

Developing Local Cultural Features through Community Tourism Services in Ha Giang Province, Vietnam

Leng Thi Lan¹; Nguyen Thi Hang²; Dinh Tran Ngoc Huy³

¹PhD, Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry, Vietnam.

¹lengthilan@tuaf.edu.vn

²PhD, Thai Nguyen University of Economics and Business Administration (TUEBA), Vietnam.

²nthang@ictu.edu.vn

³MBA, Banking University, HCMC, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

International University of Japan, Japan.

³dtnhuy2010@gmail.com

Abstract

In recent years in Vietnam, discovering and developing local cultural features in the Northern region of Vietnam is quite interesting and attract local people to participate.

Our study uses mainly qualitative analysis synthesis and inductive methods, together with quantitative analysis with data and statistics.

Our research results show that there are many strengths in local cultural features in Ha Giang province of Vietnam with 19 ethnics minorities that we can develop for cultural and community tourism. Ha Giang has a lot of local products/specialties that are very attractive to tourists such as mint honey, ancient Shan Tuyet tea, medicinal herbs, and handicraft products., brocade weaving, trumpet, awl, fine art stone... are produced from 27 craft villages of local people.

Finally, our paper will propose policy implications and recommendations.

Key-words: Cultural Tourism, Community Tourism, Vietnam, Ha Giang Province.

JEL: M21, R10, R11.

1. Introduction

Ha Giang province in the Northern region of our country has beautiful and majestic natural scenery and uniqueness and diversity in the cultural and spiritual life of ethnic communities. With 19 ethnic groups, each ethnic group has its own cultural identity, the most typical are traditional festivals that create a distinct attraction. Festivals are a type of intangible cultural heritage that reflects clearly.

cultural and spiritual life of each nation. According to statistics, at present, the province has about 20 traditional festivals, most of which are folk festivals that still retain the typical customs and practices of the ethnic groups living in the area. If the Mong people have Gau Tao festival, the Nung people, and the Pu Peo people have a ceremony to worship the gods of the forest, and the Dao people have a ceremony to raise the quality level, then the Pa Then people have a fire dance festival, the Lo Lo people have an ancestor worship ceremony, and the La people have a festival to worship their ancestors. Only has the New Rice Celebration; The Tay people have the Long Tong festival... The traditional festivals take place all year round. In addition to the ceremony, there are also cultural activities, arts, folk songs, folk dances, folk games, creating a space. imbued with traditional cultural identity, creating a highlight to attract tourists from all over the world.

In the past 10 years, Ha Giang province has been a bright spot in CBT development, with diverse topography and geology, and many beautiful sights to attract tourists such as: Dong Van stone plateau, terraced fields, Lung Cu flagpole., Meo king palace, Quan Ba heaven gate, Chieu Lau Thi mountain peak... Especially, the features and cultural interferences of 22 ethnic groups living together in Ha Giang have maintained many festivals and customs. long-standing customs such as: the festival of the Dao people; Gau Tao festival of the Mong people; fire dance festival of the Pa Then; It is the diversity of natural landscapes and national culture that has attracted domestic and foreign tourists to Ha Giang increasingly. In 2019, over 1.4 million people; in which international visitors 225,131 turns, domestic visitors 1,177,235 turns; revenue reached 1,500 billion VND.

In 2020, due to the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, the number of international visitors decreased significantly, but with many promotions, the number of domestic tourists skyrocketed by the end of December 2020, the number of visitors was 1.4 million people. with a revenue of VND 2000 billion (Ha Giang Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2020). In order to gain reputation, visitor preference can see the involvement of local leaders, businesses and residents in the effort to provide tourism services to visitors. Currently, the number of accommodation and catering establishments in the province has increased continuously with many prices and quality to meet the requirements of diverse customer groups. Moreover, each district has built different tourist highlights to "hold" tourists to experience Ha Giang longer or have the goal of returning here in the next trips. This is the right direction of the locality to develop sustainable tourism.

However, due to the short time of construction and development of tourism in the locality, the form of tourism is based on indigenous people whose level and understanding in providing tourism services is limited; Due to the requirements of world heritage management and environmental protection, many tourism services have not yet met the needs of tourists such as: the number of standard

hotels and homestays is not much, the seasonality of tourists. Ha Giang's calendar creates a shortage of places to eat and stay in the peak season; the reproduction of cuisine, festivals, tours between districts in the province; The level of exploitation of new attractions is still slow... These issues greatly affect revenue, visitor satisfaction and reputation for the "smokeless industry" of Ha Giang province. Therefore, the article evaluates the current situation of tourism service development in the province in the past time to suggest solutions in the future.

The paper organized with introduction, literature review, methodology, main results, discussion and conclusion with policy suggestions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies

First, Allen et al (1988) found out there is nonlinear correlation between tourism development and satisfaction or importance of community dimensions is generally nonlinear with citizen involvement, public services, and the environment being most sensitive to tourism development. And there are 7 aspects of community life were public services, economics, environment, medical services, citizen involvement, formal education, and recreation services.

Next, We summarize related studies in below table.

Table 1 - Related studies

Authors	Year	Results, contents
Croes and Semrad	2013	Tourism (cultural) can be developed in concepts of small islands destinations. And various tourists can determine The cultural tourism typology. Then we can quantify the economic impact of cultural tourists.
Valeriu and Istoc	2007	Tourism (cultural) will involve a wide range of interdependent activities, connected with other economic branches, which play a major role in the developing tourism industry. The people's increasing amount of leisure time, the tourists' changing interest and the increasing life expectancy help the cultural tourism gain popularity faster than other tourism segments.
Richards	2018	There are many aspects of tourism (cultural) such as heritage conservation, cultural tourism economics, anthropology, etc. And we see the shift from tangible to intangible heritage, more attention for indigenous and other minority groups and a geographical expansion in the coverage of cultural tourism research.

2.2 Theory of Community Tourism Services

2.2.1. The Concept of Community Tourism

There are many concepts given about CBT such as:

Nicole Hausle and Wolfgang Strasdas introduced the concept of community-based tourism: “CBT is a form of tourism in which mainly local people develop and manage. The economic benefits from tourism will stay in the local economy.” According to this definition, the community is highlighted with the main role in tourism development right in the area they manage. They are also the direct beneficiaries of this activity (Prabhakaran, 2014).

According to the World Wide Fund for Nature, “CBT is a type of tourism in which the local community has control over the development and management of tourism and most of the profits are derived from it. tourism activities are retained for the community” (Bui Thi Hai Yen, 2012).

According to Article 3 of the Law on Tourism, "Community tourism is a type of tourism developed on the basis of the cultural values of the community, managed, exploited and benefited by the local community".

Thus, a general concept can be given as follows: CBT is tourism that pays attention to the sustainability of the natural, cultural and social environment. CBT is owned and managed by the local community and serves the community itself, with the goal of increasing visitors' awareness and understanding of local people's lives.

2.3 Developing Community Tourism Services

2.3.1. Concept

Tourism service is the provision of travel services, transportation, accommodation, dining, entertainment, information, guidance and other services to meet the needs of tourists. Tourism service is a combination of services and facilities on the basis of exploiting tourism potentials in order to provide tourists with an enjoyable time, a complete travel experience and satisfaction. ” - Article 4 – Law on Tourism 2017. Simply put:

Tourism services = Tourism resources + Tourist goods and services

Community tourism development is an economic and social process based on the active participation of local communities. Tourism development can lead to problems for the community, but if there is a clear direction and planning, tourism development will contribute to raising awareness for

the community about the possible consequences. happening, community opportunities, empowering communities to make decisions, training local communities on management and operations, providing better technical facilities and services to the community, establishing management mechanisms stronger sense of community and a spirit of interdependence (Cengiz, 2011).

Community tourism service development is the process of increasing and perfecting tourism services such as travel, transportation, accommodation, dining, entertainment, information, guidance and other services to meet the needs of the community. the needs of tourists in which the local community directly organizes and provides services to develop tourism, contribute to increase income, preserve national culture and natural resources, environment.

3. Methodology

Authors will use quantitative analysis: statistic and data analysis from provincial data.

For qualitative analysis: authors use synthesis and inductive methods, combined with dialectical materialism methods.

4. Main Results

Current status of community tourism service development in Ha Giang province.

By the end of 2019, the whole province has 618 tourist accommodation establishments with 5,998 rooms/9,312 beds, of which: 02 3-star hotels; 16 hotels of 2 star standard; 33 hotels of 1-star standard; 36 standard hotels; 165 motels checked condition; 366 Homestay is qualified to serve tourists, the number of accommodation establishments in Ha Giang has increased rapidly in recent years due to the strong increase in tourist demand. However, the investment in accommodation facilities is mainly spontaneous, lacking proper guidance and direction. The investment scale is small and fragmented because it is invested mainly on the capital of individuals and families, has little access to bank credit, and lacks cooperation in investment. The quality of equipment is still limited, mainly meeting the needs of sleeping and resting at a minimum; There are not many value-added services for tourists such as mini bar, buffet room, conference room, entertainment area such as swimming pool, gym, sauna, souvenir stall.

Accommodation facilities are mainly concentrated in Ha Giang city, Dong Van district, while in districts and destinations with tourism resources, there are still many shortages. Especially in the high season of matches, the demand for tourists increases sharply, making the number of

accommodation establishments unable to meet. However, in the low season, many accommodation establishments have almost no guests, the number of empty rooms is very high. The average exploitation capacity in the year ranges from 60-65%. The quality of the accommodation facilities is not high, the management is still unprofessional, has not met the requirements of tourists, especially tourists with high income and service standards, has not brought satisfaction. pleasant and comfortable for visitors. The quality of accommodation facilities is uneven, the service capacity is limited, especially in the peak tourist season, when the number of tourists increases, the service quality often goes down. In addition, human resources working in accommodation facilities have limited skills, especially communication and foreign language skills.

Table 1 - Number of Tourism Service Establishments in Ha Giang Province in 2020

Accommodation business		Travel agent		Meals and drinks, catering	Traditional craft villages
Criteria	Quantity	Criteria	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity
1.Number of businesses	618	1. Domestic	14	250	27
2.Rooms	5.998	2. International	2		
3.Bedrooms	9.312				
4.Hotels					
- 01 star	36				
- 02 stars	16				
- 3 stars	2				
5. Guest houses	165				
6. Homestay	366				

(Source: Ha Giang Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism)

The current number of restaurants and capacity ensures to serve tourists in normal conditions, but at peak times, it is not enough to serve tourists. The distribution of restaurants/diners is mainly concentrated in urban centers and densely populated areas. Opening times are quite flexible but there are some signature dishes that are hard to find. Night cuisine is still not popular because the demand for night food of locals and tourists is very few, the quality of service is uneven, and the requirements of tourists have not been met. Ha Giang's ingredients and cuisine are diverse and rich in locality, but the distribution of menus to serve tourists by gender, age, region, nationality, religion... is still inappropriate.

Products and goods for tourism: Ha Giang has a lot of local products/specialties that are very attractive to tourists such as mint honey, ancient Shan Tuyet tea, medicinal herbs, and handicraft products., brocade weaving, trumpet, awl, fine art stone... are produced from 27 craft villages of local people. Souvenir products are characteristic but still simple in design and design, and the level of promotion is not high.

Many festival activities are organized by the province every year to attract more tourists and create diversity for tourism products such as: Buckwheat flower festival, Fire dance festival, Long Tong festival, etc. At the same time, many tours and tourist routes are created, including links between districts in the province and between provinces in the region to help tourists have many opportunities. choice for their journey. From there, increase income for people and localities.

Traffic to the main tourist attractions is convenient, most of the road surface has been paved with asphalt, concrete and cement. In fact, over the past years, Ha Giang province has paid much attention to investing in traffic infrastructure, including investing in and upgrading the quality of the road surface and many supporting items such as a system of guardrail walls, poles, and signs. Newspapers, convex mirrors at curved points have limited visibility... However, the system of roads leading to tourist attractions is still not many, mainly starting from national highway axes and main provincial roads leading to the tourist destination. However, there are many large and small tourist attractions scattered along the route, but due to the lack of signboards, not all tourists notice and come.

Currently, the province has been exploiting 12 typical community-based cultural tourism villages associated with new rural construction, of which the Tay ethnic group: 8 villages (Thanh Son, Vi Xuyen district; Na Rang, Xin district). Man; Chi village, Quang Binh district; Ha Thanh hamlet, Lam Dong, Tha and Ban Sui hamlets, Ha Giang city; Khiem village, Bac Quang district); Dao ethnic group: 01 village (Nam Dam, Quan Ba district); Mong ethnic group: 01 village (Lung Cam Tren, Dong Van district); Lo Lo ethnic group: 01 village (Lo Lo Chai, Dong Van district); Giay ethnic group: 01 village (Tat Nga village, Meo Vac district). In 2019, a number of villages received a high number of visitors, such as: Lung Cam village welcomed 50,000 visitors, with a revenue of over 1 billion VND; Lo Lo Chai village, Dong Van district welcomed 25,000 visitors, revenue of over 500 million VND; Nam Dam village, Quan Ba district welcomed 5,380 visitors (an increase of 1,256 visitors compared to the same period in 2017), the revenue reached over VND 1.5 billion; Ha Thanh village and Lam Dong village, Ha Giang city 11,520 visitors, revenue reached VND 3.45 billion, up 20% over the same period in 2017; Chi village, Quang Binh district received 3,981 visitors, revenue of nearly 1 billion VND; The average income of households doing tourism services (homestay) in cultural and tourist villages is on average 30 to 50 million VND/year.

Table 2 - Revenue from Tourism of Community Tourism Sites in Ha Giang Province Period 2017 – 2019

Order	Place (village)	Revenue 2017 (m VND)			Revenue 2018 (Triệu đồng)			Revenue 2019 (m VND)		
		Total	Revenue from tourism activities	Average income of households doing tourism	Total	Revenue from tourism activities	Average income of households doing tourism	Total	Revenue from tourism activities	Average income of households doing tourism
1	Hạ Thành	10.790	2.750	250	11.160	2.970	270	11.780	3.190	290
2	Lâm Đồng	24.000	280	40	25.000	315	45	26.000	336	48
3	Thôn Tha	11.040	540	90	11.410	810	135	11.780	1.110	185
4	Bản Tù	5.940	220	55	6.300	300	75	6.840	360	90
5	Nậm Đăm	800	600	160	286	200	70	888	678	160,7
6	Tát Ngà	33	33	2,7	765	765	6,3	30	30	2,5
7	Lô Lô Chải	66,4	64,4	42	65,6	63,6	57	210	208	138
8	Lũng Cắm trên	-	199,8	42	-	204,1	45	-	194,8	50
9	Thôn Chì	130	55	42	151	60	40	190	90	53
10	Nà Ràng	101	77	24	219	189	30	284	242	42
11	Thanh Sơn	42	10	0,3	168	108	7,71	314	238	13,2
12	Thôn Khiêm	450	30	40	500	40	48	560	70	58

(Source: Ha Giang Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism)

It can be seen that tourism in Ha Giang province has made strong changes in both quantity and quality, making an important contribution to socio-economic development, economic restructuring, attracting foreign investment. investment, job creation; welcoming more and more international and domestic tourists, demonstrating the role of one of the important general economic sectors with profound cultural content, interdisciplinary, inter-regional and highly socialized. The province's infrastructure continues to be built and completed. The tourism service business network in the province is growing, investment projects in tourism are increasing; The system of accommodation facilities has increased rapidly. The length of stay of international guests is getting longer and longer; revenue from tourism and tourism services in the period 2015 - 2019 increased by 14.6% on average; Tourism products are formed and developed more and more diversified, promotion, promotion and

cooperation in tourism development are promoted. The quality of tourism human resources has many positive changes.

Table 3 - Some Indicators of Tourism Growth in Ha Giang Province in the Period 2016 - 2020

ORDER	CRITERIA	Unit	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
I	Tourism and service revenue	B VND	795	913,6	1.150	1.500	2.477
II	Total number of tourists coming to Ha Giang	trips	853.746	1.023.653	1.136.963	1.402.366	1.500.000
1	<i>International visitors</i>	trips	<i>176.537</i>	<i>169,689</i>	<i>273.193</i>	<i>225.131</i>	<i>70.000</i>
	Visitors from China	trips	155.593	139.774	223.516	185.950	50.000
	Visitors from other countries	trips	20944	29.915	49.677	39.181	20.000
2	<i>Domestic tourists</i>	trips	<i>677.209</i>	<i>853.964</i>	<i>863.770</i>	1.177.235	1.430.000
V	Tourism industry workers	people	1.750	2.637	3.614	5872	7404

(Source: Ha Giang Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism)

5. Solutions for Cultural and Community Tourism Development

5.1. Raising Awareness, Renewing Thinking about Tourism Development

Renovate thinking about tourism - consider this as a spearhead economic sector and develop according to the law of market economy; at the same time, they are well aware that tourism is an effective means to boost local production and export, capable of making great contributions to economic development, creating many jobs, transforming the economic structure and creating economic growth. the driving force for the development of other branches and fields, bringing about economic, cultural, social, political, foreign affairs and security and defense effects in many aspects.

5.2. Investing in the Development of Infrastructure, Material and Technical Facilities for Tourism and Developing Specific Tourism Products

- Regarding tourism infrastructure development investment: The central budget allocates, based on actual needs, prioritizes and balances resources (state budget, lawfully mobilized capital) for infrastructure investment. tourist service floors. In which, priority is given to the development of transport systems such as the Hanoi - Ha Giang expressway, national highways 4C, 279, 34... and traffic routes connecting to key tourist areas and destinations of the province. Attract investment in parking lots, lake-bed tourist boat docks, rest stops and 15 public restrooms and other physical and technical facilities for tourism in accordance with guidelines and regulations.

- In terms of material and technical facilities for tourism: Develop a system of modern, high-quality and modern tourist-service facilities and techniques, with synchronous amenities to meet the needs of tourists; which focuses on calling for investment and development of tourism projects, combining with tourism, gradually forming a system of high-class hotels - restaurants and resorts; hotel complex combined with trade center - conference - seminar; develop tourist accommodation establishments close to nature in service of eco-tourism; invest in auxiliary service works to develop clean and high-tech agricultural eco-tourism; Experiential tourism, community tourism, medicinal tourism, traditional craft villages.
- Focus on building specific tourism products in Ha Giang province: diversify and improve the quality of services. Exploiting and promoting ethnic traditional cultural values. Continue to build and improve community tourism villages; Survey and identify outstanding typical tourism products of each tourist area in the province to have an investment plan and encourage people and businesses to invest and develop to attract tourists; Surveying traditional craft villages, identifying goods and products capable of serving tourists of each region; Upgrading existing tourism products and services at key tourist destinations.

5.3. Strengthen Links, Promote Tourism Promotion

Create conditions for businesses to expand domestic and international cooperation, improve competitiveness in the domestic tourism market. Focusing on cooperation and development of tour routes associated with units with many advantages and development experience and are major tourist centers of the country.

Innovating the way and content of tourism promotion and promotion, increasing the application of smart technology, improving the professionalism and effectiveness of tourism promotion at fairs, tourism festivals, and festivals.

5.4. Developing Human Resources for Tourism Development

Strengthening socialization in training and fostering human resources, ensuring both quantity and quality of human resources operating in the field of tourism; diversify forms of training, focusing on training in both professional skills, foreign languages, vocational skills and professional ethics.

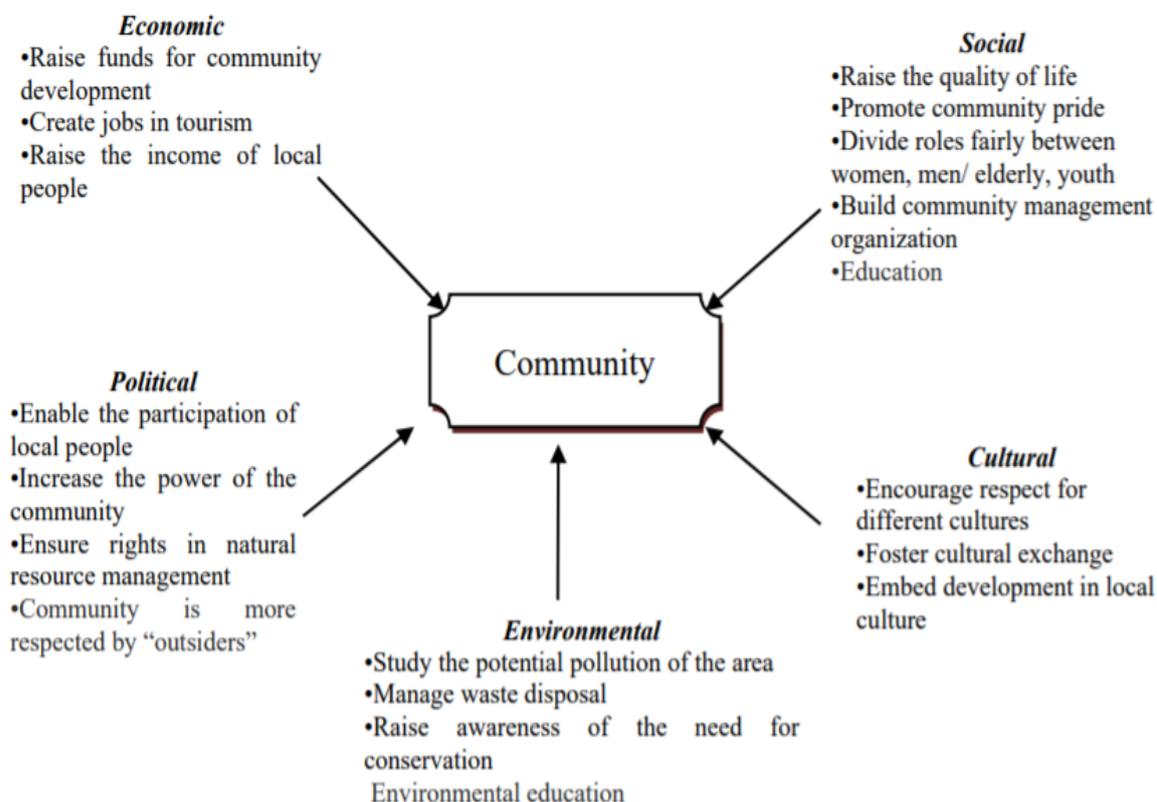
Building a community-based tourism ecosystem to create conditions for business households and people to do tourism professionally. Be proactive in training business households and tourism workers to improve the quality of tourism services and the image of the destination.

6. Discussion

Community is one component for understanding community development for tourism development but is also important to appreciate how community affects local tourism development. Local communities have a key role in tourism development as they are crucial in providing a good environmental condition for tourists. Local communities are a basic element of modern tourism development. They are the focal point for the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport, facilities and services for tourism development (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000).

Below figure shows multi factors effects on community tourism.

Figure 1 - Tourism Community Model



(source: Tourism in Community. Adapted from Strasdas (2005) & Suansri (2004)).

Community Tourism Development Goals

Contributing to the protection of resources (natural and human) and the environment. Community-based tourism development aims to restore and promote traditional cultural values, thus contributing to sustainable tourism development from the perspective of tourism resources and environment.

- Contributing to local economic development through increased tourism revenue and other economic benefits for local communities (creating employment opportunities, increasing income for local communities, improving labor activities in this area; localities benefit from the development of tourism infrastructure...)
- Encourage and support community participation.
- Provide visitors with a tourism product that is environmentally and socially responsible.

6.1. Criteria for Assessing the Level of Community Tourism Service Development

a. Increasing level of community tourism services

- The level of increase in accommodation and food services
- The level of increase in tour, route
- Increased level of infrastructure improvement

b. Spending and average number of days of stay by tourists

The higher the index of expenditure and the average number of days of stay of tourists, the more sustainable tourism development will be considered. However, this does not negate the importance of efforts to attract as many visitors as possible in order to increase tourism income that contributes to the national economy.

c. Number (proportion) of returning tourists

Tourists are a decisive factor in the work of forming tourism "demand", one of the most important criteria to evaluate tourism development in a particular region or country. The indicator of the number of visitors is meaningful, specifically it is a measure of the attractiveness of tourism products, the ability to "supply" and the quality of tourism services...

d. Customer satisfaction

Visitors' satisfaction is a measure of the quality of tourism products, service quality, and quality of the workforce, in addition to objective favorable conditions such as weather, climate, etc. Visitor

satisfaction will be an important indicator of the sustainability of tourism. This is also the goal of sustainable tourism development to bring tourists quality trips.

7. Conclusion and Policy Implications

We suggest some tourism development policies:

The quality of tourism human resources is improved in a sustainable direction. The quality of the team directly affects the quality of tourism products, the quality of services and the end result affects the business performance, the growth of tourism from an economic perspective. Thus, the quality of the trained staff is not only a factor to attract tourists, improve the reputation of the industry and the country, but also an important factor in the competition to attract tourists, ensuring the development of tourism. Lasting. f. Responsibility in tourism propaganda and promotion activities.

The responsibility of propaganda and promotion activities is reflected first of all in the honesty in the introduction of tourism products offered for sale. For sustainable tourism development, in addition to the function of expanding the market, introducing tourism products to tourists, propaganda and promotion activities are also responsible for providing information and giving necessary instructions. For visitors about the attitude towards the community, with cultural traditions, with the environment and landscape where tourists will visit. This will help limit the negative impacts of tourism activities on resources, the natural environment and the community. The results will give visitors rewarding trips and the impressions left after such trips will surely attract visitors to return. Thus, making a very important contribution to sustainable tourism development not only in terms of economic sustainability but also in terms of ensuring the sustainability of resources, environment and society.

Last but not least, Create a favorable environment for businesses and communities to participate in tourism development. Branding tourist zones and attractions in association with the formation of souvenir products, local specialties and traditional cuisine; adopt policies to support enterprises, craft villages and artisans in creating higher quality souvenir products. Interested and creating conditions for travel businesses inside and outside the province to open tourism programs to Ha Giang.

Creating favorable conditions for people to directly participate in business and benefit from tourism; Enhancing the role of the community, promoting the role of socio-professional organizations related to tourism.

Vogt and Jordan (2016) stated that Tourism, in some communities, occurred “organically” as a place of services for those traveling to or through, while elsewhere development was planned and marketed to attract leisure or business tourists. Today, communities across the globe are acces- sible

by tourists as the ability to travel almost anywhere in the world has greatly expanded over the past 100 years.

8. Limitation of Research

We need to expand our research models for other cities in Vietnam and other emerging markets.

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