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SOCIAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON LOCAL COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY AT DONG HOA HIEP VILLAGE, CAI BE DISTRICT, TIEN GIANG PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted as an investigation on both positive and negative social impacts of tourism development on Dong Hoa Hiep's villagers, in Tien Giang Province. It was based on the data collected from five-point Likert scale questionnaires of 400 villagers and in-depth interviews. The results showed that tourism development created both positive and negative social impacts on local communities, whereas the social advantages of tourism outweighed its drawbacks. The positive impacts were recognized such as improving in general infrastructure, and increasing the quality of local people's life, while the negative effects were seen to be rarely opportunities for local people to join in planning and managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village, and the insistence of some poor children and vendors on tourists to buy products.

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1 INTRODUCTION

It is well - documented that tourism is one of the world's largest sectors, which brings many advantages for not only the development of economy, but also for society, especially for local communities. By the year 2014, travel and tourism had contributed to over 276 million jobs and generated 9.8% of global GDP (World Travel and Tourism statistics, 2014). Tourism plays an important role in significant activities in most societies and is considered as crucial vehicles for economic growth (Mohammed, 2007), out of control on the development of tourism has been causing unexpected downsides to indigenous people. Along with Duong Lam village in Hanoi city and Phuoc Tich village in Hue city, Dong Hoa

Hiep commune is considered as one of three ancient villages of Viet Nam, which is located at the tourist centre of Cai Be District, Tien Giang Province. With the total area of 13.05 km² and a total population of 15,211 (calculated in 2013 by Dong Hoa Hiep People's Committee). This village includes seven sub-villages: An Binh Dong, An Hoa, An Ninh, An Hiep, An Thanh, An Loi, and Phu Hoa where can be seen with gardens, rice fields, and traditional handicrafts. There are approximately 10 ancient houses with antique architectures over 100 years old that are famous home stays attracting foreign tourists. Together with ancient houses, green gardens, traditional handicrafts and traditional culture values make Dong Hoa Hiep village become a distinctive community to develop tourism in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam.

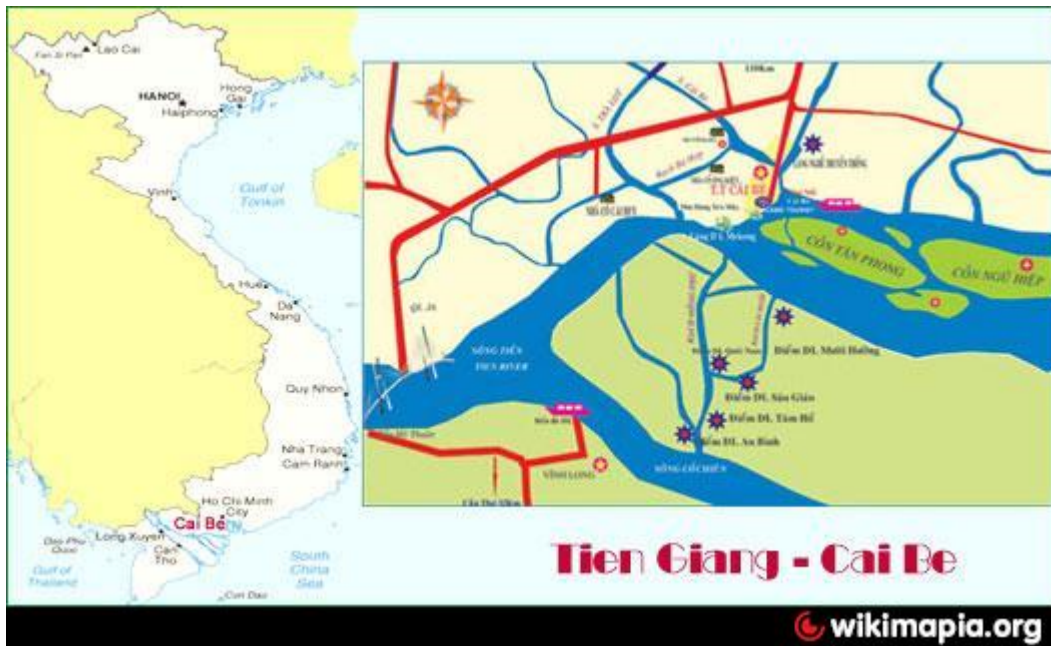


Fig. 1: Dong Hoa Hiep village area map

Source:

https://www.google.com.vn/search?q=b%E1%BA%A3n+%C4%91%E1%BB%93+du+l%E1%BB%8Bch+C%C3%A1i+B%C3%A8&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahU-KEwi95LPaj8PTAhVGWrwKHcdMCi8Q_AUICigB&biw=780&bih=364&dpr=1.75#imgrc=Dr5C-W4DXst9jM:

Vietnam National Administration of Tourism and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) supported to implement a project namely “Support and promote the role of communities in sustainable development in Vietnam through heritage tourism” which was organized in Duong Lam village, Phuoc Tich village, and Dong Hoa Hiep village, and lasted in three years from February 2011 to February 2014. It can be seen from the project’s results as the development of infrastructure (rural roads, boat stations, piers, and lightning systems), the improvement of environment, the strengthening of advertisement (leaflets). However, tourism development of this village needs to convert into real community - based tourism development because there were lacks of community involvements in tourism activities.

This study is aimed to (i) determine positive as well as negative social impacts of tourism development on Dong Hoa Hiep local villagers; and then (ii) propose recommendations in order to eliminate negative effects.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical framework

There were a variety of perspectives of social issues that were indicated in previous studies. It is supported that tourism development influences on directly and indirectly improvements in quality of life

of local communities. It may easily be seen the improvement on roads, transport links, communication and information, the supply of power, clean water and sewerage disposal systems by tourism which brings benefits to local communities (Shapley, 1994). Moreover, it is worth noting that tourism is one of key factors that lead to high price for people living which inflated land, house prices and expenditures (Coppock, 1977). It should be emphasized that the growth of tourism may convert into positive improvements which consist of job opportunities, income, infrastructure and health care services (Ross, 1922; Landford, 1994; Mccool and Martin, 1994). It is found out that local communities perceive significant improvements in quality of life which employment opportunities and income are transformed strongly (Crompton, 1993; Johnson and Akis, 1994; Snepenger and Akis, 1994; Faulkner and Tideswell, 1997). Leila and Vikneswaran (2011) stated that the fair distributions encourage local residents to have a strong willing to evolve in community’s tourism activities. The community board managements who fairly allocate financial benefits. There witnessed a practical issue is that if the profits of tourism activities are not fairly allocated, in what extent, the community may be failed into instability and it also leads to an unsustainable development (Komsan, 2011). Additionally, Glenn (2001) reported that local people could feel a sense

of loss of community control when outside people interfere over the planning and development of their community. It means that the community has a state in manipulation and exploitation by outsiders with the benefit flows for non-local investors. There was an association between crime and tourism. It could easily be found that tourism may cause traffic congestion, litter and overcrowding (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Paul and Paul, 1999). Approached in similar aspect, Faulkner and Tidswell (1997) identified that public security and traffic conditions worsen by the development of tourism. The increase

of alcoholism, individual crime, and drug, organized crime, and openness sex and traffic conditions were caused by tourism (Brian, 1993). It is widely agreed that tourism undermines values of local community by crime, prostitution and disorder, but it depends on the address and discipline of its countries (Mohammed, 2007). Basing on the above mentioned academic literature reviews, the conceptual framework can be found in Table 1 for social impacts of tourism development at Dong Hoa Hiep village, Tien Giang province, Vietnam.

Table 1: Social impacts of tourism development at Dong Hoa Hiep village

Scale	Variables
Positive social impacts	<p>Infrastructure improvements: roads, transport links, light system, clean water, supply of power, clean water system, sewerage disposal system, health care services, bridges, boat stations, direction signals.</p> <p>Quality of life improvements: job opportunities, high income, high standard of living.</p> <p>The community benefits division: fair distributions for each household, fair financial divisions from tourism advantages.</p> <p>Local participation: local people join into managing tourism activities. Have committee board to manage tourism activities at the village.</p> <p>Insistence: poor children or vendor do not insist on tourist to buy products or lottery tickets</p> <p>Traffic conditions: without traffic jam, and serious accidents</p> <p>Social evils: safe for tourists, security level at village, no crime, alcoholism, drug, prostitution, gambling.</p>
	<p>Infrastructure improvements: deteriorated roads, lack of transport links, light system, clean water, supply of power, clean water system, sewerage disposal system, health care services, brides, boat stations, direction signals.</p> <p>Quality of life improvements: High price for living, inflated house, high expenditures, low paid jobs, exceeding capacity of the village.</p> <p>The community benefits division: unfair profit divisions among people. Local people cannot get benefits from tourism</p> <p>Local participation: Loss of community control, interfering by outside people/ outside investors, outsider manipulate and exploit tourism potentials of the village, local people rarely have opportunities to join in planning or managing tourism activities.</p> <p>Insistence: poor children or vendors insist on tourist to buy products or lottery tickets</p> <p>Traffic conditions: traffic jam, and serious accidents happened frequently</p> <p>Social evils: unsafe for tourists, tourism lead to crime, thefts, robbers, alcoholism, drug users, prostitution, gambling.</p>

Source: synthesized by the author

2.2 Research methods

The research is based on a survey which is designed a cross-sectional analytical study. The data is gathered by questionnaires and in-depth interview. The sample groups of questionnaires are local households who are living at Dong Hoa Hiep village. The survey had been administered from March 2014 to June 2014. The formula of Taro Yamane is employed in order to determine the size of questionnaires for Dong Hoa Hiep village with 400 samples.

The next step was a random selecting sample; the 400 samples were randomly identified by computer

program based on the alphabetic lists of all available households in the community. The five-point Likert scale survey is adopted and complied from previous studies (Brian, 1993; Paul and Paul, 1999; Enemu and Oduntan, 2012; Long, 2012). Respondents answered questionnaires by five-point Likert type scale which are divided into: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Not sure, Agree, and Strongly. The information and data obtained from questionnaires were analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 19. To in-depth interview, the researcher used purposive sampling techniques to se-

lect interviewers who were the head of Cai Be’s Office of Culture and Information, the Vice President of Dong Hoa Hiep People’s Committee and three representative local people. The results of in-depth interviews were classified into six categories as conceptual framework for analysing information.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Results of the questionnaires

The demographic respondent characteristics consisted of 12 variables which were classified such as sex, marital status, age group, ethnic group, educational background, occupation, living place, living year, immigrated status, people number in family, income, and respondent characteristics. Among 400 local residents at Dong Hoa Hiep village taking the survey on the attitude of social impacts, 47.3% were males, and 52.7% were females. The majority of respondents were Kinh people who were married. The result also showed that most surveyed households had 4 - 6 members in their families. The surveyors at the ages from 30 to 49 years old with secondary or high school educational degrees accounted for the highest percentage of 72.5%. Besides, mainly respondents were farmers and gardeners, living for 20

- 39 years, native residents, 2,000,000 - 3,000,000 VND monthly income and none employed in tourism industry.

From demographic table, it could be seen that elderly people at Dong Hoa Hiep cited the highest percentage were farmers or gardeners. With high proportion of secondary/high school educational respondent backgrounds, they were posed extended family from 4 - 6 members in house. Especially, majority were low-income respondents (approximately 100-150 USD/month) and native residents. To what extent that indigenous residents have low educational backgrounds, it is not easy for them to get professional skills to work in tourism activities or not know how to manage tourism activities in effective way. In addition, senior residents and young people have offered different opinions about social tourism impacts. Furthermore, with low income, local residents tend to leave their village to urban in order to find jobs, thus, this trend may cause breakdown traditional family structures. Therefore, social impacts effect on local life inevitably with these demographic profiles.

Table 2: Residents’ attitude towards tourism impacts on social issues

Rank ¹	Surveyed questionnaires instrument	Mean ²	S.D ³
1	Tourism has improved general infrastructures of Dong Hoa Hiep local community	4.20	0.4
2	Tourism developments improve the quality of life of Dong Hoa Hiep local community.	4.10	0.5
3	Local people had rarely opportunities to participate in planning and managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village	3.80	0.6
4	Some of children and vendors insist on tourists to buy products or lottery tickets in some tourism destinations	3.43	0.8
5	The community benefits are divided unfairly among local people.	2.80	0.8
6	Tourism development leads to traffic jams for the community.	1.96	0.5
7	Tourism developments result in negative social problems for Dong Hoa Hiep village.	1.95	0.5
8	Tourism leads to the increase of crime rates.	1.90	0.5
9	Tourism has increased gambling	1.49	0.5
10	Alcoholism abuses are growth by tourism development	1.48	0.5
11	Prostitutions are increased by tourism development	1.46	0.5
12	Tourism has increased drug users	1.44	0.5

Questions are ranked by mean values, ² Scale from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not sure, 4 = Agree, 5 = strongly agree, ³ standard deviation

According to Table 2, the results indicated that the respondents strongly agree that tourism development improves general infrastructure and quality of life at Dong Hoa Hiep village, which are instituted 4.2 and 4.1, respectively. However, local residents also admitted that they had rarely opportunities to participate in planning and managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village (3.8) and some of

children and vendors insist on tourists to buy products or lottery tickets at some tourism destinations (3.43). The respondents did not perceive that tourism caused traffic jams, social problems, crime rates, gambling, alcoholism abuses, prostitutions, and drug users.

3.2 Result of the in-depth interviews

Based on the answers of head of Cai Be's Office of Culture and Information, the Vice President of Dong Hoa Hiep People's Committee's and local people, the author classified social impacts on five sectors namely infrastructure, local participation, the community benefits division, insistence, and social evils.

3.2.1 Infrastructure

Through tourism development, there are significant improvements on Dong Hoa Hiep's infrastructure. As demonstrated Nguyen Van Truong, Phu Hoa hamlet, *"Thanks to tourism development, the infrastructure has been improved by expanded streets, constructed boat stations, built pedestrian bridges and installed street lights for residents"*. Nguyen Van Tai said, *"Boat stations were constructed to make more convenient for tourists. Besides that, Duong Van Phuong "tourism created a new "face" for our rural village where general infrastructure was upgraded"*. Nguyen Van Sanh - local people complained *"deteriorated road conditions and narrow routes that made visitors hardly to walk during visiting and shopping at An Ninh hamlet traditional handicrafts. Moreover, for waterway systems, some shallow canals that make the tourist boats move difficultly in dry season"*. In fact, along Phu Hoa hamlet, An Binh Dong, An Loi hamlet, the village roads were expanded up to 3 meters in width, which were installed street lights along these streets in front of each house. Furthermore, pedestrian bridge was established to link Tran Tuan Kiet house to opposite canal side. Additionally, direction signals were built to instruct tourists to ancient house destinations and other tourist attractions. Dong Hoa Hiep boat station was constructed in front of Dong Hoa Hiep banyan tree and water station icon with Dong Hoa Hiep welcome gate. From central Cai Be town to An Hiep traditional milk cracker handicraft, roadway has been upgraded in big street with two ways road that helps people easily to access to the craft village as well as transport conveniently to central town and city. However, roadways are too developed, so this also led to change transportation means from boats to motorbikes or cars. There raises another issue is that the deteriorated road of An Ninh hamlet and narrow routes made visitors hardly to walk, visit and shop rice papers, coconut candies and pop rice crafts. It should be underscore that, for waterway systems, some shallow canals make the tourist boats

move difficultly in dry season. The modern architectures building built in concrete or cements may dilute traditional image of Dong Hoa Hiep ancient village. This village is one of three ancient villages in Vietnam with unique old houses, so it is utmost necessary to maintain traditional architectures and wooden houses to keep original beauty. If local people build hotel in modern building, it may compromise the ancient images of village. Therefore, local tourism authorities should issue regulations on conditions of construction of building hotels or restaurants in such area. By doing that, it may help the village conserve the traditional images and cultural values in long term.

3.2.2 The community benefits division

Only some ancient houses' owner who are doing tourism business can get benefit from selling visiting tickets, providing home stay services, beverage and food, whereas local people can get income through in selling traditional products, souvenirs, fruits, beverages and food, serving as boat drivers, local tour guides and so on. However, local people get little benefits than the tourism destinations owners, indeed. Thanks to the exceeding in the unique architectural, there are only Tran Tuan Kiet House and Phan Van Duc House that received more benefits in compared to other ancient houses. It could be concluded that if any family has more products, they will get more money.

3.2.3 Local participation

Nguyen Van Tai indicated *"local community not really participate the whole tourism activities in Dong Hoa Hiep village because it does not bring more income to local people"*. Nguyen Van Sanh said that *"local people are hardly offered opportunities to join in planning or managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village"*. As shown by the organizational diagram at Dong Hoa Hiep village (Fig. 2), it is a top down approach to tourism management as local people lie on the end of organizational processes and don not really join into tourism activities in their village. According to local villager's responses, they hardly take part in planning and managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village, most responsibilities are conducted by local authorities without getting local people's ideas in advance. In addition, this diagram still lacks community board management or Dong Hoa Hiep community leader who is responsible for managing seven leader's hamlets and the whole activities at Dong Hoa Hiep village.

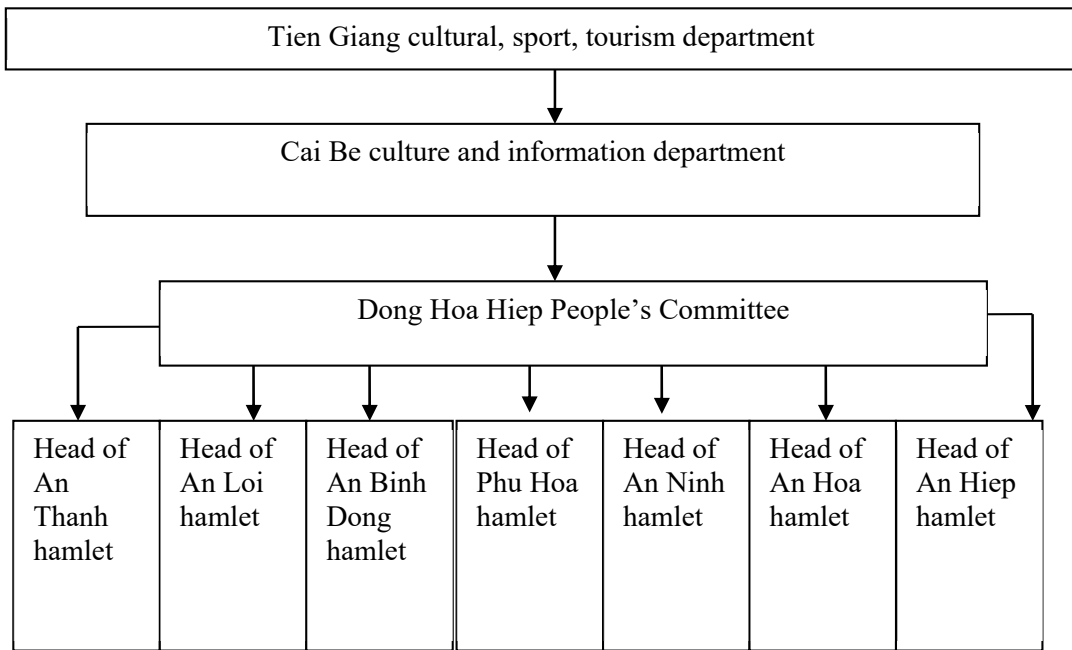


Fig. 2: Tourism management organizational diagram at Dong Hoa Hiep village

3.2.4 Insistence

Some young children in need and vendors insisted on tourists to buy products or lottery tickets at some tourism destinations. Moreover, according to Duong Van Phuong, some tourist guides who required commission from tourism destinations or souvenir shops if these places would like the tourist guides to take visitors to there. Nguyen Van Truong stated “*The village’s security situations place under safety for both local people and tourists who can rest assured visiting and staying overnight in the village without thefts, and pickpockets*”. Nevertheless, at boat stations and tourist destinations, young poor children and vendors insisted on tourist to buy products or lottery tickets, since tourists usually buy products at tourist destinations instead of vendors, if they want to sale their products, they would beg tourists to buy anything. Therefore, it is necessary to create more jobs for poor children and vendors in creative ways as well as train professional skill to communicate with tourists.

3.2.5 Traffic conditions

The road traffic conditions are safe and ventilated systems which are convenient linking between Cai Be and neighboring provinces as well as Ho Chi Minh City. There is no doubt that this advantage creates an easily and accessible way for visitors, Duong Van Phuong answered. However, some local people complained that deteriorated road conditions and narrow routes at An Ninh traditional hamlet make

visitors hardly to walk during visiting and shopping at this traditional handicraft.

3.2.6 Social evils

According to Duong Van Phuong’s observation, “the security situation of the village is very good, only some jobless men go out late at night to gather together. The village still maintained good social problems after developing tourism”. Nguyen Van Tai indicated “in this village, serious crime rates, drugs, prostitutions, alcoholism, and gambling did not happen any cases in the village, especially, pubs are prohibited by local authorities to avoid any social effects to the community life”. As Duong Van Phuong said “Only 6 people were addicted to drugs, but they gave up drugs and had jobs for community integrations. Sometimes, normal gambling and alcoholism happened at An Thanh and An Ninh hamlet since these hamlets placed on highways passing, floating market, and industrial zone with many people living, but it doesn’t make any sense to community’s life, just for being fun for their reunions”. Security level in the village is assured for both local people and tourists. The visitors do not need to worry about crimes, thefts and pickpockets during staying at Dong Hoa Hiep village.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This study illustrated that tourism development in Dong Hoa Hiep community created both positive and negative social impacts on local people, but the positive impacts which exceed the negative impacts. In this research, local residents totally agreed that

tourism developments improved general infrastructure and life quality for Dong Hoa Hiep village. Also, the study revealed that the respondents rarely had opportunities to participate in planning and managing tourism activities of Dong Hoa Hiep village. Social evils do not occur at Dong Hoa Hiep village. However, the social problem is the insisting of some children and vendors on tourists at destinations.

Based on analyzed and discussed issues above, the solutions are proposed in order to promote the positive effects as well as adverse impacts of tourism development on the local communities at Dong Hoa Hiep village.

Firstly, the government should enrich its efforts in supporting budgets for local people to strengthen the development of infrastructure and electric power for villagers. In addition, the local government should provide funds for people to renovate the garden landscapes and buy equipment to serve the tourism development, for example, the milk crackers' owners may use such fund to upgrade cooking equipment, rent labor forces or enhance their brand reputation.

Secondly, local tourism authorities should regularly open tourism training courses to train professional tourism skills for local people. By doing this, local people may have more ability to implement tourism business in right directions and good master plans and provide best services for tourists as well as avoiding the insistence on tourists.

Thirdly, the village management committee should organize monthly meetings of local residents at community house to evaluate tourism activities and propose new directions. The organization of monthly meetings makes local authorities understand specifically Dong Hoa Hiep tourism development status and address difficulties promptly. It should be mentioned that the unfavorable impacts of social impacts have been noted by the meetings, otherwise, the new directions for effectively tourism development are also proposed by contribution ideas from residents. Moreover, it let local people feel that they have a chance to join in planning and managing tourism activities in their village.

Next, the local tourism governments should establish a management's committee to manage tourism activities at Dong Hoa Hiep village. This suggestion will be incentive the participation and management of the local people that may bring more benefits from tourism for local community. Through management's committee, the council of management board also investigates all tourism activities to ensure that tourism development offer effectively and

sustainably economic and social growths for local community. The village should create more careers for local people by dividing fairly benefits among local people to make sure that every house can get advantages from tourism. It means that Dong Hoa Hiep village management's committee should establish a regime that help to manage all tourism activities at seven hamlets and change into to real community-based tourism project at Dong Hoa Hiep commune. For example, Makampong community-based tourism, at Chiang Mai, Thailand is one of the most appropriately sample of organizing effectively tourism activities within the village.

Another important issue is that it is necessary to encourage all villagers to cooperate in anti-social problems as well as establishing cultural life for the village.

Last but not least, local authorities should pay more attention on securities to inspect tourist destinations to avoid any social evils might be occurred. In addition, local governments also need regularly to open training courses for local people about social evil cautions and how to avoid the adverse effects of the development of tourism.

Further study may be carried out on social impacts in Duong Lam and Hue ancient villages, and then people could compare similarities and differences among three ancient villages in Vietnam. Additionally, later researches would pay more focus on the environmental impacts of tourism development on local life.

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