PERSONAL BENEFITS IMPACT THE SUPPORT FOR AGRITOURISM DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE LOCAL COMMUNITY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF COMMUNITY SATISFACTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE

a Luu Thanh Duc Hai, b Khuu Ngoc Huyen, c Nguyen Thi Tu Trinh

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to demonstrate the influence of personal benefits on the support for the development of agritourism among the local community through the mediating role of community satisfaction and quality of life.

Method: To test the research hypotheses, quantitative analysis methods are used, including reliability testing of the scales using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM). Data for the study were collected from a survey of 212 individuals residing in potential agritourism development areas in the Mekong Delta region, Vietnam.

Results: The study results show that personal benefits have a positive impact on the support for the development of agritourism among the local community. Additionally, the study reveals that personal benefits also positively influence community satisfaction and quality of life. Simultaneously, community satisfaction and quality of life are crucial factors driving the support for the development of agritourism among the local community in the Mekong Delta region, Vietnam.

Conclusions: Community support is a crucial factor for the success and development of a tourism destination, similar to the existence of a mutualistic relationship between community support and tourism development. The research findings provide a scientific basis for suggesting key policy implications to promote community support for agritourism development in the Mekong Delta region (Vietnam).

Keywords: support, tourism development, agritourism, local community.

Received: 21/06/2023
Accepted: 15/09/2023
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i7.936
RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo visa demonstrar a influência dos benefícios pessoais no apoio ao desenvolvimento do agroturismo entre a comunidade local através do papel mediador da satisfação comunitária e da qualidade de vida.

Método: Para testar as hipóteses de pesquisa, são usados métodos de análise quantitativa, incluindo teste de confiabilidade das escalas usando coeficiente alfa de Cronbach, análise exploratória de fatores (AFE), análise fatorial confirmatória (CFA) e modelagem de equações estruturais (SEM). Os dados para o estudo foram coletados a partir de um levantamento de 212 indivíduos que residem em potenciais áreas de desenvolvimento do agroturismo na região do Delta do Mekong, Vietnã.

Resultados: Os resultados do estudo mostram que os benefícios pessoais têm um impacto positivo no apoio ao desenvolvimento do agroturismo entre a comunidade local. Além disso, o estudo revela que os benefícios pessoais também influenciam positivamente a satisfação da comunidade e a qualidade de vida. Simultaneamente, a satisfação da comunidade e a qualidade de vida são fatores cruciais que impulsionam o apoio ao desenvolvimento do agroturismo entre a comunidade local na região do Delta do Mekong, no Vietnã.

Conclusões: O apoio comunitário é um fator crucial para o sucesso e o desenvolvimento de um destino turístico, semelhante à existência de uma relação mutualista entre o apoio comunitário e o desenvolvimento turístico. Os resultados da pesquisa fornecem uma base científica para sugerir as principais implicações políticas para promover o apoio da comunidade ao desenvolvimento do agroturismo na região do Delta do Mekong (Vietnã).

Palavras-chave: apoio, desenvolvimento turístico, agroturismo, comunidade local.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the context where humanity is facing issues such as climate change, increasing food prices, and global economic and regional crises, the link between agriculture and tourism can offer fundamental solutions for many countries (Torres & Momsen, 2011). While agritourism has a long history in developed nations, its growth in developing countries, particularly in Asian countries, remains limited (Bhatta et al., 2019; Bhatta & Ohe, 2019). Rural tourism development not only generates employment and economic growth (Abadi & Khakzand, 2022) but also preserve traditional cultural values (Barbieri, 2013) and protects the environment (Dewandini & Dananto, 2021), improves infrastructure and technical facilities (Dua et al., 2022). Furthermore, agritourism helps reduce rural labor migration to urban areas (Tew & Barbieri, 2012) and enhances social participation (Roman et al., 2020). Thanks to the significant values
that agritourism brings, many researchers have shown great interest in studying it (Getz & Page, 1997).

Even though destinations may not possess abundant natural resources, they can still attract tourists through artificial factors that are creative and authentic (Emir et al., 2016). The elements comprising tourism products become more unique, distinctive, and rich when they contain the warmth, friendliness, and hospitality of local hosts, creating a unique social space for the expression and exchange of cultures (Tasci et al., 2013). Community involvement in tourism is crucial as the needs of tourists can be met through the community. Moreover, encountering and being served by the local community motivate many tourists to visit (Nhan & Thong, 2021). The success of tourism depends on the active support of the community, as without community participation, the sustainability of the tourism industry is threatened (Gursoy et al., 2002; Qin et al., 2021).

In recent years, agritourism in the Mekong Delta region has been experiencing strong growth. The region’s distinctive agritourism products include experiences such as observing ripe rice fields, participating in organic vegetable farming, engaging in agricultural harvests, and experiencing a day as a farmer. The success of these agritourism destinations cannot be separated from the residents’ support. In recent times, various studies have been conducted on the support of residents in tourism development from different perspectives. Most of these studies have been conducted in developed countries, while few studies have been conducted in developing countries with contexts similar to Vietnam. In Vietnam, there are few studies on the support of residents in agritourism, especially in the Mekong Delta region. Therefore, this study is conducted to demonstrate the influence of personal benefits, community satisfaction, and quality of life on the support for agritourism development among the residents in the Mekong Delta region, Vietnam.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES
2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
2.1.1 Agritourism

The term “agritourism” is defined as a series of tourism activities related to agriculture. These activities are carried out on farms or other agricultural environments for relaxation, entertainment, or educational purposes (Arroyo et al., 2013; Karampela et al., 2021). Agritourism is a term used to refer to activities that involve visiting farms or agricultural production processes, or agricultural businesses for the aim of awareness,
interest, education, or recreation, including agricultural resources, natural resources, and human resources (Tew, 2010). Agritourism includes farm tourism and areas with resident communities, excluding outdoor recreational activities such as national parks, forests, or wilderness areas (Oppermann, 1996). Agritourism is the activity of visiting a farm or any establishment operating in the agricultural sector for the aim of relaxation, entertainment, and increasing awareness, where visitors can actively engage in farm activities (Lobo et al., 1999).

2.1.2 Residents’ support for tourism development

Residents’ support for tourism development is not a new issue in research. According to Sirakaya et al. (2002), attitudes and support of residents for tourism development have been studied since the mid-1970s. Residents’ support for tourism development refers to the activities in which residents participate to help tourism grow (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). The attitude of residents toward tourism development is extremely important, especially positive support from residents, which is a critical factor for successful tourism development (Nunkoo & So, 2016; Erul et al., 2020; Yapanto et al., 2023). Resident support for tourism is measured by attitudes, including support for current, additional, and specific tourism development projects (Gursoy et al., 2002). Community support for tourism involves supporting the establishment of new tourism facilities, recognizing the necessity of tourism development for the local area (Tinggi et al., 2011), and supporting tourism organizations to invest in the local area (McGehee & Andereck, 2009).

2.2 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

2.2.1 The relationship between personal benefits and community satisfaction

When the personal benefits derived from tourism development exceed the recognized costs, community satisfaction increases (Ko & Stewart, 2002; Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011). The community’s satisfaction with tourism development is influenced by the personal benefits received from it (Woo et al., 2015). As presented by Su & Swanson (2020), personal benefits from tourism development positively affect the satisfaction with the residents’ lives. Based on this, the study proposes hypothesis H1: Personal benefits have a positive impact on community satisfaction.
2.2.2 The relationship between personal benefits and quality of life

According to Allen et al. (1993), residents agree with the community orientation which is attracting more tourists because it leads to a better quality of life. Suess et al. (2018) argue that the greater the economic benefits from tourism, the higher the welfare of the resident community. In the field of tourism, some studies have demonstrated that the perceived personal benefits from tourism have a positive impact on the life quality of residents (Yu et al., 2011; Pavlić et al., 2015; Su & Swanson, 2020). Based on this, the study suggests hypothesis H2: Personal benefits positively influence the life quality of the community.

2.2.3 The relationship between personal benefits and support for agritourism development

Positive perception of the benefits of agritourism development positively influences the support for agritourism development among residents (Olya et al., 2018; Yu et al., 2018; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020; Kanwal et al., 2020; Mai et al., 2023). According to Qin et al. (2021), personal benefits have a positive impact on the support for agritourism development among local residents. Nugroho & Numata (2022) have demonstrated that the perception of economic benefits strongly influences residents’ support for tourism development. Based on this, the study proposes hypothesis H3: Personal benefits have a positive impact on the support for agritourism development among local residents.

2.2.4 The relationship between community satisfaction and support for agritourism development

Community satisfaction positively influences the attitude of residents toward supporting agritourism development (Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011). Community satisfaction plays a significant determining role in residents’ support for tourism development (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Some studies have demonstrated that community satisfaction positively affects residents’ support for tourism development (Kanwal et al., 2020; Su & Swanson, 2020; Moghavvemi et al., 2021). Based on this, the study proposes hypothesis H4: Community satisfaction positively affects the support for agritourism development among residents.
2.2.5 The relationship between quality of life and support for agritourism development

Tourism creates opportunities to improve the quality of life for residents (Honey & Raymond, 2009). Good quality of life encourages local communities to engage in supporting tourism development (Woo et al., 2015; Chi et al., 2017; Suess et al., 2018). In the field of tourism, some studies have shown that residents' life quality positively influences their support for tourism development (Woo et al., 2015; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020; Su & Swanson, 2020; Yayla et al., 2023). Based on this, the research proposes hypothesis H5: Quality of life has a positive impact on the support for agritourism development among residents.

Based on the literature review and research hypotheses, the research model on the influence of personal benefits, community satisfaction, and quality of life on the support for agritourism development among residents is established as follows:

![Proposed research model](source: authors)

Table 1: Interpretation of observed variables in the research model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Observed variable</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Benefits</td>
<td>PB1: My family members will get good jobs.</td>
<td>Likert 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PB2: My family will gain economic benefits.</td>
<td>Likert 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PB3: Widen my view of the field and knowledge.</td>
<td>Likert 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PB4: The quality of my life will be improved.</td>
<td>Likert 1-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### References: Zhu et al. (2017), Su & Swanson (2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Satisfaction</th>
<th>Likert 1-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS1: Recreation facilities and programs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS2: Opportunity to earn an adequate income.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS3: Medical and health care services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS4: Overall satisfaction with the quality of life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References: Theodori (2001), Su & Swanson (2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Life</th>
<th>Likert 1-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QL1: The conditions of my life are excellent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QL2: So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QL3: I am satisfied with my life in general.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References: Woo et al. (2015), Yayla et al. (2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support for Tourism Development</th>
<th>Likert 1-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STD1: I am happy and proud of the presence of tourists visiting the region.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD2: I support the tourism industry as one of the most important industries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD3: I support the tourism industry as it continues to play an important economic role.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD4: I support the tourism industry as it helps my community continue to grow in the right direction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References: Su & Swanson (2020); Yayla et al. (2023)

**3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1 **RESEARCH SCALES**

The research scales were adjusted through qualitative research to be more appropriate in the research context. The adjusted measurement scales are as follows: The personal benefits scale includes 4 observed variables inherited from the studies of Zhu et al. (2017) and Su & Swanson (2020). The community satisfaction scale consists of 4 observed variables inherited from the studies of Theodori (2001) and Su & Swanson (2020). The quality of life scale comprises 3 observed variables inherited from the studies of Woo et al. (2015) and Yayla et al. (2023). The support for the agritourism development scale includes 4 observed variables inherited from the studies of Su & Swanson (2020) and Yayla et al. (2023).
3.2 DATA AND ANALYSIS METHOD

Analytical Method: To test the research hypotheses, quantitative analysis methods are used, including reliability testing of the scales using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM).

Research Data: According to Nguyen (2011), the sample size needed for a study depends on various factors such as the data analysis method and the required reliability. Using structural equation modeling (SEM), the minimum sample size should be 200 observations to ensure reliability (Hoelter, 1983). An official survey was conducted during the period from October 2022 to November 2022. The sampling method used is stratified random sampling. The subjects surveyed are residents living in areas with potential for agritourism development. The survey area focuses on Dong Thap Province, Tien Giang Province, An Giang Province, and Can Tho City (all in the Mekong Delta region). The number of valid survey questionnaires obtained is 212 observations, all of which are used to test the research hypotheses.

4 RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 EVALUATE SCALE RELIABILITY

The development of measurement scales was conducted following the standard two-step procedure to test the reliability of the scales (Narasimhan & Jayaram, 1998), including Cronbach’s alpha testing and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). According to the result in Table 2, all measurement scales achieved satisfactory reliability. The Cronbach’s alpha values of the scales were greater than 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), specifically ranging from 0.779 to 0.893. The lowest value was for the quality of life scale (0.779), and the highest was for the support for agritourism development scale (0.893). Additionally, the factor loadings of the observed variables were all above 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998). This indicates that all measurement scales in the research model demonstrate reliability and achieve internal consistency.

Table 2: Evaluation of scale reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>0.769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on Table 3, the results of composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) meet the requirements, with CR values (minimum 0.780) and AVE values (minimum 0.542) both satisfying the criteria (Jöreskog, 1971; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Additionally, the test results show that the correlations between the conceptual constructs are discriminant (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the research data is appropriate, demonstrating convergent validity, unidimensionality, discriminant validity, and reliability, and is consistent with market data.

4.2 TEST THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

According to the results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) in Table 4, all the values meet the requirements, including $\chi^2/df = 1.848$, P-value = 0.000, GFI = 0.917, TLI = 0.949, CFI = 0.959, and RMSEA = 0.063 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). This means that the research model is suitable for the market data. Based on Table 4, all the research hypotheses are accepted with a confidence level of 99%.
### Table 4: Test research hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Unstandardized Estimated value</th>
<th>Standard Error S.E</th>
<th>Critical Ratio C.R</th>
<th>Standardized estimated value</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS ← PB</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>7.250</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>H1: accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QL ← PB</td>
<td>0.497</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>7.575</td>
<td>0.704</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>H2: accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD ← PB</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>2.550</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>H3: accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD ← CS</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>4.440</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>H4: accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD ← QL</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>3.413</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>H5: accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results of analysis by the authors

#### 4.3 DISCUSSION

The test results have demonstrated a positive correlation between personal benefits and community satisfaction with a confidence level of 99%. This indicates that as individuals receive more benefits from the development of agritourism (such as better jobs, economic benefits, and improved quality of life), community satisfaction will be significantly improved. The research finding aligns with previous studies proposed by Ko & Stewart (2002), Vargas-Sanchez et al. (2011), Woo et al. (2015), and Su & Swanson (2020). Additionally, the study has shown a positive correlation between personal benefits and the community’s quality of life with a confidence level of 95%. This indicates that the personal benefits gained from agritourism development play an essential role in enhancing the community’s quality of life. This finding is consistent with studies proposed by Yu et al. (2011), Pavlić et al. (2015), Suess et al. (2018), and Su & Swanson (2020). Furthermore, the test result also demonstrates a positive correlation between personal benefits and the community’s support for agritourism development with a confidence level of 99%. This suggests that as individuals receive more benefits from tourism development, their support for agritourism development will be higher (Qin et al., 2021). These research findings are consistent with studies proposed by Olya et al. (2018), Yu et al. (2018), Demirović Bajrami et al. (2020), Kanwal et al. (2020), Tosun et al. (2020), Nugroho & Numata (2022).

The study has demonstrated a positive correlation between community satisfaction and the community’s support for agritourism development with a confidence level of 99%. Indeed, as community satisfaction increases, individuals will have a more positive attitude toward supporting agritourism development (Vargas-Sanchez et al., 2011), thus encouraging their active participation in supporting...
agritourism development (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). The result is consistent with previous studies proposed by Kanwal et al. (2020), Su & Swanson (2020), and Moghavvemi et al. (2021). Finally, the research has also shown a positive correlation between the quality of life and the community’s support for agritourism development with a confidence level of 99%. This indicates that the quality of life is an essential factor that encourages the community’s active participation in supporting agritourism development (Woo et al., 2015; Chi et al., 2017; Suess et al., 2018). These research findings in the field of tourism align with studies by Woo et al. (2015), Demirović Bajrami et al. (2020), Su & Swanson (2020), and Yayla et al. (2023).

5 CONCLUSION

Community support is a crucial factor for the success and development of a tourism destination, similar to the existence of a mutualistic relationship between community support and tourism development. The research results have demonstrated a positive relationship between personal benefits and the community’s support for agritourism development among the residents in the Mekong Delta region, Vietnam. Additionally, the study has revealed that personal benefits positively influence community satisfaction and the quality of life within the community. Furthermore, community satisfaction and quality of life are important factors that encourage the community’s participation in supporting agritourism development among the residents in the Mekong Delta region. The research findings provide a scientific basis for suggesting key policy implications to promote community support for agritourism development in the Mekong Delta region (Vietnam).
REFERENCES


