

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**INTEREST RELATIONS IN COMMUNITY-BASED
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LAO CAI PROVINCE**

**DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY MAJOR: POLITICAL
ECONOMY**

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**The thesis will be defended before the Academy-level thesis grading
council meeting at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

At the beginning 9 hours 00, days 5 month 7 in 2025

**The thesis can be found at the National Library
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BEGIN

1. The urgency of the topic

In the context of transforming the model of sustainable growth and development, community tourism has become a priority orientation in tourism development policies in many countries, including Vietnam. With the advantages of natural landscape, national cultural identity and the policy of encouraging economic development associated with conservation, community tourism is identified as a suitable direction to create livelihoods for people, develop the rural economy and promote the process of industrialization. rural modernization.

Lao Cai province – a highland locality in the Northwest – is a bright spot in terms of community tourism development, with models in Sa Pa, Bac Ha, Bat Xat... However, besides the positive results, the practice of community tourism development in Lao Cai is also posing many problems related to the relationship of interests between participants such as the government, local communities, businesses and tourists. The manifestations of disharmony in benefit sharing, revenue distribution, information and capacity asymmetry between parties lead to conflicts of interest, affecting the sustainability of the community tourism model.

From the above practice, it is necessary to systematically study the relationship of interests in community tourism development, choosing Lao Cai province as the survey area, in order to provide scientific and practical arguments for policy making, improving local tourism management institutions, etc contributing to the sustainable development of community tourism and ensuring fairness of interests among stakeholders.

2. Research objectives and tasks of the thesis

2.1. Research objectives

On the basis of clarifying the theoretical basis and assessing the current situation of interest relations in community tourism development in Lao Cai province, the thesis proposes viewpoints and solutions to ensure the harmony of interests between subjects in community tourism development by 2030. with a vision to 2035.

2.2. Research tasks

First, systematize and clarify the theoretical basis for the relationship of interests in community tourism development from the perspective of Political Economy.

Second, analyze the current situation of interest relations in community tourism development in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024, clarify the results, limitations and causes.

Third, proposing a system of solutions to ensure the harmony of interests between subjects in community tourism development in Lao Cai in accordance with the new context

3. Objects and scope of research of the thesis

3.1. Subjects of study

Relationship of interests in community tourism development, focusing on the following subjects: local authorities, residential communities, tourism businesses and tourists.

3.2. Scope of study

Scope of content: Typical interest relationships in community tourism development, influencing factors and methods of harmonizing interests.

Spatial scope: In Lao Cai province.

Time Range: Study the data from 2019 to 2024;

4. Theoretical basis and research methods

4.1. Theoretical basis

The thesis is researched on the theoretical basis of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Party's and State's guidelines on the relationship of interests and development of community tourism; at the same time, selectively inherit the research results of published works related to the thesis topic.

4.2. Research methods

The thesis uses the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, combined with specific methods such as: analysis – synthesis, descriptive statistics, sociological investigation, expert method, comparative method, logical – historical method, scientific abstraction method. The methods are flexibly applied to analyze theories and process practical data objectively, in accordance with the characteristics of the topic.

5. New contributions of the thesis

Firstly, supplementing and perfecting the theoretical basis for the relationship of interests in community tourism development from the perspective of Political Economy, proposing an analytical framework consisting of 6 pairs of typical relationships between subjects.

Secondly, to assess the current situation of interest relations in community tourism development in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024, thereby clarifying the bottlenecks and risks of conflicts of interest.

Third, propose a system of feasible solutions to ensure the harmony of interests between subjects, in accordance with local economic, social and institutional conditions, which can be referred to other localities.

6. Structure of the thesis

In addition to the introduction and conclusion, the thesis is structured into 4 chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview of research related to the relationship of interests in

community tourism development

Chapter 2: Theoretical and practical basis of the relationship of interests in community tourism development

Chapter 3: The current situation of interest relations in community tourism development in Lao Cai province

Chapter 4: Viewpoints and systems of solutions to ensure the harmony of interests in community tourism development in Lao Cai province to 2030, with a vision to 2035.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

1.1. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE TOPIC

1.1.1. Theoretical research direction on the relationship of interests and development of community tourism

The works in this direction mainly focus on generalizing the theoretical categories of economic interests, interest relations, conflicts and harmonization of interests between subjects in the process of socio-economic development in general and in the field of tourism in particular. Some typical authors can be mentioned such as: C. Marx and Ph. Engels with the idea of ownership relations – interests in the development of productive forces; the works of Tran Van Tho, Tran Ngoc Thuan, Nguyen Trong Hoai... also contribute to explaining the role of interests and driving forces in modern socio-economic development. In the field of tourism, scholars such as Weaver (2003), Richards & Hall (2000), and Murphy (1985) have laid the theoretical foundation for the concept of community tourism, sustainability, and a model of people-involved development.

1.1.2. Practical research directions on community tourism and stakeholders

Practical studies in Vietnam and some developing countries (such as Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal, etc.) have analyzed models of community tourism in specific socio-cultural conditions, in which issues related to the relationship between indigenous communities and tourism businesses and local authorities are prominent. Some domestic works with reference value include: Nguyen Van Dinh (2020), Dao Ngoc Canh (2019), Nguyen Thi Lanh (2022)... These works often assess the level of community participation, benefit sharing and conflict of interest, but there is a lack of a strong theoretical framework on the structure and operating mechanism of interest relations in community tourism.

1.1.3. Research direction for impact assessment and institutional model of community tourism management

A number of recent works have begun to approach in the direction of

institutionalizing the relationship between subjects in community tourism, analyzing the role of the State in setting the rules of the game, benefit-sharing mechanisms and coordinating conflicts. Among them are the research of Trinh Hong Quang (2021), Bui Thi Hai Yen (2023), and reports of UNWTO, ADB... These works suggest an interest-based approach as an operational structure that depends on local institutional capacity, meaningful community participation, and corporate social responsibility.

1.2. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RESULTS RELATED TO THESIS TOPICS AND THESIS ISSUES FOCUSED ON RESEARCH

1.2.1. Overview of research results related to the thesis topic

On the basis of systematization of domestic and foreign works, it is possible to generalize a number of main contents that have been resolved as follows:

First, in theory, the works have analyzed quite deeply the role of interests and interest relations in development, thereby affirming the inevitability of harmonization of interest relations as a condition to ensure sustainable development.

Secondly, in practice, many studies have described the forms of relations between parties in community tourism, especially the inequality and lack of transparency in the distribution of benefits between businesses and the community.

Third, some studies have also initially developed community governance models, participation analysis frameworks and equity indicators, as a basis for evaluating effectiveness and proposing policy improvements.

1.2.2. Gaps in previous research and thesis issues focused on research

In summary, there are still a number of issues that have not been clarified, which are gaps for the thesis to continue researching:

- There has been no comprehensive study of the **structure and operation of the relationship of interests between subjects in community tourism development** in a specific area such as Lao Cai province - where ethnic cultural characteristics, difficult terrain and the role of businesses and communities have not been clearly established.

- **Lack of a specific theoretical framework** to evaluate the relationship of interests in a quantitative and qualitative way, especially the level of harmony and conflict in the relationship between subjects.

- Existing projects are mainly approached from the perspective of tourism management or community development, not using the perspective of political economy to explain the motivations, conflicts and benefit distribution mechanisms among parties participating in the community tourism value chain.

- **Lack of solutions to institutionalize the relationship of interests** in a sustainable manner in the conditions of weak commune-level governance, lack of sharing constraints and lack of community self-representation capacity

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 presents an overview of research related to interest relations and community tourism at home and abroad. The thesis analyzes three groups of works: research on interests and interest relationships; research on community tourism; and studies that integrate the above two fields. On that basis, the author identifies a research gap on the relationship of interests between subjects in the development of community tourism at the provincial level, especially in mountainous areas such as Lao Cai. From summarizing the reasons for choosing the topic, objectives, tasks, objects and scope of research, This chapter clarifies the contribution of the thesis and the approach, and establishes the content structure of the entire project.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL BASIS FOR THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.1. CONCEPT, CHARACTERISTICS AND ROLE OF INTEREST RELATIONS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1. Some basic concepts

The thesis clarifies four core concepts that have fundamental significance for the approach and analysis of research contents: (i) Benefits – which is the central category reflecting the socio-economic dynamics of actors in the socialist-oriented market economy; associated with needs, action objectives and conditions for resource distribution; (ii) Community tourism – is a type of tourism owned, organized, provided by indigenous communities and directly benefits from tourism activities associated with cultural identity and local resources; (iii) Relationship of interests in community tourism development – is the establishment and maintenance of interactions between subjects such as authorities, businesses, communities and tourists in the entire chain of tourism activities in order to distribute value, optimize overall benefits and ensure equitable development; (iv) Community tourism development stakeholders – are individuals, groups or organizations that have the rights, obligations and ability to influence the creation, use, control or distribution of resources and values in the community tourism model, in which the four central actors are: local governments, indigenous communities, tourism businesses and tourists

2.1.2. Characteristics of the relationship of interests in the development of community tourism

The relationship of interests in community tourism is multi-dimensional and multi-subject, not only with economic factors but also associated with society, culture and environment. Salient characteristics include: asymmetry of interests, dependence on ownership structures, being affected by institutional power, and prone to conflict if there is no coordination mechanism.

2.1.3. The role of ensuring the relationship of interests in the development of community tourism

Interests play a role in controlling efficiency, sustainability and fairness in community tourism development. The rational coordination of interests helps to promote endogenous motivation, improve community capacity, protect resources and create a new structure of production relations in accordance with the local economy.

2.2. CONTENTS, EVALUATION CRITERIA AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.2.1. Contents of the relationship of interests in the development of community tourism

The thesis identifies six typical pairs of interests between subjects:

- (1) Government – Community;
- (2) Government – Enterprise;
- (3) Enterprises – Communities;
- (4) Community – Tourists;
- (5) Enterprises – Tourists;
- (6) Government – Tourists.

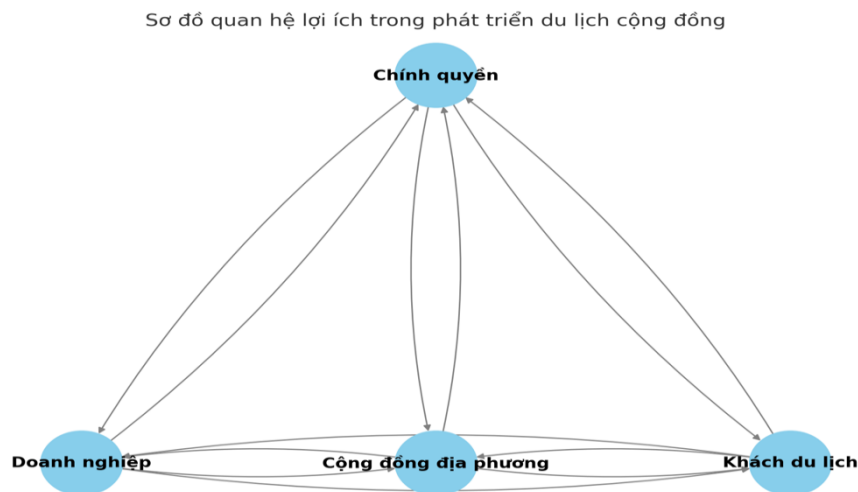


Diagram 2.1: Relationship of interests in community tourism development

Each pair of relationships reflects one side of the interaction of interests: public power - resources; private - public; market - culture; consumption - identity. These relationships are the embodiment of modern production relations in the conditions of transformation of the development model.

2.2.2. Principles for ensuring the relationship of interests in community tourism development

The thesis proposes four fundamental principles:

- (1) Equality of access and benefits;

- (2) Sharing risks and opportunities;
- (3) Respect for cultural identity – community sovereignty;
- (4) Social responsibility of the participants.

2.2.3. Criteria for evaluating the relationship of interests in community tourism development

The thesis develops a set of criteria including:

- (i) Fairness in the distribution of benefits;
- (ii) The level of participation of the parties;
- (iii) Information transparency and monitoring capabilities;
- (iv) Effective coordination and feedback of benefits;
- (v) Reproducibility generates community benefits.

These criteria are concretized by a system of quantitative and qualitative indicators to evaluate practice

2.2.4. Factors affecting the relationship of interests in community tourism development

The elements are divided into two groups:

- **Objective group:** Level of development of production forces; forms of ownership; natural-social conditions; international integration; legal institutions; application of technology.

- **Subjective group:** Sense of subjectivity, community governance capacity; degree of cohesion, association and cooperation between parties; role of grassroots authorities; culture of behavior and tourism behavior of guests.

2.3. PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE ON ENSURING THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SOME LOCALITIES AND SOME LESSONS LEARNED

2.3.1. Practical experience on ensuring the relationship of interests in the development of community tourism in some localities

2.3.1.1. Community tourism in Ha Giang province

The highlight of Ha Giang's experience is the **flexible organizational model according to cooperative groups** or interest groups initiated by the community, with technical support from the government and development organizations. The establishment of women's groups as homestays, youth guide groups, food service groups, etc. have helped mobilize internal resources of the community, create jobs and maintain autonomy in service provision. In particular, Ha Giang province has focused on **building a community-based tourism management regulation**, which clearly defines the rights – obligations – responsibilities of each subject: people, businesses and local authorities. Some community tourism destinations have applied **a clear proportional benefit sharing mechanism**, for example, 60% for service providers, 20% for village management and 20% for community funds. However, the experience from Ha Giang also shows certain limitations. Some

models are ineffective when the project ends, the community's self-operation capacity has not been fully strengthened; there is no mechanism to bind social responsibility from enterprises; and lack of institutional foundation to sustainably maintain the tripartite cooperation model. The lesson learned is that it is necessary to **improve the organizational capacity and institutionalize the institution of community representation**, and at the same time **establish a supervised benefit-sharing mechanism**, linking community tourism with long-term livelihoods, independent of external assistance.

2.3.1.2. Community tourism in Hoa Binh province

One of the outstanding experiences of Hoa Binh is the **forming a self-governance mechanism in the community**, through community tourism groups, village conventions and village tourism management boards. These institutions not only help to clearly assign responsibilities among households but also create a foundation for internal regulation of interests in a fair, transparent and united manner. In addition, Hoa Binh province also focuses on **Public-Private Cooperation**, in which the government plays a role in supporting planning, skills training and market connectivity; enterprises participating in the development of tourism services associated with national culture; while the community plays the role of receiving, creating and providing services. However, challenges remain, especially the risk of **Commercialization of Cultural Identity** due to the lack of a binding institutional framework in the exploitation of festivals, performances and folk activities. Experience from Hoa Binh shows that: to develop sustainable community tourism, it is necessary to **Empowering the community**, and at the same time set up **Clear cooperation mechanism with businesses and authorities**, in which culture is considered the central resource and the community is the active custodian.

2.3.1.3. Community tourism in Son La province

Son La province has implemented many community tourism models in districts such as Moc Chau, Van Ho, Quynh Nhai, focusing on promoting the cultural identity of the Thai, Mong and Dao ethnic groups associated with mountainous landscapes, hydropower reservoirs and indigenous agriculture. The community tourism model here is built on the basis **of a tripartite link between the government, businesses and the community**, in which the government plays the role of planning and supporting infrastructure; businesses undertake market connection and improve service quality; the community owns cultural and environmental resources and directly participates in homestay services, cuisine, experience. In particular, Son La province has implemented **tripartite commitment programs on benefit sharing**, establishing the principle of revenue distribution in clear proportions and public supervision. Businesses are encouraged to fulfill **social responsibility**, especially in supporting the training of indigenous human resources, preserving national

culture and developing new tourism products. The fact that the community is empowered to participate in the decision to exploit tourism resources has contributed to reducing conflicts, improving the quality of experience and ensuring the sustainability of the local community tourism model - Linking community tourism development with the resettlement program - a tool for redistributing social benefits.

2.3.2. Some lessons learned

From the above experiences, the thesis draws 5 main lessons:

First, it is necessary to institutionalize the commitments of interests between the parties involved by contracts or community conventions;

Second, it is necessary to improve the capacity of interest representation and community self-management;

Third, the government plays the role of an intermediary in transparent and effective coordination;

Fourth, businesses need to be bound by social responsibility;

Fifth, it is necessary to establish a two-way monitoring and feedback mechanism from tourists.

Chapter 2 Summary

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical and practical basis of the relationship of interests in community tourism development. The thesis clarifies the concept, characteristics and roles of the relationship of interests and identifies six pairs of relationships between the government, the community, businesses and tourists. The author proposes five groups of evaluation criteria including: fairness, harmony, participation, transparency and sustainability. On the basis of practical research in Ha Giang, Hoa Binh and Son La, chapter 2 draws lessons such as: it is necessary to institutionalize a flexible community organization model, build clear cooperation contracts with businesses, and promote the government's regulatory and supervisory role in distributing community tourism benefits.

Chapter 3

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY TOURISM IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

3.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY TOURISM IN LAO CAI PROVINCE AND THE INTERESTS OF STAKEHOLDERS

3.1.1. Natural, socio-economic characteristics and resources for community tourism development in Lao Cai province

Lao Cai is a mountainous province in the Northwest with rich terrain, diverse ecosystems, a concentration of many ethnic minorities, and a rich system of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Villages such as Ta Van, Ta

Phin (Sa Pa), Nam De (Bac Ha), Trung Do (Bao Yen) are typical spaces for the tourism model associated with human identity.

3.1.2. Development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

Community tourism in Lao Cai has a continuous development in both scale and quality. From 2019 to 2024, the number of visitors increased from 511 thousand to 765 thousand, the total revenue from community tourism increased from 222 billion to 1,223 billion VND, accounting for about 4.5–5% of the total tourism revenue of the province. The homestay system has increased sharply, the number of community self-management organization models has been formed in key districts.

Table 3.1: Some indicators of community tourism in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024

Year	Tourists (millions)	International visitors (millions)	Total revenue from tourism (billion VND)	Tourism workers (people)	Community tourism workers (people)	Community tourists (thousand)	Total revenue (billion VND)
2019	5.106	0.806	19203	32000	1700	511	960
2020	4.952	0.739	7184	22000	1700	495	359
2021	4.797	0.673	4440	12000	1700	480	222
2022	4.643	0.606	16380	20300	1700	464	819
2023	7.261	0.539	22244	28600	2000	700	1112
2024	8.484	0.539	27033	33001	2100	765	1223

Source: Author compiled from data of Lao Cai Department of Tourism

3.1.3. Role of stakeholders in community tourism development in Lao Cai province

- **Local governments** play a role in creating an environment, policies, planning and technical assistance, but there are still limited resources and supervision.

- **Residential communities** are the forces that directly operate community tourism activities, but most of them are still weak in organizational skills and lack of voice in the value chain.

- **Businesses** play the role of intermediaries connecting the market, providing professional tourism services, but many places still have limited commitments to share benefits with the community.

- **Tourists** are becoming more and more aware of sustainable tourism, but the mechanism for feedback and interaction with the government is limited. First, local governments play a role in creating institutions and regulating development.

3.2. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY TOURISM IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

3.2.1. The current situation of the relationship between local authorities and local communities in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

Local governments play the role of orienting, building institutions and making initial investments in infrastructure for tourism, while the community is the direct subject of exploiting resources and providing tourism services. However, this relationship still largely operates according to the model of "above promulgation - below implementation", lacking two-way dialogue and no mutual monitoring mechanism. The lack of equality of power and information leads to a difficult time for the community to participate in important decisions related to planning, investment, and resource use.

3.2.2. The current situation of the relationship of interests between local authorities and enterprises in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

This is a relationship that plays a role in regulating the community tourism market, but there is a lack of a clear legal framework for the distribution of benefits. Some businesses are prioritized to access land and support policies, but lack a commitment to reinvest in the community. Commune-level authorities also face difficulties in controlling business activities, leading to an imbalance of interests and extreme commercialization of cultural identity.

3.2.3. The current situation of the relationship of interests between local authorities and tourists in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

This relationship is often indirect through the quality of public service and the overall experience at the destination. The government has a role to play in ensuring security, sanitation, the environment and cultural behavior, but there is a lack of tools to receive and process feedback from tourists. As a result, tourists have less trust in the official complaint channel, reflecting mainly through social networks or with businesses.

3.2.4. The current situation of the relationship of interests between local communities and tourists in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

This is a direct and reciprocal two-way relationship: the community provides services, tourists pay and spread value. However, due to the lack of skills to welcome and protect the culture and mechanisms to monitor the behavior of guests, many communities have become passive. Tourists have also not been supported to reflect and comment officially on the quality of services

3.2.5. The current situation of the relationship of interests between businesses and tourists in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

This relationship plays a decisive role in the development of community tourism products. Businesses organize programs, tourists evaluate and pay. However, many businesses tend to exploit short-term benefits, reduce service quality and are not transparent about costs, affecting customer trust. The lack of intervention of the

management agency leads to a "deviation" in the organization of community tours.

3.2.6. The current situation of the relationship of interests between businesses and local communities in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

This is a key relationship in the community tourism value chain, but it is currently seriously imbalanced. Businesses play the role of intermediaries in marketing, operating, and pricing products, while communities are dependent on seasonal contracts or low profit sharing. The lack of intermediary institutions such as associations, community tourism management boards, and model contracts makes it difficult for communities to control their legitimate interests.

3.3. GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF INTERESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY TOURISM IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

3.3.1. Results achieved by the relationship of interests in Lao Cai tourism development through the criteria

Table 3.3: Criteria for assessing the relationship of interests in community tourism development in Lao Cai, period 2019–2024

Evaluation Criteria	Measurement indicators	Pairs of Interests Measured	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1. Fairness in the distribution of benefits	Percentage of households directly participating in tourism activities (%)	Community Government ↔	10%	12%	14%	20%	25%	28%
	Percentage of households accessing support from the government or programs	Community Government ↔	9%	10%	11%	14%	15%	18%
	Percentage of guests satisfied with the value of the experience compared to the cost	Traveler Business ↔	70%	75%	77%	83%	88%	90%
2. The degree of harmony of interests between subjects	Number of disputes/conflicts of interest arising each year	Business Community ↔	7 cases/year	6 cases/year	5 cases/year	5 cases/year	5 cases/year	4 cases/year
	Percentage of people consulted on the benefit distribution mechanism	Community Government ↔	8%	10%	12%	18%	20%	25%
	Percentage of Tourists Reflecting Received and Responding	Tourist Administration ↔	13%	30%	35%	50%	65%	70%

Evaluation Criteria	Measurement indicators	Pairs of Interests Measured	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
3. The level of community participation and decision-making role	Critical Decision Rate Has Community Participation	Community Government ↔	20%	15%	18%	25%	30%	40%
	Number of community-organized tourism products	Tourist Community ↔	20	25	28	35	50	60
	Community satisfaction with participation (Likert 1–5)	Community Government ↔	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.5	3.8	4.0
	Number of exchange activities organized by the community and guests	Tourist Community ↔	28	25	28	40	60	75
4. Transparency and accountability in the implementation of benefit distribution	Rate of people having access to information on prices and support	Community Government ↔	22%	30%	33%	40%	45%	55%
	Rate of public handling of complaints and violations of interests	Corporate Government ↔	12%	25%	28%	35%	40%	50%
5. Sustainability and reinvestment in the community	Number of Community Training Classes Held Each Year	Community Government ↔	52	15	20	30	38	45
	Proportion of cultural and environmental resources preserved and restored	Community Government ↔	15%	55%	58%	65%	70%	75%
	Rate of tourists returning or referring destinations	Tourist Community ↔	2.5%	17%	19%	22%	27%	35%

Source: Self-calculated and synthesized by the author

(1) Equity criteria in benefit distribution: Survey data shows a marked improvement in the period 2019–2024. The percentage of households participating in tourism activities increased from 10% to 28%; the percentage of households accessing support policies from the government increased from 9% to 18%; Meanwhile, the level of satisfaction of tourists with the value of the experience compared to the cost of payment also increased from 70% to 90%. These figures reflect the trend of expanding access to benefits for the community, and show the initial effectiveness in improving the experience and satisfaction of tourists – an important link in the relationship of interests between communities, businesses and tourists.

(2) Harmonization of interests between subjects: the statistical results of the number of conflicts of interest between communities and businesses each year have decreased from 7 cases to 4 cases. The percentage of people consulted on the benefit distribution mechanism increased from 8% to 25%, while the percentage of tourist opinions received and feedback from the government also increased significantly, from 13% to 70%. These changes show a positive shift from the model of imposing relations to the direction of dialogue and consultation between the parties, contributing to creating a more stable and inclusive structure of development relations.

(3) The level of community participation and decision-making role also recorded a marked improvement. The proportion of important decisions in tourism activities with community participation increased from 15% to 40%. The number of tourism products organized and supplied by the community increased from 25 to 60 products during the research period. Community satisfaction with the right to participate and influence decisions was rated at 4.0 points on a 5-point scale – an increase of 1 point compared to 2019. These results affirm the increasing role of the community in the role of the subject, not only as a beneficiary but also as a force to create, provide and control the community tourism value chain.

(4) Transparency and accountability criteria, although there are still many inadequacies, have also made positive changes. The percentage of the community having access to information on revenue – expenditure and distribution of benefits in tourism activities increased from 22% to 55%; the rate of feedback and complaints of tourists being handled publicly increased from 12% to 50%. Some pilot models in Sa Pa and Bac Ha initially implemented the publicity of contracts between businesses and the community, although they are still limited in scale and do not have a specific binding legal mechanism.

(5) The criteria for sustainability and the ability to reinvest benefits, the number of training and community capacity training classes jointly organized by the government increased from 15 classes/year to 45 classes. The percentage of enterprises reinvesting profits in cultural conservation, indigenous environment and community support increased from 10% to 25%. In particular, the rate of tourists returning or introducing community tourism destinations has nearly doubled – from 17% to 35%, showing the positive spillover effect of development models associated with identity and community responsibility.

In general, the assessment of the relationship of interests based on groups of quantitative and qualitative criteria has provided a more comprehensive and clear picture of the changes in the relationship between parties in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province. Although there are still many shortcomings, However, the progressive trend of fairness,

transparency, harmony and community participation shows significant potential for institutional improvement and improving the efficiency of the community tourism value chain in the coming time.

3.3.2. Advantages in the relationship of interests between entities participating in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024

Interests are gradually shaping in the direction of multi-stakeholder - more harmonious, the government plays a supporting role instead of controlling, the community participates more actively in the organization of services, businesses focus on long-term investment, tourists have a sense of responsible consumption.

3.3.3. Limitations in the relationship of interests between community tourism development entities in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024

- The distribution of benefits is unfair, **while the dominant interest group (officials, large enterprises); the core community is also passively excluded from the value chain.**

- Community participation is still formal, **lacking a mechanism to ensure substantive decision-making.**

- Lack of transparency and feedback mechanisms, **especially between tourists and authorities.**

- The issue of cultural and environmental conservation is not sustainable, **commercialization of cultural elements, and breaking down indigenous architecture.**

- Disadvantaged groups (women, the poor, ethnic minorities) **have not been guaranteed their rights and have limited access to resources, skills and markets.**

3.3.4. Causes of limitations and problems arising in the relationship of interests in community tourism development in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024

3.3.4.1. Objective and subjective causes

- Objective: There is no clear legal institution on benefit-sharing; the tourism market is still fragmented; information monitoring and transparency technology has not been applied effectively.

- Subjective: Commune-level authorities lack coordination capacity; the community is still dependent and weak in representation; enterprises lack commitment to responsibility; Travelers lack effective feedback tools

3.3.4.2. Issues raised

- It is necessary to establish a fair, transparent and supervised mechanism for the distribution of benefits.

- Establish a community representative institution with real power in decisions related to tourism resources.

- Strengthen the community's capacity for self-organization and negotiation.
- Businesses need to have a commitment to benefit sharing and long-term investment.
- The government needs to shift from a management role to a multi-stakeholder creation and coordination role.

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 analyzes the current situation of interest relations in community tourism development in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019-2024. Based on a survey of six pairs of relationships between key actors, this chapter assesses the results achieved through five groups of criteria: fairness, harmony, participation, transparency and sustainability. In addition to positive changes, there is still inequality in profit distribution, lack of feedback and monitoring mechanisms, and the community is still passive. Chapter 3 also points out the causes of these limitations and identifies the issues that need to be addressed in order to improve institutions and improve the capacity of parties in the community tourism value chain.

Chapter 4

VIEWPOINTS AND SOLUTIONS TO ENSURE THE HARMONY OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

4.1. BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND TASKS OF COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LAO CAI PROVINCE TO BE 2030 AND VISION 2035

4.1.1. Forecast of domestic and international contexts affecting the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province

In the coming period, the development of community tourism in Lao Cai will be strongly affected by global trends and internal fluctuations. At the international level, factors such as post-pandemic tourism model transformation, experiential and indigenous tourism trends, pressures from climate change and digital transformation are reshaping the tourism development strategies of many countries. Domestically, the policy of promoting green tourism and community tourism integrated into socio-economic development programs, along with the increase in the middle class and the demand for responsible tourism, is opening up new opportunities for community tourism in Lao Cai.

However, many challenges also exist. Businesses tend to exploit short-term, lack of commitment to share benefits; local communities are still weak in negotiation and governance; The commune-level government also has limited resources to monitor tourism activities. In addition, the coordination institution and benefit distribution mechanism have not been perfected, leading to the risk of

conflict and unsustainable development if there is no appropriate strategic adjustment.

4.1.2. Viewpoints, objectives and tasks of community tourism development in Lao Cai province to 2030 and vision to 2035

Community tourism development in the coming period is identified as a strategic direction to link the preservation of indigenous culture with livelihood development and new rural construction. community tourism is considered an important component of the sustainable tourism ecosystem, contributing to the realization of the goal of making Lao Cai a green tourism center of the Northern midlands and mountains.

Specific targets to 2030. See Table 3.2

Table 3.2: Summary of community tourism development goals of Lao Cai province to 2030

Target content	Targets by 2030
Community tourists	1.7 million visitors/year
Proportion of total revenue from community tourism in total provincial tourism revenue	10%
Number of community tourism models meeting ASEAN standards	07 Models
Number of community tourism models meeting provincial standards/TCVN 13259:2020	25 models
Number of homestay establishments	560 establishments (up from 466)
Number of employees who are created	2,500 employees
Forming new tourism products	Cultural, ecological, culinary, agricultural, experiential tourism

Source: NCS General

With a vision to 2035, Lao Cai province aims to develop community tourism into an **internationally competitive, professionally** organized, sustainably operated community tourism brand and become a platform to promote improving the quality of rural life, preserving the cultural and ecological identity of the highlands.

In order to realize the above goal, **the key tasks** set include:

- Focus on investing in building community tourism models meeting ASEAN standards in key areas such as Sa Pa, Bac Ha and Bao Yen;
- To complete the essential infrastructure system such as roads, tourist information centers, signboards;
- Training local human resources in skills of reception, explanation, cuisine, culture of behavior, and environmental protection;
- Building a community tourism brand through an identity system, professional communication and digitized content;
- Strengthening regional linkages, connecting markets, promoting public-private cooperation and expanding the community tourism market space.

4.2. VIEWPOINTS ON ENSURING THE HARMONY OF INTERESTS IN COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

The thesis establishes six guiding viewpoints:

First, putting the interests of the community in the central position in the community tourism development model, considering the community as the subject of cultural-ecological resources and services.

Second, institutionalize the interests between the parties by contracts, tripartite regulations and supervision mechanisms.

Third, ensure transparency and accountability, establish a mechanism for publicizing interests and two-way feedback.

Fourth, improving community capacity and representation, helping people have a voice and bargaining power in the value chain.

Fifth, encourage social responsibility and long-term investment of enterprises, integrate livelihood development and preserve identity.

Sixth, linking regions and expanding public-private cooperation, linking community tourism with the tourism ecosystem, OCOP products and local economy.

4.3. SOLUTIONS TO ENSURE THE HARMONY OF INTERESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY TOURISM IN LAO CAI PROVINCE

4.3.1. Solutions from the Lao Cai provincial government

(1) Institutionalization of interest relationships: The government needs to promulgate a clear institutional system of interest relations in community tourism development. Including: establishing a set of criteria and principles for dividing benefits between the community, businesses and the government; develop a legally valid tripartite cooperation contract template; and complete regulations on publicity of revenues and expenditures, allocation of revenue from community tourism activities.

(2) Integrate community tourism into socio-economic development planning and programs. Community tourism development needs to be integrated into major strategies such as provincial tourism development planning, new rural construction, OCOP program, and cultural and ecological heritage conservation. This integration ensures investment resources, creates multi-sectoral linkages and increases the community's access to support.

(3) Develop a specific financial mechanism. The province needs to form a Community Tourism Development Fund, provide financial support for disadvantaged groups and encourage the community to start a business in the field of tourism. In addition, building a preferential credit mechanism, combining state capital with socialized capital to increase the capacity to access finance for the people.

(4) Integrate digital technology to make benefits transparent and two-way feedback. The government needs to apply a smart tourism platform, allowing tourists, businesses and communities to evaluate and supervise the distribution of benefits and

services at community tourism destinations. Digital tools such as QR codes and provincial tourism apps can help collect feedback and warn early of conflicts of interest risks.

(5) Improve coordination capacity at the grassroots level. Commune and district authorities need to be trained in regulating interest relations, mediation skills, contract supervision and operation of tripartite coordination institutions. Periodically organizing training courses and building a system of decision-making support tools at the grassroots level is a necessary condition to improve the effectiveness of community tourism governance.

(6) Inter-subject coordination: businesses – communities – tourists. The government needs to proactively organize periodic tripartite dialogue forums, establish cooperation mechanisms, codes of conduct, and mutual monitoring systems between businesses - communities - tourists. This approach helps to minimize conflicts, build trust and promote mutual roles between parties.

(7) Encourage the model of co-creation and community empowerment. The government needs to transform from an "administrative management" model to a "co-constructive governance" model in community tourism development. This includes empowering community self-governing boards, soliciting public opinion before intervening in the tourism space, disclosing financial information, and increasing citizens' critical of businesses and policies.

4.3.2. Solutions from the local community

1) To build an institution of representation of indigenous interests. It is necessary to establish models of community representative organizations such as tourism cooperation groups, tourism village management boards, and indigenous population councils. These institutions are not only self-governance tools but also formal negotiation channels with businesses and governments. At the same time, it is necessary to institutionalize the role of the community in decisions related to planning, investment and use of tourism resources.

(2) Improve community capacity comprehensively. The community needs to be supported to train basic skills such as tourism service organization, cultural explanation, marketing, financial management, contract negotiation and the use of digital technology. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen legal understanding, supervision and social criticism skills. Capacity building does not only stop at techniques but also needs to be combined with fostering a sense of ownership, a sense of responsibility and civilized behavior skills in the tourism environment.

(3) Promote the substantive participation of the community in the tourism value chain. Governments and businesses need to create conditions for the community to participate from the beginning in the process of designing, providing and controlling tourism services. The community must have the right

to propose products, decide on exploitation methods and participate in the pricing of services. Ensuring the right to participate substantially helps balance the power between the parties and reduces the risk of communities passively commercializing their identities.

(4) Establish a mechanism for monitoring and criticism from the community. It is necessary to form benefit-sharing supervisory boards or financial disclosure groups in each community tourism destination, in order to monitor the distribution of profits, service quality, environmental protection and implementation of cultural commitments. In addition, it is necessary to create conditions for the community to comment, criticize and criticize tourism policies, programs and projects related to their rights.

(5) Supporting disadvantaged groups in the community. Women, youth, the poor, and ethnic minorities should be prioritized to access training programs, financial support, and small business start-ups in the tourism sector. At the same time, community institutions must ensure full representation of these groups, avoiding the phenomenon of monopoly of interests by dominant groups in the village.

(6) Building a civilized community tourism culture – responsibility. The community is not only the one who exploits the benefits, but also the one who preserves the identity and shows the cultural face of the locality. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a general code of conduct in welcome, communication, landscape protection, hygiene and consensus in event organization, thereby contributing to the formation of a civilized – responsible – sustainable community tourism environment.

4.3.3. Solutions from the business side

(1) Commitment to benefit sharing and long-term investment. Enterprises need to fulfill the obligation to share benefits in a transparent and legally binding manner. This includes signing a tripartite cooperation contract (business - community - government), establishing a revenue sharing ratio, committing to reinvest in cultural preservation and indigenous infrastructure. The social enterprise model, taking community values as the goal of accompanying profits, needs to be encouraged to replicate.

(2) Respect for cultural space and community autonomy. Businesses must respect identity values, image control and community decision-making rights for tourism activities. Performances, festivals, and communication activities need to have the consensus of the community and follow the co-ownership mechanism. Absolutely avoid the act of imitating false culture, excessive commercialization without consulting the people.

(3) Develop a mechanism for cooperation and periodic dialogue. To minimize conflicts and maintain trust between parties, businesses need to participate in periodic tripartite dialogue mechanisms with authorities and

community representatives. The content of the dialogue focuses on distributing benefits, protecting resources, improving services, and assessing visitor satisfaction. The dialogue mechanism should have a memorandum of understanding and the supervision of an independent organization when necessary.

(4) Support capacity building for the community. One of the factors that helps the relationship of interests become balanced is the capacity of the community to organize itself. Businesses need to participate in tourism skills training programs, provide technical support, and consult on building new products for people. Accompanying to improve indigenous capacity not only helps the community take ownership, but also increases the quality and identity of tourism services.

(5) Institutionalize social responsibility and business ethics. Lao Cai province needs to promulgate a code of ethics for community tourism, which clearly stipulates the social obligations that businesses must perform, including employing local workers, not polluting the environment, not harming cultural heritage, and being accountable for the distribution of benefits. This is the basis for appraisal of enterprises when licensing, supervising and evaluating operations.

(6) Participating in the risk insurance and value chain stabilization mechanism. Due to the characteristics of tourism strongly affected by epidemics and natural disasters, businesses need to accompany the community and the government in setting up a risk insurance fund or crisis sharing fund. Having a preventive mechanism helps maintain stability and reduce vulnerability to the weak side when the market fluctuates.

4.3.4. Solutions from the side of tourists

(1) Raise awareness and practice responsible tourism. Tourists need to be propagated and oriented to responsible consumption behavior through the system of signs, guides, media clips, travel apps, etc. The key contents include: respecting the indigenous cultural space, avoiding behaviors that harm the customs, environment and daily life of the people; encourage the use of environmentally friendly products and services provided by indigenous people; behave civilly, do not force prices, do not take photos to infringe on spiritual life.

(2) Establish a feedback mechanism and satisfaction survey. Tourists need an official channel to send feedback, comments and evaluate the quality of community tourism services. Lao Cai province should integrate electronic feedback functions on tourism applications, QR code systems in villages, along with periodic surveys to collect opinions and adjust policies. The publicization of the tourist satisfaction index on public platforms not only improves transparency but also creates positive pressure on the government, businesses

and the community to improve services.

(3) Promote the role of "social companions" of tourists. A part of tourists need to be oriented to become "community tourism ambassadors" – people who not only share experiences but also have a role in spreading positive messages, social monitoring and connecting the market for local products. The incentive mechanism can be points accumulation programs, "responsible traveler" certification, or social networks to support community tourism to develop in the direction of humanity and sustainability.

(4) Strengthen dialogue between tourists and subjects at the destination. Lao Cai province should establish periodic tourism forums, seminars or seminars where tourists can directly communicate with the local community, businesses and authorities about expectations, experiences and suggestions for service improvements. The organization of "convergent homestays", "storytelling", and "sharing experiences" programs not only connects tourists with locals but also strengthens the consensus on values and cultural behavior in the community tourism environment.

(5) Uphold the role of education before, during, and after the trip. The long-term solution is to coordinate between schools – tourism organizations – the community to make responsible tourism a universal education content. Cultural behaviors, intangible value assessments, and protection of tourism resources need to be systematically communicated, aiming to build a new class of tourists who are knowledgeable, responsible and sympathetic to indigenous people.

4.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.4.1. Recommendations to the National Assembly

The National Assembly needs to institutionalize the orientation for community tourism development by amending and supplementing the Law on Tourism in the direction of:

- Supplementing a separate section on community tourism, specifying the organizational model, operating principles, and conditions for the community to be recognized as a tourism subject.

- Assign the authority to the Government to promulgate decrees guiding the mechanism of using land types in combination with community tourism, distribution of benefits and community supervision.

- Integrate community tourism into national agendas on poverty reduction, highland development, and conservation of intangible cultural heritage

4.4.2. Recommendations to the Government

The Government needs to direct the development of a national policy framework on community tourism associated with sustainable development, specifically:

- To promulgate a specialized Decree on the development of community tourism on the basis of circular economy, sustainable livelihoods and preservation of indigenous cultures.

- Coordinate with ministries and sectors to develop a set of criteria for evaluating sustainable community tourism models; standardize homestay models, local experience services.

- Technical support, human resource training, digitalization system development, and establishment of financial mechanisms to support businesses and communities to start a community tourism

4.4.3. Recommendations to ministries and central branches

- **The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism:** To assume the prime responsibility for formulating the national master plan for community tourism development; to promulgate the Code of Conduct for civilized community tourism; to strengthen communication and promotion of Vietnamese community tourism destinations.

- **The Ministry of Finance:** To guide and allocate public investment capital, ODA and national target programs integrated into community tourism development; to promulgate policies related to tax incentives and support from job creation funds to create a driving force for community tourism development.

- **Tourism associations and socio-professional organizations:** Promote the role of bridges, establish market connection mechanisms, fairly supervise benefits and service quality among stakeholders,

Chapter 4 Summary

Chapter 4 proposes a system of viewpoints and solutions to ensure the harmony of interests in community tourism development in Lao Cai province to 2030, with a vision to 2035. On the basis of analyzing the context, objectives and problems raised, the thesis establishes six orientation viewpoints and four groups of solutions according to each subject: government, community, business and tourists. Each group of solutions emphasizes the role of institutions, coordination mechanisms, representation of interests and social responsibility. At the end of the chapter, the author makes recommendations to the National Assembly, the Government, ministries, Lao Cai province and stakeholders to create a policy and legal foundation for sustainable community tourism development.

CONCLUDE

The thesis "*Relationship of interests in community tourism development in Lao Cai province*" is an in-depth research work to contribute to improving the theoretical and practical basis, and at the same time propose a system of views, solutions and recommendations with scientific grounds to ensure the harmony of interests between

subjects in community tourism development (tourism community calendar) in Lao Cai province. On the basis of political and economic approach, the thesis has fully completed the set research tasks, specifically:

Firstly, the thesis has systematized and clarified the theoretical framework on the relationship of interests in the development of community tourism on the basis of inheriting and developing the views of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought and the views of the Communist Party of Vietnam on interests. The author approaches the relationship of interests as a socio-economic structure in the community tourism model, clearly identifying four main actors: the government, the community, businesses and tourists. The thesis has analyzed the characteristics, content and relationships between subjects in community tourism development, and developed a set of criteria for evaluating the relationship of interests, including: level of participation, transparency, fairness, coordination – feedback mechanism, and the ability to regenerate benefits.

Secondly, on the basis of a practical survey in Lao Cai province in the period of 2019–2024, the thesis objectively assessed the current situation of the relationship of interests between subjects at key community tourism destinations such as Sa Pa, Bac Ha, Bat Xat and Bao Yen. The thesis points out remarkable results such as: the increase in community participation, the beginning of the coordination role from the grassroots government, the formation of a business-community cooperation model, and the improvement of the professional level in the relationship between tourists and local services. However, the thesis also identifies notable inadequacies such as: imbalance in benefit distribution, lack of independent supervision institutions, unstable coordination mechanisms and the risk of commercialization of local cultural identity.

Thirdly, on the basis of theory and practice, the thesis has proposed six orientations to ensure the harmony of interests in community tourism development, and at the same time propose a comprehensive system of solutions from the government, communities, businesses and tourists. The solutions emphasize the role of the State in creating institutions, strengthening the autonomy and organizational capacity of the community, social responsibility and long-term commitment from businesses, as well as the awareness and responsible tourism behavior of tourists. In addition, the thesis also makes specific recommendations to the National Assembly, the Government, ministries, the People's Committee of Lao Cai province and relevant parties to promote the institutionalization of the community tourism model on the basis of harmonizing interests and sustainable development. and protect indigenous cultural identities in the conditions of socialist-oriented market economy.

With the above-mentioned academic and practical contributions, the thesis not only contributes to clarifying a topical theoretical issue, but also has practical reference value in policy planning for community tourism development in mountainous localities in particular and Vietnam in general in the process of sustainable development and national integration extensive treatment today.

LIST OF RESEARCH WORKS OF THE AUTHOR WHO HAS PUBLISHED THE RESULTS OF THE THESIS RESEARCH

1. Hua Tan Hung (2025), "Developing tourism according to green and smart trends in Lao Cai province: Current situation and solutions", *Journal of Economics and Forecasting*, (01), pp.144-147.
2. Hua Tan Hung (2025), "Regional linkage in tourism development in Lao Cai province: Current situation and solutions", *Journal of Finance and Accounting Research*, 01(280) p.41-45.
3. Hua Tan Hung (2025), "The role of local authorities in the development of community tourism in Lao Cai province", *Journal of Finance and Accounting Research*, 02 (281), pp.73-76.