation aims to comprehensively assess the current state of tourism development in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 period. At the same time, based on Social Exchange Theory (SET), it proposes a research model on the factors influencing the intention to support STD, as perceived by local residents in Da Nang City. On this basis, the dissertation proposes orientations and solutions for STD in Da Nang’s tourism sector in the new context.

2.2. Specific Objectives

First, the dissertation systematizes and clarifies the theoretical and practical foundations of STD, including concepts, contents, principles, evaluation criteria, approach models, and relevant domestic and international research experience, with particular emphasis on approaches that regard resident communities as participating actors in, and evaluators of, the tourism development process.

Second, the dissertation analyzes and evaluates the current state of tourism development in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 period according to institutional, economic, cultural-social, and environmental pillars.

Third, the dissertation identifies and analyzes groups of factors affecting local residents’ intention to support STD in Da Nang City, clarifying how these factors are perceived, evaluated, and reflected by resident communities through their levels of satisfaction, consensus, and willingness to participate in tourism development.

Fourth, the dissertation proposes a system of STD solutions for Da Nang City to 2030, ensuring coherence, feasibility, and suitability to local practical conditions.

3. Research Object and Scope

3.1. Research Object

The research object of the dissertation is the process of STD in Da Nang City, including the system of tourism development activities, policies, and outcomes examined from the perspective of sustainability according to institutional, economic, cultural-social, and environmental pillars.

3.2. Research Scope

In terms of spatial scope, the dissertation studies STD in Da Nang, focusing on the city’s former administrative boundaries before the merger and expansion of urban space in July 2025.

In terms of temporal scope, the dissertation analyzes the current state of tourism development in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 period. On that basis, it proposes STD solutions for the 2026–2030 period.

In terms of content scope, the dissertation focuses on the following main contents: (i) systematizing and selecting a theoretical framework for approaching STD; (ii) analyzing the current state of tourism development in the city through the perceptions and evaluations of

local resident communities; (iii) identifying and evaluating groups of factors affecting local residents' intention to support STD in Da Nang; and (iv) proposing a system of STD solutions for Da Nang City to 2030.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research Approaches

The dissertation adopts the following approaches: a systems approach; an interdisciplinary approach; a local approach; and a historical-developmental approach.

4.2. Data Collection Methods

4.2.1. Secondary Data Collection

The dissertation uses secondary data from official and highly reliable sources, including reports, strategies, and tourism development plans of Da Nang City; statistical yearbooks; sectoral reports of the Vietnam National Authority of Tourism; documents from the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Department of Finance, and the Department of Agriculture and Environment of Da Nang City; as well as scientific studies, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and domestic and international specialized articles related to STD.

4.2.2. Primary Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a questionnaire survey of local residents.

4.3. Data Processing and Analysis Methods

4.3.1. Qualitative Analysis

Content analysis was used to synthesize and analyze policy documents, plans, strategies, and research materials related to STD.

4.3.2. Quantitative Analysis

The dissertation uses quantitative analytical methods to measure the extent to which groups of factors affect STD in Da Nang City. The survey data were processed using SPSS software.

4.4. Research Support Tools

The support tools used in the dissertation include Google Forms and SurveyMonkey for designing and collecting survey data, and Excel and SPSS for entering, processing, and analyzing quantitative data.

5. Significance of the Study

5.1. Theoretical Significance

First, this dissertation emphasizes the importance of institutional, or political, factors for STD. It contributes to filling the gap in a comprehensive theoretical framework for the political dimension of sustainability.

Second, the dissertation extends the application of Social Exchange Theory and the sustainability lens theory by integrating institutional, or political, factors, satisfaction with

tourism, and emotions, namely residents' quality of life. These are important components of the benefits and costs considered by residents in explaining residents' STD.

Third, unlike many previous studies that mainly focus on economic, cultural-social, environmental, or political factors to explain STD, this dissertation highlights the role of residents' quality of life as a key emotional and psychological factor.

Fourth, in studies on STD, most existing works still focus on the context of developed countries. Therefore, this dissertation fills a contextual research gap by exploring STD in a developing country.

5.2. Practical Significance

From a practical perspective, the dissertation provides a comprehensive, systematic, and updated picture of the current state of STD in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 period across four dimensions: institutional, economic, cultural-social, and environmental.

An important practical contribution of the dissertation is its identification and quantification of the impact levels of groups of factors affecting local residents' intention to support STD in Da Nang City. This helps managers clearly identify which factors play a decisive role and which factors should be prioritized for intervention at each stage of development.

In addition, the dissertation also serves as a useful reference for tourism enterprises and stakeholders in improving product quality, developing tourism in association with social responsibility and environmental protection, and can be used as reference material for research, teaching, and policymaking on STD in tourism cities in Vietnam.

6. Structure of the Study

In addition to the introduction and conclusion, references, and appendices, the main content of the dissertation is structured into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1. Literature Review on Sustainable Tourism Development

Chapter 2. Theoretical Foundations of Sustainable Tourism Development

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

Chapter 4. Current Situation and Research Results on Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City

Chapter 5. Solutions for Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City during the 2026–2030 Period

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

1.1. Overview of Studies on Sustainable Tourism Development

1.1.1. International Studies on Sustainable Tourism Development

International studies on sustainable tourism development (STD) have focused on analyzing development models, management tools, and policies aimed at promoting STD. These studies provide empirical evidence on the application of sustainable development principles in destination management and tourism development.

Within the group of studies on STD practices and models, Steck et al. (1999), Gutierrez et al. (2006), and Drumbrăveanu (2004) emphasized sustainable tourism as an appropriate development option, while also discussing project models and sustainable tourism practices at the destination level.

In addition, studies on STD tools and policies have focused on the role of destination governance and management instruments. UNEP and UNWTO (2005), together with UNWTO (2013), emphasized the role of management tools, policies, and destination governance mechanisms in promoting STD. These studies show that STD needs to be associated with an effective management system and coordination among stakeholders.

Overall, most previous studies have still relied on Social Exchange Theory or its extended variants.

1.1.2. Studies on Sustainable Tourism Development in Vietnam

Studies on STD in Vietnam have focused on assessing the current state of tourism development, analyzing influencing factors, and proposing solutions toward STD. These studies mainly adopt a case-study approach at local destinations, while also considering the roles of planning, destination governance, local communities, and innovation in STD.

Within the group of studies on sustainable tourism practices and applications in Vietnam, the studies by Dung (2007), Van (2012), and Nguyen et al. (2020) reflect the application of STD principles in association with tourism development planning, resource conservation, and the promotion of the role of local communities. These studies indicate that STD in Vietnam needs to be linked to local characteristics and the requirements of protecting tourism resources.

In addition, studies on destination governance and community participation have also been addressed in many empirical studies in Vietnam. Luong (2002), Tu (2016), Dong (2014), Nguyen et al. (2020), and Binh (2022) emphasized the role of destination governance, coordination among stakeholders, and local community participation in sustainable tourism development. These studies show that community participation and effective governance mechanisms are important factors in STD in Vietnam.

Overall, studies on STD in Vietnam have provided important evidence on factors affecting STD, including development planning, destination governance, community participation, and innovation. However, previous studies have mainly approached these factors separately and have not developed an overall research model of STD in a specific local context.

1.1.3. Synthetic Review of Studies on Sustainable Tourism Development

First, international studies such as those by Wani et al. (2024) and Viana-Lora et al. (2024) focus on STD practices and models at destinations and residents' support for STD. These studies emphasize sustainable tourism as a development option, while also addressing STD models and practices at the destination level.

In Vietnam, studies by Dung (2007), Van (2012), and Nguyen et al. (2020) reflect the application of STD principles in relation to local planning, resources, and communities. At the same time, studies by Luong (2002), Dong (2014), Tu (2016), Nguyen et al. (2020), and Binh (2022) emphasize the role of destination governance, multi-stakeholder coordination, and community participation in STD.

Moreover, studies by Manh (2008), Thuongmai University (2016), Dong (2014), and Vien (2017) address the role of innovation and the application of new models in STD. In a volatile context, studies by Nguyen et al. (2020), Vien (2017), Binh (2022), and Ngan and Hai (2022) emphasize the requirements for adaptation, recovery, and innovation in STD.

Overall, empirical studies on STD have provided important evidence on factors influencing STD, including development practices, tools and policies, destination governance, community participation, and innovation. However, previous studies have mainly approached individual aspects separately and have not developed an overall research model of STD in a specific local context.

1.2. Research Gaps

1.2.1. Theoretical Gap

First, regarding the debate on sustainability, the concept of sustainability pillars refers to three pillars: economic, environmental, and cultural-social dimensions (UNWTO, 2004). Previous studies show that limited attention has been paid to examining STD in relation to residents' attitudes toward tourism and the political aspects of governance (Jurowski and Gursoy, 2004; Mihalic et al., 2016). This study contributes to addressing that gap while also improving understanding of the institutional dimension surrounding the implementation of sustainable tourism.

Second, most studies focus on the context of developed countries, while research conducted in developing countries remains relatively limited (Agarwal, 2024). This imbalance is a matter of concern because developing countries often have distinct

characteristics, such as livelihood-dependent economies, vulnerable ecosystems, limited governance capacity, and high poverty rates.

Third, previous studies have mainly explained local community support for STD through Social Exchange Theory (SET). According to this approach, residents are assumed to support or oppose tourism development based on their consideration of benefits and costs (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2010). However, Social Exchange Theory tends to simplify the relationship between communities and tourism from an economic perspective, whereas in reality, residents' attitudes and behaviors are also significantly influenced by emotional factors, social relationships, and specific living contexts (Šegota et al., 2024).

Thus, previous studies have provided an important theoretical foundation for STD, yet they still lack an integrated theoretical framework to fully explain the relationships among the factors affecting STD in a specific research context. This is the theoretical gap that the dissertation aims to address.

1.2.2. Empirical Gap

First, international empirical studies have mainly focused on evaluating STD models and practices at specific destinations, such as the studies by Steck et al. (1999), Gutierrez et al. (2006), and Drumbrăveanu (2004). These studies provide important practical experiences; however, their findings are mainly case-specific and are difficult to generalize across different local contexts.

In Vietnam, empirical studies on STD, such as those by Dung (2007), Van (2012), and Nguyen et al. (2020), have mainly focused on analyzing the current situation and proposing STD solutions for localities. However, these studies often approach each locality separately and have not developed an overall empirical model of STD.

In addition, studies on destination governance and community participation, such as those by Luong (2002), Tu (2016), Dong (2014), Binh (2022), and Nguyen et al. (2020), have emphasized the role of communities and destination governance in STD. However, these studies have mainly used qualitative methods or case studies; therefore, quantitative studies assessing the extent of the impact of factors on STD remain limited.

Overall, previous empirical studies have provided important evidence on STD, yet there remains a lack of systematic empirical studies that use an overall research model and test it in a specific local context. This is the empirical gap that the dissertation aims to supplement and clarify.

1.2.3. Methodological Gap

First, international studies on STD, such as those by Steck et al. (1999), Gutierrez et al. (2006), and Drumbrăveanu (2004), have mainly used case-study methods and analyses of practical models at specific destinations. These studies provide important practical experiences; however, their

research methods are mainly descriptive and have not tested the relationships among factors affecting STD.

In Vietnam, studies by Dung (2007), Van (2012), Luong (2002), Dong (2014), Tu (2016), Vien (2017), Binh (2022), and Nguyen et al. (2020) have mainly used qualitative research methods, current-situation analysis, or case studies in specific localities. These studies have provided important empirical evidence; however, they have not developed an overall research model and have not used quantitative analytical methods to test the relationships among factors affecting STD.

Overall, previous studies have used various research methods in STD research. However, there remains a lack of studies using an integrated research methodology that combines qualitative and quantitative methods to develop and test an STD research model in a specific context. This is the methodological gap that the dissertation aims to address.

From the above gaps emerges an important research question: What mechanisms govern local community support for STD in the context of developing countries? The selection of local residents as the research subjects stems from their central and irreplaceable role in the sustainable tourism ecosystem.

In addition, local residents are also the group that most clearly faces the trade-off between short-term benefits and long-term sustainable values. They are both beneficiaries of livelihood opportunities generated by tourism and those who bear pressure from issues such as tourism overcrowding, resource degradation, and cultural change. Therefore, studying how residents evaluate costs and benefits and form intentions to support sustainable tourism will provide important empirical evidence, contributing to explaining the mechanism of behavioral decision-making in the current tourism development context.

Finally, focusing on local residents is also of high practical significance, as STD policies can only succeed if they receive consensus and active participation from the community. Therefore, understanding residents' motivations, barriers, and expectations not only helps fill the research gap but also provides a basis for proposing appropriate governance solutions, ensuring harmony between tourism development and community interests.

Summary of Chapter 1

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Concepts of Sustainable Tourism Development

2.1.1. Concept of Tourism

2.1.2. Sustainable Development

2.1.3. Sustainable Tourism Development

The concept of sustainable tourism development (STD) is formed on the basis of the concept of sustainable development and cannot be separated from the core principles of sustainable development in general. In practice, STD is the application of sustainable development principles to the tourism sector, a comprehensive economic sector that directly and indirectly uses natural, cultural, and social resources.

STD can be understood as a tourism development process that achieves harmony among:

- (1) Institutional sustainability, ensuring that the policy system, destination management, and coordination among stakeholders are effective and efficient.
- (2) Economic sustainability, ensuring long-term efficiency and stability.
- (3) Social sustainability, ensuring equity, participation, and community welfare.
- (4) Environmental sustainability, protecting resources and ecosystems.

2.2. Principles and Contents of Sustainable Tourism Development

2.2.1. Principles of Sustainable Tourism Development

2.2.2. Contents of Sustainable Tourism Development

2.2.2.1. Sustainable Tourism Development Associated with Institutions

2.2.2.2. Sustainable Tourism Development Associated with the Economy

2.2.2.3. Sustainable Tourism Development Associated with Cultural-Social Issues

2.2.2.4. Sustainable Tourism Development Associated with Environmental Protection

2.3. Selected Theoretical Frameworks for Sustainable Tourism Development

2.3.1. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been widely used to analyze community attitudes toward tourism development, particularly how communities evaluate the positive and negative impacts of tourism in relation to their level of support (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon, 2012). According to Emerson (1981), social exchange is an interaction process in which parties are interdependent through the benefits they receive. Homans (1961) argued that social behavior is the result of the exchange of tangible and intangible resources, in which individuals tend to maximize benefits and minimize costs. When benefits exceed costs, a behavior or relationship will be maintained (Cook et al., 1993).

In STD research, SET makes it possible to explain how residents evaluate tourism development not only through economic benefits but also through their level of satisfaction and quality of life.

2.3.2. Triple Bottom Line Model

In addition, the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model proposed by Elkington (1994) is a foundational evaluation framework in STD. According to TBL, tourism development should be considered simultaneously across three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. This framework enables the assessment not only of economic efficiency but also of benefit distribution to the community, cultural conservation, and the control of ecological impacts such as environmental carrying capacity, pollution, and resource degradation. Therefore, TBL has been widely applied in developing sustainable tourism strategies, ecotourism, and community-based development models.

2.4. Criteria for Evaluating Sustainable Tourism Development

2.4.1. International Criteria for Evaluating Sustainable Tourism Development

2.4.1.1. UNWTO Criteria

2.4.1.2. OECD Recommendations

2.4.1.3. Criteria Developed by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

2.4.2. Localized and Contextualized Criteria Framework: A Proposal for Research in Da Nang City

2.4.2.1. Economic Criteria

2.4.2.2. Cultural-Social Criteria

2.4.2.3. Environmental Criteria

2.4.2.4. Institutional Criteria

2.5. Local Residents' Support for Sustainable Tourism Development

2.5.1. The Role of Residents' Support in Sustainable Tourism Development

Research issue: Through what mechanisms do local residents, as key actors in the tourism industry, balance the ideals of sustainable development with the realities of their livelihoods? How and in what ways does this cost-benefit evaluation mechanism influence their intention to support STD at their destination? The tension between community responsibility and personal interests is not only a challenge in sustainable tourism governance but also an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how residents evaluate costs and benefits in action choices related to long-term tourism development.

In the tourism context, if residents do not support the orientation toward STD, policies on planning, environmental management, or benefit distribution may encounter obstacles in implementation, increasing adjustment costs and reducing development effectiveness.

First, residents' support ensures the legitimacy and stability of tourism development policies.

Second, residents' support contributes to reducing social costs and conflicts of interest in the development process.

Third, residents' support reflects the degree of benefit sharing and welfare improvement generated by tourism.

2.5.2. Theoretical Research Model of Factors Affecting Local Residents' Intention to Support Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City

The sustainability lens framework consists of four dimensions:

(i) Institutional sustainability: the policy system, management mechanisms, and the level of community participation in development coordination;

(ii) Economic sustainability: the capacity to generate added value, employment, and stable local revenue;

(iii) Cultural-social sustainability: the preservation of identity, maintenance of social structures, and equitable distribution of benefits;

(iv) Environmental sustainability: resource protection, pollution control, and maintenance of the carrying capacity of ecosystems.

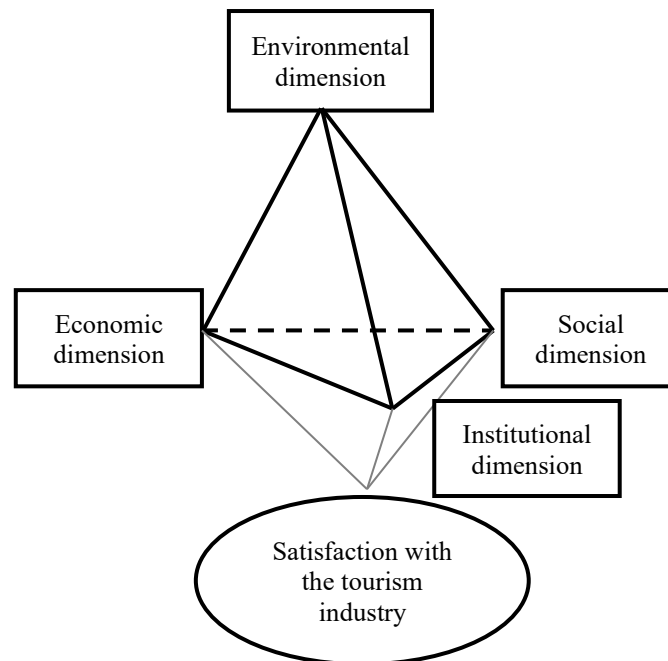


Figure 1. Sustainability lens model

2.5.3. Development of Research Hypotheses

Building on the above findings and adapting them to the institutional-social context of Da Nang City, the dissertation selects four groups of independent variables: (1) perceived institutional impacts; (2) perceived economic impacts; (3) perceived cultural-social impacts; and (4) perceived environmental impacts; two mediating variables: (5) residents' satisfaction with tourism; and (6) quality of life; and one dependent variable: (7) support for STD. The selection of these variables ensures consistency with international theory and previously tested studies, while also reflecting the current policy priorities of Da Nang City in shifting

the tourism growth model toward sustainability, placing residents and their quality of life at the center.

On this basis, the dissertation proposes the research model and specific hypotheses as follows:

H1. Perceived institutional impacts positively affect local residents' perceived economic impacts.

H2. Perceived institutional impacts positively affect local residents' perceived cultural-social impacts.

H3. Perceived institutional impacts positively affect local residents' perceived environmental impacts.

H4a. Perceived economic impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' satisfaction with tourism.

H4b. Perceived economic impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' quality of life.

H5a. Perceived cultural-social impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' satisfaction with tourism.

H5b. Perceived cultural-social impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' quality of life.

H6a. Perceived environmental impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' satisfaction with tourism.

H6b. Perceived environmental impacts of sustainable tourism positively affect local residents' quality of life.

H7. Local residents' satisfaction with tourism has a positive effect on local residents' quality of life.

H8a. Local residents' satisfaction with tourism has a positive effect on support for STD.

H8b. Local residents' quality of life has a positive effect on support for STD.

Proposed Research Model:

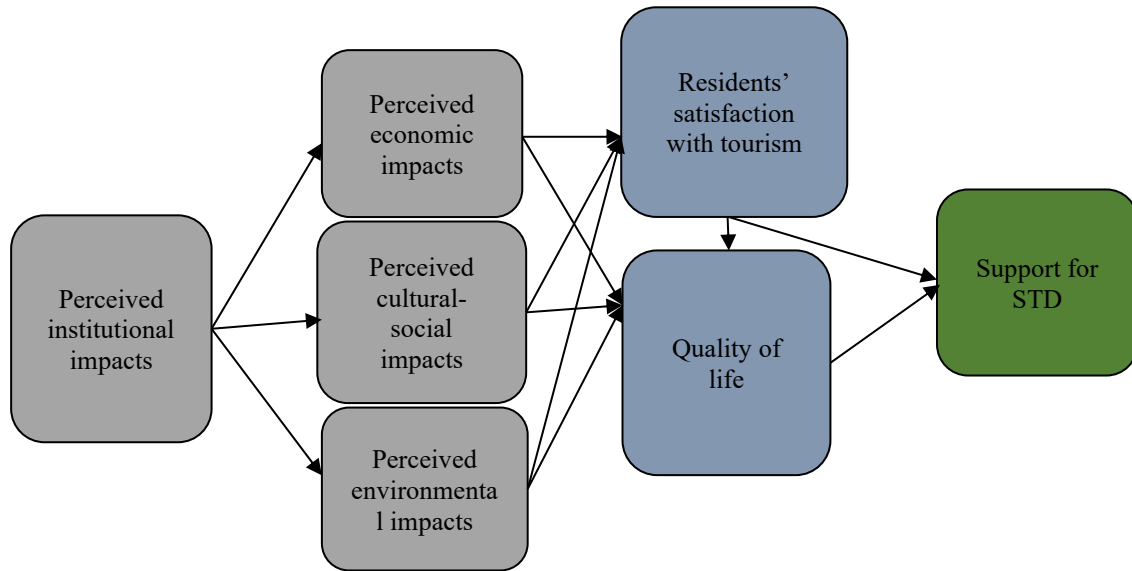


Figure 2. Proposed research model

Summary of Chapter 2

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the identified research objectives, the dissertation develops a system of research methods appropriate to the characteristics of the topic in the field of development economics. Based on the theoretical framework of sustainable tourism development (STD) presented in Chapter 2, the study is implemented through three main components.

First, it develops and adjusts a set of criteria for evaluating STD in Da Nang City by referring to international criteria frameworks and localizing them according to local practical conditions.

Second, it evaluates the current state of STD in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 period through the analysis of secondary data and comparison with the developed set of criteria.

Third, it tests the model of factors affecting local residents' intention to support STD in order to clarify the social-institutional conditions that influence the feasibility of the development strategy.

This approach ensures consistency among the theoretical foundation, the practical analytical content, and the policy proposals presented in the following chapters.

3.1. Approach and Method for Developing the Criteria Set for Evaluating Sustainable Tourism Development

3.2. Method for Evaluating the Current State of Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 Period

3.3. Research Method for Factors Affecting the Intention to Support Sustainable Tourism Development

3.3.1. Research Context

3.3.2. Research Design and Theoretical Model

3.3.3. Scale and Questionnaire Design

The measurement scales were inherited from previous studies and adjusted from relevant prior research to ensure suitability for the local context. Specifically, the scale “Perceived Political Impact” is denoted as PPI. The scale “Perceived Economic Impact” is denoted as PEI2. The scale “Perceived Socio-Cultural Impact” is denoted as PSI. The scale “Perceived Environmental Impact” is denoted as PEI1. The scale “Residents’ Satisfaction with Tourism” is denoted as RST. The scale “Quality of Life” is denoted as QOL. Finally, the scale “Residents’ Support for Sustainable Tourism Development” is denoted as SSTD.

The questionnaire was designed with four main sections, following a logical structure to facilitate respondents’ participation and improve the quality of the collected data.

Section 1. Introduction to the study

Section 2. Screening questions for research subjects

Section 3. Demographic information

Section 4. Main research content

3.3.4. Pilot Survey and Official Survey

The survey was conducted over a five-month period, from September 2023 to January 2024, and obtained 1,220 valid questionnaires. The structure of the research sample is presented in detail in Table 4.11. With this number, the ratio between the number of valid observations and this ratio indicates that the final sample size is sufficiently large and appropriate for conducting structural equation modeling analysis, while also ensuring statistical power and the stability of estimates in subsequent analyses.

3.3.5. Analytical Methods

This study uses covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) to evaluate the fit of the proposed theoretical model with empirical reality. The analysis follows a series of consistent steps, including sample analysis, assessment of the measurement model, and assessment of the structural model using SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 21 software.

Summary of Chapter 3

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT SITUATION AND RESEARCH RESULTS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DA NANG CITY

4.1. Overview of Natural and Socio-Economic Conditions Affecting Tourism Development in Da Nang

4.1.1. Characteristics of Natural Conditions and Tourism Resources Affecting Tourism Development in Da Nang

4.1.2. Socio-Economic Conditions Affecting Tourism Development in Da Nang

4.1.2.1. Economic Growth and Economic Restructuring

4.1.2.2. Infrastructure and Technical Facilities for Tourism

4.1.2.3. Development of Tourism Human Resources

4.2. Current Situation of Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City during the 2014–2024 Period

4.2.1. Assessment of Sustainable Tourism Development from the Institutional Perspective

4.2.1.1. Issuance and Implementation of State Management Mechanisms and Policies on Sustainable Tourism Development

4.2.1.2. Organization of the Implementation of State Management Policies on Sustainable Tourism Development

4.2.2. Assessment of Sustainable Tourism Development from the Economic Perspective

4.2.2.1. Growth Rate and Long-Term Stability of Growth

4.2.2.2. Tourist Structure

4.2.2.3. Average Length of Stay and Average Expenditure

4.2.2.4. Tourism Revenue

4.2.2.5. Accommodation System of the Tourism Sector

4.2.2.6. Share of Investment in the Tourism Sector

4.2.3. Assessment of Sustainable Tourism Development from the Cultural-Social Perspective

4.2.3.1. Conservation and Promotion of Cultural and Historical Values

4.2.3.2. Tourism Development Contributing to Improvements in Residents' Quality of Life

4.2.3.3. Establishment of Recreational, Entertainment, and Sports Facilities Serving Society

4.2.4. Assessment of Sustainable Tourism Development from the Environmental Perspective

4.2.4.1. Protection of Vitality and Biodiversity

4.2.4.2. Efficient Use of Non-Renewable Resources

4.2.4.3. Strengthening the Role of Communities in Environmental Self-Management

4.2.4.4. Changing Local Residents' Customs and Habits toward Building a Green City

4.3. Research Results on Factors Affecting Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City

4.3.1. Description of the Survey Sample Characteristics

The research team distributed questionnaires to survey respondents during the period from September 2023 to January 2024. The actual sample size collected was $n = 1365$ and after removing samples with insufficient data, the actual number used for analysis was $n = 1220$.

4.3.2. Preliminary Assessment of the Scales Using Cronbach's Alpha and Exploratory Factor Analysis

4.3.2.1. Preliminary Assessment of the Scales Using Cronbach's Alpha

The results of reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha for the seven constructs in the research model show that all scales achieved high reliability, with $\alpha > 0.8$. The two scales of Quality of Life and Socio-Cultural Impact had alpha coefficients approximately equal to 0.8 but still met the reliability requirements for social science research.

The results show that no observed variable had an item-total correlation coefficient lower than 0.3; therefore, no variable needed to be removed before conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Thus, the scales were retained for further testing of convergent validity and discriminant validity in the subsequent EFA step.

4.3.2.2. Preliminary Assessment of the Scales Using EFA

The results of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. EFA Assessment Results

KMO = 0.895; Sig. = .000; Eigenvalue = 1.125; Extracted variance = 53.283%								
Pattern Matrixa								Cronbach's Alpha
	Factor							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
SSTD2	0.818							0.912
SSTD4	0.807							
SSTD3	0.802							
SSTD6	0.802							
SSTD5	0.791							
SSTD1	0.760							
PEI2.6		0.753						0.861
PEI2.2		0.741						
PEI2.7		0.682						

PEI2.4		0.677					0.886	
PEI2.5		0.660						
PEI2.3		0.643						
PEI2.1		0.604						
PSI3			0.799				0.886	
PSI2			0.794					
PSI1			0.777					
PSI4			0.713					
PSI6			0.685					
PSI7			0.623					
RST2				0.796			0.822	
RST1				0.757				
RST4				0.724				
RST3				0.627				
QOL3					0.685		0.768	
QOL2					0.667			
QOL1					0.664			
QOL4					0.664			
PEI1.2						0.713	0.776	
PEI1.3						0.707		
PEI1.1						0.689		
PEI1.4						0.536		
PPI2							0.750	0.828
PPI4							0.733	
PPI3							0.715	
PPI1							0.618	
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.								
Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.								
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.								

(Source: Author's survey data processing results, 2024.)

The KMO coefficient reached 0.895, greater than 0.5, indicating that the data were fully suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test had a Chi-square value of 6110 with a significance

level of Sig. = 0.000, less than 0.05, rejecting the null hypothesis H_0 that the observed variables are not correlated in the population, thereby confirming the suitability of the data for EFA.

The analysis extracted seven factors with Eigenvalues greater than 1, with the total extracted variance reaching 53.283%, greater than 50%. This demonstrates that the formed factors can adequately explain the variance in the data and that the scales have acceptable convergent validity.

During the analysis, one observed variable belonging to the Perceived Socio-Cultural Impact scale was removed due to a low factor loading and weak cross-correlation. The remaining variables all had factor loadings greater than 0.5, were clearly grouped, and were consistent with the initial theoretical model.

Thus, the EFA results confirm that the scale structure achieved good convergent and discriminant validity, providing a basis for continuing to test the measurement model using CFA in the next stage of analysis.

4.3.3. Scale Testing Using Confirmatory Factor Analysis

4.3.3.1. CFA Results for the Critical Model

The study continued to test the discriminant validity of all component constructs in the research model, because allowing the constructs to freely correlate with one another makes it possible to examine whether they truly have discriminant validity. This model is referred to as the critical model. The CFA results of the critical measurement model are shown in Figure 3.

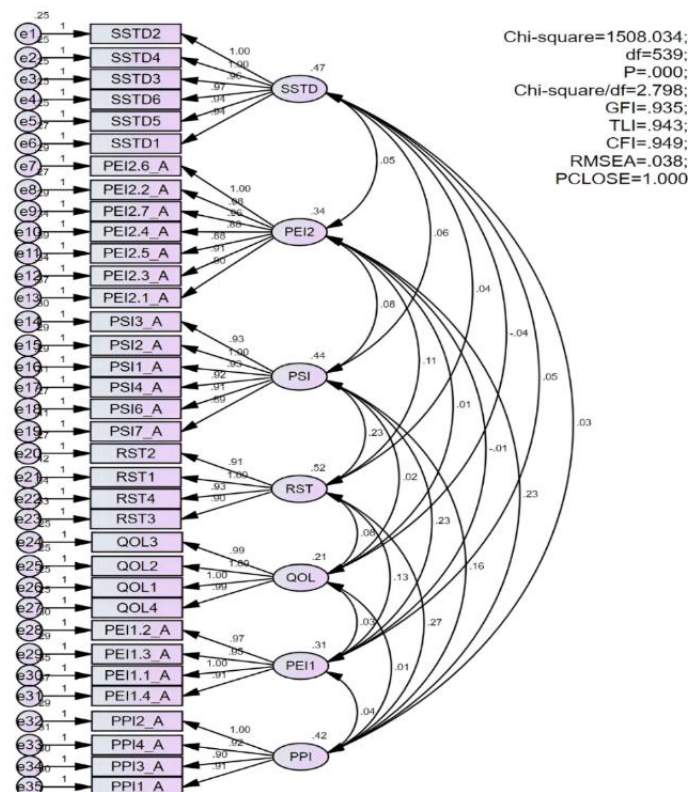


Figure 3. CFA results of the critical measurement model, standardized estimates

The CFA results show that the model had 539 degrees of freedom, Chi-square = 1508.034, $p = .000$, and CMIN/df = 2.798, less than 3. The GFI, TLI, and CFI indices were 0.935, 0.943, and 0.949, respectively, all greater than 0.9, while RMSEA = 0.038, less than 0.8. Therefore, the study confirms that the model fits the market data well. In addition, all standardized weights were greater than 0.5 and statistically significant, $p = 0.000$; thus, this scale achieved convergent validity.

4.3.3.2. Conclusion on Scale Testing Using CFA

4.3.4. Testing the Theoretical Model and Research Hypotheses Using Structural Equation Modeling

4.3.4.1. Testing the Theoretical Model

After the scales were confirmed to have reliability and validity through Cronbach's Alpha, EFA, and CFA, structural equation modeling was used to test the fit of the theoretical model and evaluate the causal relationships among the research constructs.

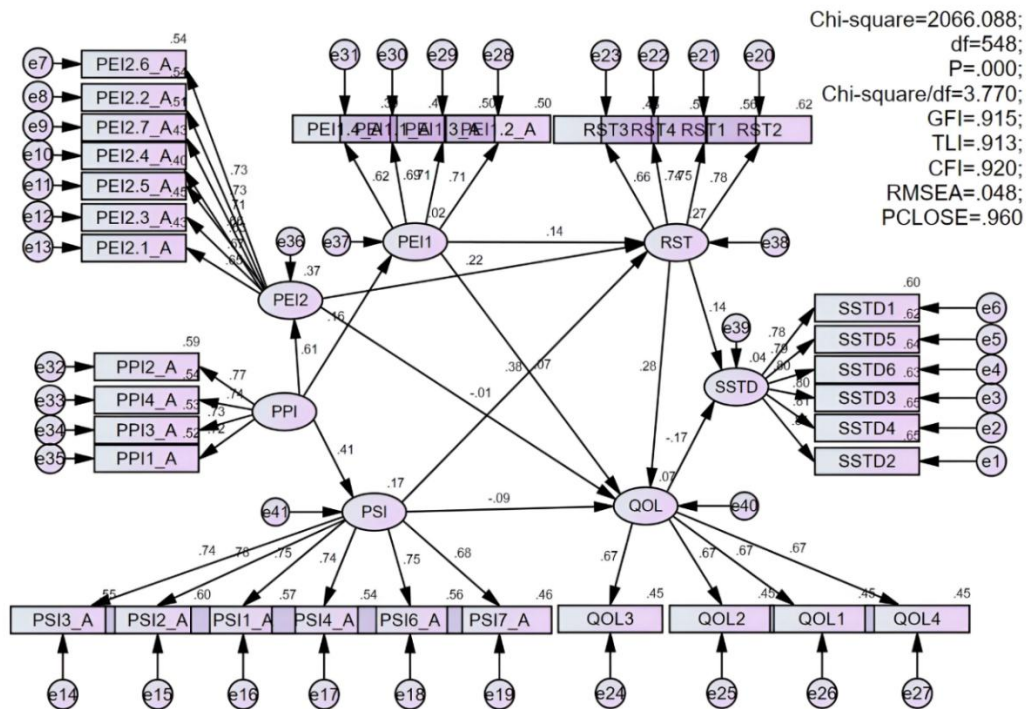


Figure 4. SEM results of the research model, standardized estimates

The SEM results show that the model had a good fit with the empirical data. Specifically, the model fit indices met the required thresholds: Chi-square (χ^2) = 206.688 ($p = 0.000$), CMIN/df = 3.770 (< 5), GFI = 0.915, TLI = 0.913, CFI = 0.920 (> 0.9) and RMSEA = 0.048 (< 0.08). According to the recommendations of Hair et al. (2010), these values indicate that the proposed theoretical model achieved an acceptable fit and adequately reflected the relational structure among the variables in the survey data.

Overall, the SEM testing results confirm that the theoretical model has a high level of fit, that the tested causal relationships are statistically significant, and that the direction of effects is consistent with the research hypotheses.

4.3.4.2. Testing the Hypotheses of the Research Model and Discussion of Results

Table 2. Results of Testing Relationships among Variables in the Model

Hypot hesis	Relationship			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Conclusion
H1	PEI2	<---	PPI	0.552	0.036	15.504	***	Accepted
H2	PEI1	<---	PPI	0.134	0.031	4.402	***	Accepted
H3	PSI	<---	PPI	0.414	0.036	11.416	***	Accepted
H4a	RST	<---	PEI2	0.269	0.040	6.696	***	Accepted
H4b	QOL	<---	PEI2	-0.012	0.032	-0.384	0.701	Rejected
H5a	RST	<---	PSI	0.408	0.039	10.543	***	Accepted
H5b	QOL	<---	PSI	-0.070	0.031	-2.296	0.022	Accepted
H6a	RST	<---	PEI1	0.177	0.042	4.201	***	Accepted
H6b	QOL	<---	PEI1	0.063	0.034	1.860	0.063	Rejected
H7	QOL	<---	RST	0.200	0.032	6.181	***	Accepted
H8a	SSTD	<---	RST	0.143	0.035	4.112	***	Accepted
H8b	SSTD	<---	QOL	-0.238	0.051	-4.671	***	Accepted

(Source: Author's survey data processing results, 2024.)

The results in Table 2 show that most hypotheses, namely H1, H2, H3, H4a, H5a, H5b, H6a, H7, H8a, and H8b, were accepted at the statistical significance level of $p < 0.05$, except for H4b and H6b, which were rejected because they did not reach statistical significance. These results confirm that most relationships in the model have practical significance and are consistent with the theoretical foundation of STD.

For the group of hypotheses related to perceived institutional impacts, PEI and PPI, the test result for H1, $PPI \rightarrow PEI2$, shows an estimated coefficient of 0.552, S.E. = 0.036, C.R. = 15.504, $p < 0.001$. This reflects a strong positive relationship between perceived institutional impact, or Perceived Political Impact (PPI), and enhanced economic impact, or Perceived Economic Impact (PEI2). This implies that local government policies, regulations, and commitments in the field of sustainable tourism play a decisive role in shaping residents' perception of the economic benefits generated by tourism development.

Hypothesis H2, $PPI \rightarrow PEI1$, with a coefficient of 0.134, $p < 0.001$, also indicates a positive but weaker relationship between political institutions and perceptions of basic economic benefits, such as income and employment, PEI2.1–PEI2.3. This suggests that government support policies still contribute to facilitating direct economic benefits, although their influence is more limited than that of factors promoting enhanced economic impacts. One possible reason is that basic economic benefits are short-term and easily recognizable,

so residents' perceptions may be limited at the initial stage. They respond positively to immediate policies, such as job creation or livelihood support, but may not yet fully perceive the long-term economic effects of STD.

For the group of hypotheses related to perceived socio-cultural impacts, PSI, hypothesis H3, $PSI \rightarrow PPI$, has a coefficient of 0.414, $p < 0.001$, indicating that perceived socio-cultural impact, or Perceived Socio-Cultural Impact (PSI), has a positive influence on perceptions of institutional impact (PPI). Indicators such as tourism helping the city create more parks and public recreational areas, PSI2; preserving local culture, PSI6; and improving the quality of education in Da Nang, PSI7, all contribute to strengthening the image of a friendly local government oriented toward harmonious development between conservation and development. This result is consistent with Stylidis et al. (2014) and Han et al. (2023), who argue that positive socio-cultural spillovers help enhance legitimacy and trust in the governing capacity of local authorities in managing tourism development. This also reinforces the assumption of a two-way relationship between local governance and community culture, in which residents' participation in tourism activities is not only an outcome but also a driving force for strengthening sustainable institutions.

The results of testing the group of hypotheses on residents' satisfaction with tourism, RST, and quality of life, QOL, show that residents' satisfaction has a significant positive effect on both perceptions of the economic and social impacts of STD. Specifically, the test result for H4a, $RST \rightarrow PEI2$, shows a coefficient of 0.269, $p < 0.001$, demonstrating that residents' satisfaction with tourism has a positive influence on perceptions of enhanced economic impact, PEI2. When residents feel satisfied with tourism development, RST1–RST4, they tend to evaluate indirect economic benefits more positively, such as diversification of economic activities, PEI2, job creation, and expansion of business opportunities, PEI3.

Conversely, H4b, $QOL \rightarrow PEI2$, was rejected, Estimate = -0.012, $p = 0.701$, indicating that a high quality of life does not necessarily increase perceptions of economic impact. This can be explained similarly to Woo et al. (2015) and Han et al. (2023), who suggest that when living standards improve, residents have higher expectations and become more sensitive to social costs arising from tourism, such as pollution, congestion, and ecological imbalance. As a result, positive economic evaluations may decline in the short term.

Meanwhile, H5a, $RST \rightarrow PSI$, with a coefficient of 0.408, $p < 0.001$, further confirms that residents' satisfaction is a driver of positive social perceptions, consistent with Woo et al. (2015) and Han et al. (2023). In contrast, H5b, $QOL \rightarrow PSI$, has a negative coefficient of -0.070, $p = 0.022$, implying that if quality of life is negatively affected by tourism, such as through the loss of living space or changes in cultural values, residents tend to evaluate the social impacts of tourism less favorably.

For the group of hypotheses concerning perceived environmental impacts, Environmental Impact, PEI1, hypothesis H6a, RST $\rightarrow$ PEI1, has a coefficient of 0.177, $p < 0.001$, demonstrating that residents' satisfaction contributes to enhancing awareness of tourism's environmental impacts, especially in activities related to preserving the city's green spaces, PEI1.2, and reducing pollution, PEI1.1. However, H6b, QOL $\rightarrow$ PEI1, was rejected, Estimate = 0.063, $p = 0.063$, indicating that quality of life, QOL, is not yet strong enough to form sustainable environmental awareness. This may imply the need to strengthen community communication and education regarding the role of the environment in STD. This result is consistent with Mihalič et al. (2016), who emphasize that environmental motivation becomes evident only when residents perceive the long-term benefits of sustainable tourism.

In summary, the SEM results show multidimensional relationships among institutional, economic, cultural-social, and environmental factors, in which perceived institutional impact, PPI, plays a central role in orienting and reinforcing other positive perceptions in the model. Positive paths predominate, especially among the economic-social variables, H1, H3, H5a, H7, and H8a, thereby demonstrating the close linkage among community perceptions, residents' satisfaction, and STD performance.

4.3.5. Analysis and Synthesis of Research Results

- (1) Synthesis of the results of testing the research hypotheses
- (2) Assessment of the relative role of factor groups in the model
- (3) Linking the research results with the current state of tourism development in Da Nang City

Overall, the quantitative research results provide empirical evidence showing that STD in Da Nang City is a multidimensional process simultaneously affected by multiple groups of factors. Among them, institutions play a central role, while residents' satisfaction and quality of life serve as important mediating mechanisms connecting tourism development with local community support.

Summary of Chapter 4

CHAPTER 5

SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DA NANG CITY DURING THE 2026–2030 PERIOD

5.1. Perspectives and Orientations for Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City during the 2026–2030 Period

5.1.1. Basis for Formulating Perspectives and Orientations for Sustainable Tourism Development

5.1.2. Perspectives on Sustainable Tourism Development during the 2026–2030 Period

5.1.3. Orientations for Sustainable Tourism Development during the 2026–2030 Period

5.2. Groups of Solutions to Promote Sustainable Tourism Development in Da Nang City during the 2025–2030 Period

5.2.1. Institutional Solutions

5.2.1.1. Developing Integrated Multi-Sectoral Planning Policies

5.2.1.2. Institutionalizing the Local Sustainable Tourism Index Set (DSTI)

5.2.1.3. Green Investment Policies in Sustainable Tourism Development

5.2.1.4. Strengthening Participatory Institutions and Community Monitoring

5.2.1.5. Promoting the Development of Sustainable Tourism Infrastructure, Technology, and Data

5.2.2. Economic Solutions

5.2.2.1. Restructuring Tourism Products and Value Chains toward Sustainability

5.2.2.2. Mobilizing and Orienting Investment Capital according to Green, Efficient, and Spillover-Oriented Criteria

5.2.2.3. Renewing Market Approaches and Customer Segmentation

5.2.2.4. Developing Sustainable Tourism Branding and Promotion Systems

5.2.2.5. Developing a Sustainable Tourism Distribution and Sales Ecosystem

5.2.3. Cultural-Social Solutions

5.2.3.1. Conserving and Promoting Cultural Heritage and Humanistic Tourism Resources

5.2.3.2. Respecting and Strengthening the Role of Resident Communities

5.2.3.3. Strengthening Linkages among Functional Sectors and Communities in Tourism Development

5.2.4. Environmental Solutions

5.2.4.1. Conserving, Restoring, and Sustainably Exploiting Resources and Biodiversity

5.2.4.2. Raising Awareness among Resident Communities and Management Levels

5.2.4.3. Developing Environmentally Friendly Forms of Tourism and Encouraging Accommodation Establishments to Strive for the Green Lotus Sustainable Tourism Label

5.3. Recommendations for Departments, Agencies, and Sectors of Da Nang City

Summary of Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The dissertation has systematically and comprehensively examined issues related to sustainable tourism development (STD) in Da Nang City in the context of international integration, digital transformation, and global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and the restructuring of tourism value chains. Based on the theoretical approach to sustainable development, international and national criteria frameworks, as well as local practices, the study has achieved fundamental results with both methodological significance and policy implications.

First, the dissertation has systematized the theoretical foundations of sustainable development and development economics, thereby clarifying the roles of institutions, resources, and community participation in ensuring a balance among economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection. The integration of Social Exchange Theory, the Triple Bottom Line, and stakeholder perspectives enables the dissertation to develop a comprehensive analytical framework that both reflects the interactive relationships among the pillars of sustainable development and can be applied to practical analyses of tourism development in coastal tourism cities.

Second, the study has objectively and thoroughly examined and analyzed the current state of tourism development in Da Nang City by combining quantitative and qualitative data during the research period.

Third, the dissertation has proposed a feasible and clearly oriented system of solutions for the city's STD process in the coming period.

The dissertation makes clear contributions in three dimensions: theoretical, practical, and methodological.

In theoretical terms, the dissertation contributes to clarifying and extending the analytical framework for STD in the context of a coastal tourism city in a developing economy. By emphasizing the roles of institutions, destination governance, and local communities, the study supplements a dynamic approach to sustainable development, rather than viewing it merely as a static equilibrium among pillars. This is a meaningful contribution to improving the theory of STD in Vietnam.

In practical terms, the dissertation provides scientific arguments and empirical evidence to support the formulation and adjustment of STD policies in Da Nang City. The research results can serve as a reference basis for state management agencies, policymakers, and tourism enterprises in developing strategies, plans, and tourism development programs toward greater effectiveness and sustainability.

In methodological terms, the dissertation flexibly combines qualitative and quantitative research methods, case study analysis, and international comparison. This approach not only enhances the reliability of the research results but can also be applied to subsequent studies on STD in other localities with similar conditions.

Despite the results achieved, the dissertation still has several limitations that should be objectively acknowledged.

First, regarding the research scope, the dissertation focuses on STD in Da Nang City within the administrative space of the city level. This approach allows for an in-depth analysis of the institutional characteristics, resources, and coastal urban tourism development model. However, it has not fully clarified interregional linkages and tourism value chains in an open spatial context with neighboring localities, which are increasingly important in the current context of tourism development.

Second, regarding the research content, the dissertation mainly analyzes factors affecting local residents' intention to support STD, such as institutional, economic, cultural-social, and environmental factors. However, several emerging issues, such as the circular economy, green transition, carbon neutrality, and the deeper impacts of digital transformation on destination governance, are only addressed at the orientation level and have not yet been quantified or analyzed in depth.

Third, regarding methods and data, although the dissertation has combined qualitative and quantitative methods, access to long-term and micro-level data remains limited. This restricts the ability to analyze long-term trends and assess the dynamic impacts of factors on STD in a fully comprehensive manner.

On this basis, future studies may expand toward an interregional approach, integrate the digital economy and green transition, and develop dynamic quantitative models to assess long-term impacts. At the same time, further in-depth research is needed on the role of local communities in co-governance and co-creation of tourism value in order to ensure long-term social sustainability.