



FACTORS AFFECTING TOURISTS' SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN MANG DEN COMMUNE, QUANG NGAI PROVINCE, VIETNAM

Nghi Bao Duy¹,

Nguyen Mai Quoc Viet²,

Thai Cong Dan³ⁱ

^{1,2}Department of History-Geography-Tourism,
School of Political Science, Social Sciences and Humanities,
Can Tho University,
Vietnam

³School of Foreign Languages,
Can Tho University,
Vietnam

Abstract:

This study investigates the factors affecting tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam, aiming to provide guidance for sustainable tourism development. A mixed-method approach was employed, combining secondary data collection from government reports, academic sources, maps, and media with primary data collection through face-to-face and online questionnaire surveys. The questionnaire covered tourists' demographics, evaluations of six satisfaction criteria (landscape and natural environment, infrastructure and tourism services, human factors, tourism activities and products, prices, and overall satisfaction), and additional suggestions for improvement. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed, with 150 valid responses obtained, using a convenience sampling technique to ensure representativeness. Data were analyzed with SPSS 20.0, including descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify and group satisfaction factors. Results indicate that tourist satisfaction depends not only on infrastructure and services but also significantly on local residents' attitudes, natural landscapes, cultural experiences, and tourism activities. Strengths of Mang Den include its fresh climate, serene environment, and unique cultural features, while challenges such as insufficient professional service skills, infrastructure gaps, environmental management, and limited promotion affect visitor experiences. Recommendations include coordinated development strategies, infrastructure improvement, skills training for local residents, enhanced marketing, and sustainable tourism management to increase satisfaction and promote long-term development.

ⁱ Correspondence: email tcdan@ctu.edu.vn

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1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale

In the current context of socio-economic integration and development, tourism is not only regarded as a comprehensive economic sector that generates high added value, but also plays an important role in preserving cultural identity, creating employment, and improving the livelihoods of local communities. One of the most prominent trends in Vietnam's tourism industry in recent years is community-based tourism—a form of tourism that involves the direct participation of local residents, is based on the exploitation of natural and indigenous cultural resources, and aims toward sustainable development.

Mang Den Commune is endowed by nature with a cool climate throughout the year, majestic mountainous landscapes, a diverse ecosystem, and the distinctive culture of ethnic minority groups. These are favorable conditions for the development of community-based tourism, combining leisure, nature-based experiences, and exploration of local culture. In recent years, community-based tourism in Mang Den has gradually taken shape and attracted the attention of tourists. However, in practice, the level of tourist satisfaction remains relatively low due to various factors such as underdeveloped infrastructure, limited supporting services, a lack of diverse experiential products, inconsistent service quality, and insufficient promotion and marketing activities.

In tourism research, tourist satisfaction is considered an important indicator reflecting service quality and plays a decisive role in tourists' intention to revisit and recommend a destination to others. Properly identifying and evaluating the factors affecting tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism will provide a scientific basis for local authorities to improve product quality, enhance visitor experiences, and build a sustainable destination image.

Although numerous domestic and international studies have examined tourist satisfaction, in Mang Den—a relatively new destination—there is still a lack of in-depth research from this perspective. Therefore, the selection of the topic “Factors Affecting Tourists' Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam” is both necessary and meaningful in terms of theory and practice. The research results will not only contribute to enriching the scientific foundation of community-based tourism studies but also support local authorities, businesses, and communities in developing appropriate solutions to enhance tourist satisfaction, thereby transforming Mang Den into an attractive and sustainably developed destination in the future.

2. Research Objectives

2.1. General Objective

It is to evaluate and identify the factors affecting tourists' satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province, thereby proposing solutions to improve service quality and tourist experiences, contributing to the sustainable development of community-based tourism in the locality.

2.1.2. Specific Objectives

- To systematize the theoretical framework and review domestic and international studies related to tourists' satisfaction and factors influencing community-based tourism.
- To analyze the current status of community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune and identify key factors affecting tourists' satisfaction.
- To measure the impact of these factors on tourists' satisfaction and propose solutions to enhance service quality, tourist experience, and the sustainable development of community-based tourism in Mang Den.

2.2. Research Questions

To address the research objectives, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What theoretical frameworks and key factors have been identified in previous studies regarding tourists' satisfaction with community-based tourism?
- What is the current status of community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, and which factors influence tourists' satisfaction?
- How do the identified factors affect tourists' satisfaction, and what solutions can be proposed to enhance satisfaction and promote the sustainable development of community-based tourism in Mang Den?

3. Literature Review

3.1. Community-Based Tourism

3.1.1. Concept of Community-Based Tourism

According to the Vietnam Tourism Law (2017), community-based tourism (CBT) is a form of tourism developed based on local communities, aiming to promote historical, cultural, and economic values. This type of tourism contributes to local socio-economic development, increases residents' income, and supports sustainable tourism development.

Community-based tourism emphasizes the role of local people as the core actors in tourism activities. Local communities participate directly in providing tourism services while preserving and promoting indigenous cultural values, thereby creating unique and authentic experiences for visitors.

In Vietnam, several community-based tourism destinations have been developed successfully, such as Kon Pring Community Tourism Village and Kon Kơ Tu Community Tourism Village (Quang Ngai Province), Quynh Son Community Tourism Village (Lang Son Province), and Hoai Khao Community Tourism Village (Cao Bang Province, North of Vietnam).

In Mang Den, community-based tourism activities have gradually emerged and expanded, forming an important foundation for sustainable tourism development. According to official media sources, Kon Plong District currently has two recognized community-based tourism villages, namely Kon Pring Cultural–Tourism Village and Vi Rơ Ngheo Community Tourism Village. These villages attract tourists by preserving traditional cultural identities and maintaining distinctive ecological landscapes. In addition, dozens of homestay establishments managed by local residents are operating, contributing to accommodation capacity and enhancing tourist experiences. Several other villages are also being developed under the community-based tourism model, indicating strong growth potential for CBT in Mang Den.

3.1.2. Characteristics of Community-Based Tourism

One of the most prominent characteristics of community-based tourism is the direct participation of local communities. Local residents are not only service providers but also custodians of cultural heritage. Tourism activities such as homestay accommodation, traditional cuisine experiences, tour guiding, and folk performances are organized and managed by the community.

Community-based tourism is grounded in the use of local resources, including natural landscapes, traditional crafts, festivals, customs, and daily lifestyles. These resources form the basis for tourism products and create distinctive experiences that differentiate CBT from mass tourism.

Furthermore, community-based tourism is closely associated with the principle of sustainable development, aiming to balance economic benefits, environmental protection, and cultural preservation. This approach helps minimize negative impacts on natural resources and local communities while ensuring long-term tourism development.

3.1.3. Roles of Community-Based Tourism

Community-based tourism plays an important role at multiple levels. For local communities, it creates employment opportunities, increases income, improves living standards, and encourages the preservation of cultural traditions. For tourists, CBT offers authentic and immersive experiences that enhance understanding of local culture, history, and lifestyles. At the societal level, community-based tourism contributes to cultural heritage conservation, strengthens destination image, promotes social interaction, and supports balanced economic and environmental development.

3.2. Tourist Satisfaction in Community-Based Tourism

3.2.1. Concept of Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is defined as a positive emotional state resulting from tourists' evaluation of their travel experience, based on a comparison between expectations and actual experiences.

According to Oliver (1997), satisfaction is the outcome of the comparison process between expectations and perceived performance. In the context of tourism, Yoon and Uysal (2005) argue that tourist satisfaction depends not only on service quality and infrastructure but also on interactions with local communities and the authenticity of cultural experiences. Garrod (2003) further suggests that tourists may tolerate material limitations if they receive sincere hospitality and meaningful engagement with local life. Thus, tourist satisfaction in community-based tourism is a multidimensional concept influenced by both tangible and intangible factors.

3.2.2. Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction

3.2.2.1. Service Quality

Service quality is a critical determinant of tourist satisfaction. In community-based tourism, service quality encompasses accommodation, food services, tour guiding, and experiential activities related to local culture.

According to Parasuraman *et al.* (1988), service quality is reflected through five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. When services are delivered as promised, promptly, and with care, tourists feel comfortable and satisfied. Conversely, poor service performance may reduce satisfaction, even if the destination has attractive natural or cultural resources.

Therefore, improving service quality in community-based tourism requires not only upgrading facilities but also enhancing service skills and professionalism among local residents.

3.2.2.2. Infrastructure and Physical Facilities

Infrastructure and physical facilities form the foundation for tourist convenience and safety. Zeithaml and Bitner (2000) emphasize that basic infrastructure, such as transportation, electricity, water supply, sanitation, accommodation, and communication systems, is essential for positive tourist experiences.

In community-based tourism, facilities do not need to be highly modern but must meet basic standards of hygiene, safety, and comfort. Inadequate infrastructure, such as poor road conditions or unsafe accommodation, may negatively affect tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions. Therefore, infrastructure investment should be appropriate and consistent with the characteristics of local communities.

3.2.2.3. Human Factors and Local Community

Human factors, particularly the attitudes and behaviors of local residents, play a central role in community-based tourism. Friendliness, hospitality, communication skills, and service attitudes directly influence tourists' perceptions and satisfaction.

According to Bitner (1990), interactions between service providers and tourists represent "*moments of truth*" that shape overall impressions. Garrod (2003) highlights that sincere hospitality and community engagement can create unique experiential value that compensates for material shortcomings. Consequently, capacity-building for local residents is essential to enhance sustainable tourist satisfaction.

3.2.2.4. Tourism Resources

Tourism resources include both natural resources (landscapes, climate, ecosystems) and cultural resources (customs, festivals, architecture, cuisine). According to McIntosh *et al.* (1995), tourism resources form the foundation of tourism products and determine destination attractiveness.

In community-based tourism, tourists are particularly attracted to pristine environments and distinctive cultural identities. Environmental degradation, loss of authenticity, or excessive commercialization may reduce destination appeal and negatively affect tourist satisfaction. Therefore, effective conservation and sustainable resource management are crucial.

3.2.2.5. Price and Cost Reasonableness

Price is an important factor influencing tourist satisfaction. Zeithaml (1988) notes that price reflects perceived value, defined as the comparison between benefits received and costs incurred.

In community-based tourism, tourists expect reasonable, transparent prices that correspond to service quality and contribute to local development. According to Monroe (1990), fair pricing enhances satisfaction, revisit intention, and positive word-of-mouth, whereas unreasonable pricing reduces trust and satisfaction.

3.2.2.6. Promotion and Marketing Activities

Promotion and marketing activities play a key role in shaping tourists' expectations and attracting visitors. Kotler *et al.* (2017) argue that effective marketing communication helps create awareness, interest, and trust.

In community-based tourism, promotion should emphasize cultural values, local lifestyles, and community participation rather than only physical attractions. Accurate and targeted promotion helps align expectations with actual experiences, thereby enhancing tourist satisfaction.

3.3. Models and Theoretical Foundations of Tourist Satisfaction

3.3.1. SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), is widely used to measure service quality and customer satisfaction. The model includes five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. In community-based tourism, SERVQUAL is useful for identifying service gaps between tourists' expectations and actual experiences.

3.3.2. Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) Model

The Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) model, proposed by Fornell *et al.* (1996), measures satisfaction at industry or national levels. The model includes customer expectations, perceived quality, perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty, and complaints. In community-based tourism, CSI helps evaluate overall tourist satisfaction and predict revisit and recommendation intentions.

3.3.3. Review of Previous Studies

Previous studies have developed various models to analyze tourist satisfaction. Yoon and Uysal (2005) propose a model linking travel motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty, emphasizing satisfaction as a mediating variable. Garrod (2003) highlights the importance of human factors and community participation in creating positive tourism experiences. These studies provide a theoretical and empirical foundation for developing the research model applied to community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province.

In summary, this part has reviewed the theoretical background and previous studies related to community-based tourism and tourist satisfaction. Based on the concepts, characteristics, roles, influencing factors, and relevant theoretical models, this chapter provides a solid foundation for developing the research model and hypotheses in the subsequent chapter, focusing on factors affecting tourists' satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province.

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4. Research Methodology

4.1. Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data for the study, "Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province, Vietnam", were collected from various sources to provide a theoretical foundation and practical context for analysis. The collection took place from October to December 2025, alongside the field survey.

Key sources included:

- Statistical reports from the Quang Ngai Provincial Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Division of Culture and Information of Kon Plong District, and

the People's Committee of Mang Den Commune, reflecting tourism development, arrivals, revenue, infrastructure, and community-based tourism programs,

- Academic materials such as books, theses, journal articles, and online resources,
- Maps, images, and mass media related to Mang Den tourism,
- Secondary data aimed to establish a theoretical framework, provide an overview of community-based tourism development in Mang Den, and serve as a benchmark for comparing primary data. Data processing involved identifying relevant information, collecting reliable sources, synthesizing, and systematizing the information for research purposes.

4.2. Primary Data Collection

Primary data were collected to analyze the factors affecting tourist satisfaction and to propose solutions for improving destination quality. The data included tourists' demographics (gender, age, occupation, income, visit frequency) and their evaluation of satisfaction factors such as infrastructure, service quality, natural and social environment, prices, local residents, and intention to revisit.

Data collection occurred at tourist attractions, sightseeing areas, and accommodation facilities in Mang Den Commune, Kon Plong District, Quang Ngai Province, during October–December 2025 to ensure currency and representativeness. Two collection methods were used:

- Face-to-face surveys: Questionnaires distributed directly to tourists,
- Online surveys: Questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, email, and social media platforms such as Facebook and Zalo.

Collected data were coded and processed using SPSS 16.0 for Windows. Analytical methods included descriptive statistics to describe sample characteristics, Cronbach's Alpha for scale reliability, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify and group factors affecting tourist satisfaction.

4.3. Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire method collected primary data on tourists' perceptions and satisfaction after experiencing community-based tourism in Mang Den.

The questionnaire had three main parts:

- General information: Gender, age, education, occupation, number of visits, travel type, and purpose,
- Tourists' evaluation of community-based tourism: Six criteria with 20 observed variables measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree), covering:
 - Landscape and natural environment,
 - Infrastructure and tourism services,
 - Human factors – local community,
 - Community-based tourism activities and products,
 - Price and travel costs,

- Overall tourist satisfaction.

- Additional comments: Suggestions for improving service quality, facilities, or tourism experiences.

A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 150 valid responses were obtained, ensuring representativeness.

The sampling method was convenience sampling, selecting tourists present at community-based tourism sites and accommodation facilities during the survey period. This method is practical, time-efficient, and cost-effective for exploratory research.

4.4. Sample Size Determination

Sample size determination followed established guidelines:

- Minimum sample size of 30 (Stutely, 2010).
- For Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Hair *et al.* (2006) suggest a minimum of 50, preferably 100, with a ratio of observations to measurement variables of at least 5:1,
- Given that the study included 30 observed variables, the minimum required sample size was calculated using a ratio of 5 observations per variable, as recommended for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

4.5. Sampling Technique and Data Analysis

A non-probability convenience sampling method was used, selecting respondents who were easily accessible. This approach helped save time, reduce costs, and obtain sufficient data for exploratory analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 20.0, including:

- Descriptive statistics – to summarize demographic characteristics and survey responses,
- Scale reliability analysis – Cronbach's Alpha,
- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) – to identify and group factors affecting tourist satisfaction.

4.6. Proposed Research Model

Based on the literature review and practical conditions, the study proposed the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** Positive relationship between landscape and natural environment and tourist satisfaction.
- **H2:** Positive relationship between infrastructure and tourism services and tourist satisfaction.
- **H3:** Positive relationship between human factors and local community and tourist satisfaction.
- **H4:** Positive relationship between community-based tourism activities and products and tourist satisfaction.
- **H5:** Positive relationship between price and travel costs and tourist satisfaction.

- **H6:** Positive relationship between overall tourist satisfaction and tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism.

These hypotheses guided the questionnaire design and data analysis, linking six criteria and twenty observed variables to tourist satisfaction outcomes.

4.7. Natural Conditions and Tourist Satisfaction

Mang Den's natural conditions—cool climate (16–22°C), forests, waterfalls, lakes, and rich vegetation—create a favorable first impression and influence tourist satisfaction. Tourists appreciate the fresh air, peaceful atmosphere, and separation from urban areas, viewing Mang Den as a “*mental retreat*.”

However, challenges include rainy-season hazards, slippery roads, dense fog, and cold weather, which may limit outdoor activities and affect perceptions. Overall, natural conditions serve as both a competitive advantage and an emotional determinant of tourist satisfaction. Preserving landscapes, sustainable resource use, and providing information on weather and travel routes contribute to improved experiences and satisfaction.

5. Research Results and Discussion

5.1. Overview of the Survey Sample

To ensure the study is conducted scientifically and provides practical value, the author collected data through a structured questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was designed to be valid, aligned with the research objectives, and distributed to 200 tourists who had experienced community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province. The collected data provided a complete database for analysis. After collection, the data were entered and processed using SPSS 20 to ensure objective, accurate, and reliable analysis results.

In addition to the quantitative survey method, the author also employed direct observation to record tourists' behaviors and perceptions, supplementing and reinforcing the research findings. The combination of these two methods provided a more comprehensive and authentic view of the research subjects, objects, and scope. The survey results form an important basis for evaluating tourists' satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den and for proposing solutions to improve local tourism services and experiences.

5.1.1. Sample by Gender

Table 4.1: Gender of Tourists

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	112	55.7
Female	88	43.8
Total	200	100.0

Source: Survey data analysis, 2025, n = 200.

The survey was conducted among 200 tourists, including 112 males (55.7%) and 88 females (43.8%). The gender distribution is relatively balanced, reflecting the participation of both male and female tourists who have visited and experienced community-based tourism in Mang Den.

5.1.2. Sample by Age

Table 4.2: Age of Tourists

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Under 18	1	0.5
18 – 25	124	61.7
26 – 35	33	16.4
36 – 45	30	15.0
Over 45	12	6.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Survey data analysis, 2025, n = 200.

The surveyed tourists ranged from under 18 to over 45 years old. The majority of respondents were aged 18–25 (61.7%), followed by 26–35 (16.4%), 36–45 (15%), over 45 (6%), and under 18 (0.5%). This age distribution provides reliable information for analyzing tourist satisfaction.

5.1.3. Sample by Education Level

Table 4.3: Education Level of Tourists

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lower Secondary School	1	0.5
High School	6	3.0
College	7	3.5
Intermediate	2	1.0
University and Postgraduate	185	92.0
Total	201	100.0

Source: Survey data analysis, 2025, n = 201.

Among 201 respondents, education levels were categorized into five groups: Lower Secondary School, High School, College, Intermediate, and University/Postgraduate. The majority (92%) had a University or higher degree, while the other levels were minor in proportion.

5.1.4. Sample by Occupation

Table 4.4: Occupation of Tourists

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Students	100	49.8
Office Workers	46	22.9
Business/Entrepreneurs	40	19.9
High School Students	4	2.0
Others	11	5.5
Total	201	100.0

Source: Survey data analysis, 2025, n = 201.

Among the 201 tourists surveyed, the largest group was students (49.8%), followed by office workers (22.9%), business/entrepreneurs (19.9%), high school students (2%), and other occupations (5.5%). This version organizes the data clearly, uses proper English grammar, and maintains all the original survey details.

5.2. Channels Tourists Learned About Community-Based Tourism in Mang Den

Survey results show that tourists learned about community-based tourism in Mang Den through multiple information channels, reflecting diverse information-seeking behaviors. Social media was the most influential channel, with 99 tourists (49.3%) citing platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. This highlights the dominant role of social media in providing visual, up-to-date, and experience-based content that strongly influences travel decisions, particularly among younger tourists.

Travel and tour operator websites ranked second, used by 77 tourists (38.3%). This indicates that many tourists still value official and detailed information, including itineraries, prices, and reviews, and suggests that Mang Den's visibility on tourism platforms has improved in recent years. Traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, and television informed 56 tourists (27.9%), demonstrating its continued importance, especially among middle-aged visitors. Word-of-mouth from friends or relatives was reported by 54 tourists (26.9%), emphasizing the strong influence of personal recommendations based on real experiences.

Smaller proportions of tourists learned about Mang Den through school or organizational programs (18.9%) or through previous visits (7.5%), indicating limited roles for educational tourism and repeat visitation. Only 0.5% cited other sources. Overall, the findings suggest that digital media—particularly social media—plays a central role in promoting community-based tourism in Mang Den, while improvements in tourism products and experiences are needed to encourage return visits.

5.3. Frequency of Visits to Mang Den

The survey results show that the group of tourists who visited Mang Den “2–3 times” accounted for the largest proportion at 36.3%. This indicates that a significant portion of visitors returned after their first experience, suggesting that the quality of services,

natural landscapes, and community-based tourism activities in Mang Den are sufficient to leave a positive impression and motivate repeat visits. This is a positive signal, demonstrating that the destination can retain a stable group of visitors, which plays an important role in promoting sustainable tourism development.

The group of tourists visiting for the first time accounted for 34.8%, nearly equal to the 2–3 times group. This shows that Mang Den continues to attract a substantial number of new visitors, supported by the dissemination of its image through social media, newspapers, and word-of-mouth. Attracting new tourists is crucial for expanding the market and supporting the long-term development of community-based tourism.

Meanwhile, the group visiting more than three times accounted for 28.9%, lower than the other two groups but still relatively high for a community-based tourism destination. This reflects a loyal group of tourists who frequently choose Mang Den as a preferred destination. This group often has an emotional attachment to the destination, which may stem from their appreciation of the climate, natural scenery, cultural experiences, or the suitability of Mang Den for regular leisure trips. These repeat visitors represent a sustainable and valuable source of tourism and play a significant role in assessing overall satisfaction.

Overall, the distribution among the three groups is relatively balanced, ranging from 28.9% to 36.3%, indicating that Mang Den not only attracts new visitors but also retains a considerable number of returning tourists. However, the proportion of visitors who came more than three times is still lower than the 2–3 times group, suggesting that Mang Den needs to further enhance the quality of tourism products, diversify experiential activities, and improve infrastructure to maintain visitor interest in future visits.

5.3.1. Service Quality

Service quality is one of the most critical factors affecting tourists' evaluations and overall satisfaction in tourism activities. In community-based tourism, service quality not only includes the completeness of tangible offerings such as accommodation, dining, or tour guidance, but also involves the direct participation of the local community and the preservation of cultural values. Unlike commercial tourism, where businesses play the dominant role, community-based tourism emphasizes the connection between tourists' experiences and the local socio-cultural environment.

Thus, service quality in community-based tourism consists of both tangible elements (facilities, equipment, landscapes) and intangible elements (sincerity, friendliness, local identity) perceived by tourists throughout their visit.

From a theoretical perspective, service quality is often analyzed through the SERVQUAL model, which includes reliability, responsiveness, competence, empathy, and tangibles. These dimensions reflect the extent to which services meet tourists' expectations before, during, and after the service. For visitors to Mang Den—a developing community-based tourism destination leveraging natural and cultural advantages—maintaining and improving service quality is crucial. Most tourists choose

Mang Den not only for relaxation but also to explore pristine ecosystems, experience local life, and seek cultural differences. Therefore, service quality must go beyond adequacy to demonstrate professionalism, sincerity, and local distinctiveness.

Reliability is a fundamental factor that ensures tourists' confidence in the destination. This is reflected in the consistent delivery of services, including check-in times, tour schedules, food quality, and safety measures. When tourists perceive services as stable, accurate, and consistent, they form a positive impression and value the destination highly. In community-based tourism, reliability also encompasses transparent pricing, clear instructions, and consistency between promotional information and actual experiences.

5.3.2. Facilities and Technical Infrastructure

Facilities and technical infrastructure are essential factors directly influencing tourists' experiences and satisfaction in community-based tourism. In this context, facilities include not only physical structures such as homestays, restrooms, roads, signage, and visitor areas, but also technical equipment supporting activities, ensuring safety, and providing convenience. A destination with good infrastructure enables tourists to feel comfortable, professional, and secure, thereby enhancing overall satisfaction.

Research identifies three key aspects of facilities and technical infrastructure:

- **Accommodation and dining facilities:** In Mang Den, homestays are the most common lodging type. Cleanliness, comfort, safety, and available amenities directly affect tourist perceptions. Dining facilities—including food hygiene, presentation, and service quality—also contribute to the overall experience.
- **Technical infrastructure:** Roads, parking areas, lighting, signage, rest areas, and outdoor activity facilities all fall into this category. Good infrastructure improves accessibility, reduces risk, and enhances convenience. Conversely, poor roads, unclear signage, or poorly maintained sites negatively impact tourist satisfaction.
- **Supporting equipment for experiences:** This includes internal transport, safety equipment, activity tools (e.g., kayaks, camping gear), and electronic information systems. Such equipment ensures both physical needs and peace of mind while enhancing the quality of experiences, especially in eco-tourism and nature-based activities.

In addition, the surrounding landscape and environment are integral to the infrastructure in community-based tourism. Investments in conservation, pathways, cleanliness, seating areas, and observation points improve aesthetic value and visitor experience. Mang Den's pine forests, waterfalls, and agricultural landscapes represent natural advantages; combining conservation with suitable facility development ensures that tourists enjoy comfort without compromising natural value.

5.3.3. Tourism Resources

Tourism resources are the foundation of a destination's attractiveness and directly influence visitor satisfaction. In community-based tourism, these resources include

natural, cultural, historical, and human elements, which create uniqueness and local identity. In Mang Den, tourism resources provide the basis for diverse community-based tourism products that satisfy tourists' desire for exploration, hands-on experiences, and connection with nature and local residents.

Natural resources: Mang Den's cool climate, vast pine forests, waterfalls, natural lakes, hills, and agricultural fields offer ecological and scenic advantages. These resources support relaxation and recreational activities such as trekking, camping, farm visits, and ecological learning. The quality and conservation of these resources directly affect tourists' perceptions and overall satisfaction.

Cultural and social resources: Home to several ethnic minority communities, Mang Den preserves rich cultural values, including customs, festivals, crafts, cuisine, and communal lifestyles. These provide authentic experiences that commercial destinations rarely offer. Exploiting cultural values with active local participation enhances visitor experiences while promoting cultural preservation.

Human resources: Locals play dual roles as service providers and living cultural representatives. Their skills, attitudes, local knowledge, and hospitality significantly enhance tourists' experiences, especially in cultural, agricultural, or ecological activities. Supporting resources: Convenient location, transportation links, and access to information and promotions improve utility and visitor experience, influencing both destination choice and length of stay.

5.3.4. Pricing and Costs

Pricing and costs are critical factors directly affecting destination choice and satisfaction. In community-based tourism, these include accommodation, dining, transportation, and activity costs, reflecting the balance between perceived value and expenditure. Reasonable pricing enhances satisfaction, whereas high or unexpected costs reduce it and may discourage repeat visits.

In Mang Den, trip costs include homestay fees, local food, site visits, guide services, and incidental expenses. Visitor satisfaction depends on perceived value in relation to costs, including the authenticity of natural, cultural, and community experiences.

Pricing must also consider community welfare and sustainability. Setting prices too low may reduce service quality and community benefits, while excessively high prices may limit accessibility. A balanced pricing policy ensures economic benefit for the community while remaining acceptable to tourists.

5.3.5. Promotion Activities

Tourism promotion significantly influences tourists' awareness, destination choice, and satisfaction. In community-based tourism, promotion serves not only to advertise products and services but also to build a destination image, highlighting local culture, landscapes, and unique community experiences. Effective promotion helps tourists set realistic expectations, enhancing satisfaction.

Promotion methods include direct marketing at events, tourism fairs, exhibitions, as well as digital channels such as websites, social media, videos, articles, and campaigns. In Mang Den, promotional efforts focus on natural landscapes, community-based experiences (homestays, farming, ethnic culture), and sustainable tourism practices. Accurate and engaging information builds positive expectations, increasing satisfaction during actual visits.

Promotion also shapes the destination's image in tourists' minds. A clear, distinctive image differentiates Mang Den from other regions and attracts target groups. Consistency between promoted and actual experiences enhances trust, satisfaction, and repeat visitation. Additionally, comprehensive information on services, costs, schedules, and local regulations ensures smoother experiences, while lack of information may lead to unmet expectations and reduced satisfaction.

5.4. Analysis of Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism

5.4.1. Reliability Assessment of the Measurement Scales (Cronbach's Alpha)

To study tourist activities in Mang Den, the author developed a questionnaire to explore factors affecting tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism. The research model includes six criteria with 20 observed variables, as follows:

- Landscape – Natural Environment (4 observed variables)
 - CQ1: The natural landscape in Mang Den is beautiful and attractive,
 - CQ2: The air is fresh, and the environment is clean,
 - CQ3: The landscape is well-preserved and minimally polluted,
 - CQ4: Tourism infrastructure is harmoniously integrated with nature.
- Infrastructure – Tourism Services (4 observed variables)
 - CS1: Transportation system is convenient and easy to navigate,
 - CS2: Accommodation (homestays, guesthouses, etc.) is clean and comfortable,
 - CS3: Food services are of good quality and hygienic,
 - CS4: Public restrooms and parking areas are adequate.
- Human Factors – Local Community (3 observed variables)
 - YTCN1: Local people are friendly and hospitable,
 - YTCN2: Tour guides and tourism staff are enthusiastic and professional,
 - YTCN3: The local community actively participates in tourism activities.
- Activities – Community-Based Tourism Products (3 observed variables)
 - HD1: Cultural experience activities are diverse and appealing,
 - HD2: Community-based tours are professionally organized,
 - HD3: Local handicrafts and cuisine are diverse and abundant.
- Price – Service Costs (3 observed variables)
 - GC1: Local handicrafts and cuisine are diverse,

- GC2: Prices of services (food, accommodation, entrance fees, etc.) are transparent,
- GC3: There are multiple price options suitable for different tourist groups,
- Overall Tourist Satisfaction (3 observed variables)
 - SHL1: I am satisfied with my trip to Mang Den,
 - SHL2: I am willing to recommend Mang Den to friends and family,
 - SHL3: I intend to revisit Mang Den in the future,

To ensure the reliability of the measurement scales, variables that do not meet reliability requirements are excluded before performing Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and multiple linear regression.

Scale reliability is evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha:

- Cronbach's Alpha > 0.8: Excellent reliability,
- $0.7 \leq \text{Cronbach's Alpha} \leq 0.8$: Acceptable reliability,
- Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.6 : Acceptable in cases where the research concept is new or in a specific research context (Nunnally, 1978; Peterson, 1994; Slater, 1995, cited by Nguyen Dinh Tho, 2011).

A variable is considered reliable if its corrected item-total correlation ≥ 0.3 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994, cited by Nguyen Dinh Tho, 2011).

Table 4.5: Reliability Assessment of Measurement Scales

Measurement Scale	Number of Reliable Observed Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation Range
Landscape – Natural Environment	4	0.947	0.927 – 0.929
Infrastructure – Tourism Services	4	0.929	0.904 – 0.916
Human Factors – Local Community	3	0.809	0.706 – 0.716
Activities – Community-Based Tourism Products	3	0.935	0.886 – 0.919
Price – Service Costs	3	0.895	0.817 – 0.851
Overall Tourist Satisfaction	3	0.943	0.908 – 0.934

Source: Survey Data Analysis Results, 2025, n = 201.

Interpretation:

All measurement scales show high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.809 to 0.947.

Corrected item-total correlations for all variables exceed 0.3, indicating that each observed variable reliably contributes to its respective scale.

This confirms that the scales are suitable for further Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and multiple linear regression analysis.

The “Landscape – Natural Environment” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.947, and the four observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.927 to 0.929. Therefore, no observed variables were eliminated.

The “Infrastructure – Tourism Services” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.929, and the four observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.904 to 0.916. No observed variables were removed.

The “Human Factors – Local Community” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.809, and the three observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.706 to 0.716. No observed variables were excluded.

The “Activities – Community-Based Tourism Products” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.935, and the three observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.886 to 0.919. No observed variables were removed.

The “Price – Service Costs” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.895, and the three observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.817 to 0.851. No observed variables were eliminated.

The “Overall Tourist Satisfaction” scale has a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.943, and the three observed variables have corrected item-total correlations ranging from 0.908 to 0.934. Therefore, no observed variables were excluded.

5.5. Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism

To accurately evaluate the factors influencing tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai, the author conducted descriptive statistical analysis of the mean values for the observed variables across the six factors in the research model. This analysis was based on responses from 150 tourists.

All observed variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale:

- Very dissatisfied,
- Dissatisfied,
- Neutral,
- Satisfied,
- Very satisfied.

For ease of interpretation, the author classified the mean scores as follows:

- $\leq \text{Mean} \leq 1.8$: “Low”,
- $1.81 \leq \text{Mean} \leq 2.6$: “Average”,
- $2.61 \leq \text{Mean} \leq 3.4$: “Fair”,
- $3.41 \leq \text{Mean} \leq 4.2$: “Good”,
- $4.21 \leq \text{Mean} \leq 5.0$: “Very good”.

In addition, the author conducted interviews and surveys, providing qualitative insights into the factors affecting tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den.

5.5.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Before conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the suitability of the data must be assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

According to Kaiser (1974, cited in Nguyễn Đình Thọ, 2011):

- $KMO \geq 0.9$: Excellent,
- $KMO \geq 0.8$: Good,
- $KMO \geq 0.7$: Acceptable,
- $KMO \geq 0.6$: Mediocre,
- $KMO \geq 0.5$: Poor,
- $KMO < 0.5$: Unacceptable.

According to Hoàng Trọng and Chu Nguyễn Mộng Ngọc (2008), if Bartlett's test has a significance value (Sig.) > 0.05 , meaning it is not statistically significant, EFA should not be applied.

Plus, for EFA, the total variance explained by the extracted factors should be greater than 50% (Le Van Huy & Truong Tran Tram Anh, 2012).

According to the results of the KMO and Bartlett's tests, the KMO coefficient is 0.842, satisfying the condition $KMO > 0.5$. The significance value (Sig.) of Bartlett's test is $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating statistical significance. In addition, according to Gerbing and Anderson (1988, cited in Khanh Duy, p.14), the total variance explained must be greater than 50%. Therefore, the data are suitable for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

To ensure the practical significance of EFA, it is necessary to eliminate measurement variables with factor loadings that do not meet the required standard for each factor. According to Hair *et al.* (1988, cited in Khanh Duy), the factor loading is the criterion to ensure the practical significance of EFA:

- $0.3 < \text{factor loading} \leq 0.4$ is considered the minimum acceptable level,
- $0.4 < \text{factor loading} \leq 0.5$ is considered important,
- Factor loading ≥ 0.5 is considered practically significant.

Also, Hair *et al.* (1988, cited in Khanh Duy) recommend that if the threshold is $0.3 < \text{factor loading} \leq 0.4$, the sample size should be at least 350; for a sample size around 100, the threshold should be factor loading ≥ 0.55 ; for a sample size around 50, factor loading should be ≥ 0.75 . The current study has a sample of 205 respondents, so observed variables with factor loadings > 0.50 are retained.

In the EFA, using the rotated factor matrix, variables are grouped to form new factors. All variables have factor loadings > 0.50 . Thus, from the initial observed variables, no variables were eliminated through EFA, and all 20 variables are grouped into 5 factors. Based on the rotated factor matrix, the author concludes that there are 5 factors influencing tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai. After factor rotation, the factors are as follows:

Factor 1 is influenced by four observed variables:

- The natural landscape in Mang Den is beautiful and attractive. (CQ1),
- Fresh air and a clean environment. (CQ2),

- Tourism infrastructure is harmonious with nature. (CQ4),
- The landscape is preserved and minimally polluted. (CQ3).

This factor is named “Natural Landscape – Environment.”

Factor 2 is influenced by six observed variables:

- Diverse and attractive ethnic cultural experiences. (HD1),
- Community-based tourism tours are professionally organized. (HD2),
- Local handicrafts and cuisine are abundant. (HD3),
- I am satisfied with my trip to Mang Den. (SHL1),
- I am willing to recommend Mang Den to friends and relatives. (SHL2),
- I intend to revisit Mang Den in the future. (SHL3).

This factor is named “Community Tourism Activities & General Tourist Satisfaction.”

Factor 3 is influenced by four observed variables:

- Food and beverage services are of good quality and hygienic (CS3),
- Transportation system is convenient and easy to access (CS1),
- Public restrooms and parking are adequate (CS4),
- Accommodation (homestays, guesthouses, etc.) is clean and comfortable (CS2),

This factor is named “Tourism Infrastructure and Services.”

Factor 4 is influenced by three observed variables:

- Prices of services (food, accommodation, entrance fees, etc.) are transparent (GC2),
- Tourism costs in Măng Đen are reasonable relative to service quality (GC1),
- There are multiple price options suitable for different tourist groups (GC3),

This factor is named “Tourism Costs and Pricing.”

Factor 5 is influenced by three observed variables:

- Local residents are friendly and hospitable (YTCN1),
- The local community actively participates in tourism activities (YTCN3),
- Tour guides and tourism staff are enthusiastic and professional (YTCN2).
- This factor is named “Human – Local Community Factors.”

Through the reliability analysis of the scales and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), five measurement scales were identified as influencing “Tourist Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province.”

5.5.2. Multiple Regression Analysis

Through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), five factors influencing tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Măng Đen Commune, Quảng Ngãi Province were identified, based on 20 observed variables.

Using multiple linear regression analysis, the author examined the model's goodness of fit and determined the number of factors affecting tourist satisfaction. The results indicate that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.459, which is greater than 0.3. This demonstrates that the model is adequate and that the independent variables explain a substantial portion of the variation in the dependent variable. Additionally, the adjusted R^2 is 0.445, showing that the factors included in the model account for 44.5% of

the variation in tourist satisfaction, while the remaining 55.5% is determined by other factors outside the model or by random error. This confirms that the research model has a relatively good fit and that the selected variables are meaningful for predicting tourist satisfaction with community-based tourism in Mang Den.

The regression analysis also provides the Durbin–Watson statistic to test for the presence of first-order autocorrelation in the model. The obtained Durbin–Watson value is 1.537, which falls within the safe range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating that the model does not exhibit first-order autocorrelation. This ensures that the assumption of independent errors is satisfied, consistent with the recommendation of Yahua Qiao (2011).

5.6. General Assessment of Community-Based Tourism

5.6.1. Overall Assessment

In recent years, community-based tourism in Mang Den has made significant progress, gradually becoming a new destination that attracts visitors thanks to its pristine natural scenery, unique forest ecosystems, and the cultural identity of ethnic minority communities. Local tourism has increasingly been oriented towards sustainable development, contributing to employment, income generation, and socio-cultural exchange.

However, the pace of development has not yet matched the area's potential. Some limitations in infrastructure, service quality, promotion, and human resources remain, hindering comprehensive growth. Analyzing the strengths and challenges is essential for understanding the current situation and proposing solutions to enhance tourism effectiveness in the future.

5.6.2. Strengths

5.6.2.1. Rich Tourism Resources and Cool Climate

Mang Den boasts diverse natural resources, including pine forests, waterfalls, a mild climate year-round, and relatively untouched ecological spaces. These provide a solid foundation for community-based tourism products such as homestays, agricultural experiences, cultural activities, and insights into local life. Local residents participate in accommodation, culinary services, guiding, and promoting traditional products, generating stable income while raising awareness about resource conservation. These developments help Mang Den gradually establish its own identity, attracting young tourists, nature lovers, and visitors seeking cultural experiences.

However, homestay models remain mostly spontaneous, small-scale, and lack professionalism; some experiential products have not been properly developed, affecting visitor satisfaction and the likelihood of return visits.

5.6.2.2. Diverse Indigenous Culture

The culture of ethnic minority groups such as Xo Dang, Ca Dong, and Mo Nam plays a crucial role in creating Mang Den's distinctive community-based tourism identity. Traditional values, festivals, handicrafts, and stilt houses are well-preserved, offering

unique experiences for visitors. Integrating local culture into tourism helps create rich experiential products and encourages the community to preserve and promote traditional values. Cultural heritage becomes a competitive advantage, helping Mang Den differentiate its community-based tourism brand while ensuring sustainable development.

5.6.2.3. Local Government Support

Local government plays a key role in establishing the framework for community-based tourism development. Measures include:

- Integrating tourism into local planning, prioritizing infrastructure investment, establishing legal frameworks, and allocating budgets.
- Implementing training programs for residents, homestay owners, and tourism staff in service skills, hygiene, safety, marketing, and foreign languages.
- Supporting links between traditional products and tourism via the OCOP program, standardizing products, building brands, and connecting to markets.
- Organizing cultural events, festivals, roadshows, and media campaigns to promote the destination.

Nevertheless, effectiveness depends on governance mechanisms, implementation capacity, and inter-departmental coordination. Sustainable development requires multi-level governance, long-term strategies, impact monitoring, and pilot models to scale best practices.

5.6.3. Challenges

5.6.3.1. Limited Transport and Service Infrastructure

Tourism access roads are not yet fully developed, with some narrow and deteriorated routes, particularly during the rainy season. Facilities such as parking lots, public restrooms, signage, and community activity areas are insufficient or below standard, reducing visitor experience and limiting service expansion.

5.6.3.2. Uneven Service Quality

Community-based tourism is in an early stage of development and largely spontaneous, leading to inconsistent service quality. Some homestays are well-equipped and clean, while others lack basic standards such as hygiene, rooms, water supply, or kitchens. The absence of unified standards and professional training results in uneven visitor experiences, affecting satisfaction and the overall reputation of the destination.

5.6.3.3. Weak Promotional Activities

Tourism promotion in Mang Den remains limited, lacking strategy, consistency, and impact. Most businesses rely on word-of-mouth, while online channels (websites, social media) are underdeveloped. Marketing and communication skills among residents and local authorities are weak, budgets are limited, and inter-agency coordination is ineffective. Insufficient promotion reduces market visibility, visitor numbers, revenue,

and competitiveness. Many potential visitors remain unaware of Mang Den's community-based tourism offerings, natural assets, or cultural experiences.

5.6.3.4. Human Resources Lacking Skills

The workforce supporting community-based tourism is limited in both quantity and quality. Most labor comes from local residents with agricultural backgrounds and little formal tourism training. Skills in service, communication, experiential guidance, problem-solving, foreign languages, and digital tools remain weak. Training programs are inconsistent, short-term, and often do not meet practical needs. Limited income stability encourages young workers to leave, causing shortages of experienced personnel. These constraints directly affect service quality, visitor experience, and the competitiveness of Mang Den's community-based tourism.

5.7. Orientation and Solutions to Enhance Tourist Satisfaction

5.7.1. Basis for Proposing Orientation

The formulation of orientations and solutions to enhance tourist satisfaction in community-based tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province, is based on two main foundations: legal basis and practical basis. These foundations are crucial for proposing scientific solutions that align with actual conditions and the sustainable tourism development orientation of the locality.

5.7.2. Legal Basis

Community-based tourism development in Mang Den is governed by various legal documents and state policies, creating a legal framework for the effective organization, management, and exploitation of this tourism form.

Specifically:

- Law on Tourism 2017 (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2017) emphasizes the role of communities in tourism development, highlights sustainable development, cultural value preservation, and environmental protection.
- Vietnam Tourism Development Strategy to 2030, Vision to 2045 (Decision No. 147/QĐ-TTg, January 22, 2020) encourages "green" tourism that centers on local people and culture, promoting community participation.

These provide a solid foundation for community-based tourism development in Mang Den, known for its unique natural landscapes and rich ethnic minority culture.

In addition, the Rural Tourism Development Program linked with New Rural Construction (2021–2025, Decision No. 263/QĐ-TTg, February 22, 2022) offers new directions for mountainous areas to exploit community-based tourism to improve income and livelihoods. Regional planning, such as the Master Plan for Central Highlands Tourism Development to 2030, identifies Mang Den as a center for ecotourism, relaxation, and cultural experiences. Quang Ngai Province Tourism Development Orientation to 2030 also highlights the importance of eco-tourism and community-based tourism in the western mountainous area, with Mang Den as a key destination.

Thus, the legal framework at national, regional, and provincial levels provides a foundation for professional, sustainable, and community-linked development of tourism.

5.7.3. Practical Basis

Mang Den Commune possesses significant potential for community-based tourism development. Its favorable natural conditions, cool climate, pristine forests, lakes, waterfalls, and mountains have earned it the nickname “the second Da Lat of the Central Highlands.” In addition, local ethnic minority cultures, such as Mo Nam, Xo Dang, and Ka Dong, preserve unique cultural values, offering opportunities for eco-tourism, cultural tourism, agricultural tourism, and community-based tourism.

However, current development still faces limitations: uneven infrastructure and tourism services, basic accommodation and food quality, weak promotion and tour connectivity, and low local awareness and skills in tourism. These factors directly affect tourist satisfaction, particularly in service quality, tourism experience, and information accessibility. Enhancing tourist satisfaction is therefore crucial not only to attract and retain visitors but also to build Mang Den’s community-based tourism brand. Global tourism trends (UNWTO, 2023) increasingly favor green tourism, community-based tourism, and experiential tourism, where tourists seek authenticity, proximity, and sustainability. Mang Den can leverage this trend to develop tourism products rooted in local culture while meeting growing demands for quality and uniqueness.

Furthermore, the socio-economic development orientation of Kon Plong District (2020–2025) recognizes tourism as a key economic pillar, with local authorities improving infrastructure, training tourism human resources, and encouraging investment in eco-tourism and community tourism projects. This provides favorable conditions for solutions to enhance service quality, improving tourist experience and satisfaction. Survey results show tourists appreciate natural landscapes, clean environment, and friendly people but are less satisfied with infrastructure, facilities, and service professionalism. Future solutions should focus on improving infrastructure, enhancing service skills, diversifying tourism products, and increasing community involvement in tourism management. Legal and practical foundations clearly support a sustainable, comprehensive, and tourist satisfaction-centered orientation for community-based tourism development in Mang Den.

5.7.4. Social Aspect

Community-based tourism is not only about exploiting local tourism potential but also a strategy for comprehensive social development, improving residents’ quality of life. A key element is making local residents the center of tourism activities, from planning and organizing to management. When the community truly owns tourism, they preserve the environment, culture, and service quality, fostering sustainable development. Mang Den’s population includes ethnic minorities such as Xo Dang, H’re, Mo Nam, with rich cultural life and traditional agricultural practices. These are advantages for tourism products with strong local cultural identity.

However, most residents currently lack tourism skills, knowledge in guest services, marketing, and financial management. Therefore, social development orientation should focus on training and capacity building, transforming locals into professional tourism service providers.

Following Scheyvens (2002), successful tourism communities achieve four types of empowerment:

- Economic empowerment: support residents to develop homestays, restaurants, specialty shops.
- Social empowerment: encourage collective tourism activities, forming community tourism cooperatives.
- Psychological empowerment: promote pride in ethnic identity through preservation of traditions and festivals.
- Political empowerment: ensure residents have a voice in tourism planning and policy.

Local authorities should promote a Public-Private-Community (PPP-C) partnership, where the government provides policy support, enterprises invest in infrastructure, and residents provide services. Education on responsible tourism in schools is also essential to raise awareness among youth.

5.7.5. Natural Environment

Tourism sustainability depends on environmental protection (Butler, 1999). Mang Den's natural assets—cool climate, pine forests, Dak Ke Lake, Pa Sy Waterfall—must be preserved despite increasing tourist pressure.

Tourism activities should follow green tourism principles (Nguyễn Văn Cường, 2019):

- Use renewable energy (solar for homestays, energy-saving lighting).
- Waste sorting at source and minimize plastic use.
- Programs like “One Tourist – One Tree” to restore forests.
- Model eco-tourism villages combining traditional housing and green architecture.

Applying Community-Based Ecotourism (Goodwin, 2011), locals act as conservators, guides, and beneficiaries. Cooperation with NGOs (WWF, IUCN, GreenViet) can support “Mang Den Green – Clean – Beautiful” programs. Rules for responsible environmental behavior should apply to both residents and tourists.

A well-preserved environment enhances tourist perception of authenticity and satisfaction.

5.7.6. Economic Aspect

Community-based tourism is an effective tool to reduce poverty and stimulate local economy (UNWTO, 2020). Mang Den's location, climate, and natural scenery give it potential as an eco-community tourism hub in the Central Highlands. Current tourism is fragmented, spontaneous, and lacks signature products.

- Effective CBT requires (Nguyễn Văn Đình & Trần Thị Minh Hoa, 2018):

- Distinctive tourism products,
 - Regional linkage,
 - Fair benefit sharing,
- Potential models in Mang Den:

- Agro-experience tourism: tourists participate in planting, harvesting,
- Community homestays: experience local life,
- Cultural & festival tourism: participate in New Rice Festival, listen to Gong music,
- Culinary tourism: taste traditional dishes (com lam, grilled chicken, rice wine).

Residents' direct involvement increases income, reduces labor migration, and strengthens local attachment. A Mang Den Community Tourism Development Fund (5–10% of tourism revenue) can finance cultural preservation, skills training, infrastructure, and support for poor households.

Regional tourism linkages (Quang Ngai – Gia Lai) and projects like the “Green Central Highlands Route” can expand the tourism value chain.

Sustainable development follows Brundtland Report (1987): meet present needs without compromising future generations. Sustainable tourism ensures:

- Economic sustainability: stable income, fair benefits,
- Social sustainability: cultural respect, gender equality, community rights,
- Environmental sustainability: resource protection, biodiversity,

To achieve this, Mang Den should:

- Integrate tourism into Kon Plong socio-economic planning,
- Apply Vietnam Sustainable Tourism Index (VSTI) criteria,
- Use digital technology for promotion, online booking, maps.
- Encourage Responsible Tourism, where tourists enjoy and contribute to conservation.

Tourist satisfaction is central: satisfied tourists return and act as word-of-mouth ambassadors, creating a sustainable development loop: quality → satisfaction → return → investment → conservation. Mang Den aims to become a model community-based tourism destination in the Central Highlands, where visitors can relax, learn, experience, and participate in cultural and environmental preservation.

5.7.7. Suggested Solutions

5.7.7.1. Natural Environment Protection

The natural environment is the “lifeblood” and sustainable attraction of community-based tourism. Local authorities should:

- Raise awareness among residents and tourists via campaigns (“Green Tourism – No Plastic Waste”, “One Tourist – One Tree”),
- Implement regulations on waste, wastewater, forest and water resource protection
- Develop eco-tourism models with controlled exploitation of key sites (Pa Sy Waterfall, Dak Ke Lake, Mang Den Pine Forest),
- Design low-impact experience routes (forest walks, bird watching, tree planting, forest vegetable harvesting),

- Promote “green accommodation” using eco-friendly materials, energy and water efficiency, and natural landscaping,
- Conserved natural environments enhance tourist satisfaction and reinforce Mang Den’s image as a premier eco-resort destination in Central Vietnam.

5.7.7.2. Tourism Promotion and Image Enhancement

Tourism in Mang Den suffers from low visibility and inconsistent branding. Strategies should include:

- Build a consistent brand: “Mang Den – Pure Nature, Rich Culture, Friendly People”,
- Use digital platforms (Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, official websites) for marketing,
- Partner with travel agencies for community and eco-tourism tours,
- Organize famtrips, presstrips, and cultural events, fairs, to showcase products such as eco-tourism, homestays, local cuisine, handicrafts, and festivals.

5.7.7.3. Community and Tourist Participation

Tourism is sustainable when locals are active stakeholders, preserving culture, providing services, and creating experiences.

Solutions include:

- Establish cooperatives and community tourism associations for fair economic benefit distribution,
- Train residents in hospitality, guiding, culinary service, and cultural interpretation
- Engage tourists in daily life: cooking, gardening, weaving, festivals, environmental activities,
- Cultural interaction fosters emotional connections and enhances tourist satisfaction. Transparent benefit-sharing encourages community pride and responsible participation.

5.7.7.4. Human Resource Development

Skilled human resources are crucial for service quality and tourist satisfaction. Solutions:

- Collaborate with universities, colleges, vocational centers for short-term training for locals, guides, homestay owners, culinary staff, and souvenir sellers,
- Focus on communication, guiding, etiquette, heritage knowledge, and basic foreign languages (English, Chinese, Korean),
- Build a network of trained community guides as cultural bridges
- Encourage professional service through certification, incentives, and recognition
- Train soft skills: communication, problem-solving, teamwork, service mindset, and professionalism
- High-quality human resources directly increase tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

5.8. Discussion

The results from Part 4 above provide detailed insights into the satisfaction of tourists with community-based tourism (CBT) in Mang Den, Quang Ngai, directly addressing the research objectives and questions. The study aimed to identify the key factors influencing tourist satisfaction and propose strategies for improvement. Using surveys, interviews, and observations, the research tools allowed a comprehensive assessment of service quality, infrastructure, cultural experiences, environmental conditions, and community participation.

Quantitative findings indicate that tourists rated natural landscapes and environmental quality the highest, with average satisfaction scores exceeding 4.2/5. Cultural experiences, including interactions with local ethnic groups, scored 4.0/5, reflecting appreciation for authenticity. However, infrastructure and service quality received lower scores, averaging 3.2–3.5/5, highlighting gaps in accommodation, dining options, and professional skills among service providers. These results directly answer the research questions by identifying areas of strength and weakness in tourist satisfaction.

The data also emphasize the importance of community involvement. Tourists who participated in homestay experiences, cultural activities, and local-guided tours reported higher satisfaction, supporting the principle that active community engagement enhances the tourist experience. Moreover, environmental stewardship, such as clean natural sites and sustainable practices, strongly correlated with overall satisfaction, confirming global trends in CBT and responsible tourism.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that enhancing tourist satisfaction in Măng Đen requires targeted improvements in infrastructure, service quality, and community training, while preserving environmental and cultural assets. By addressing these areas, local authorities can ensure sustainable, culturally rich, and economically beneficial community-based tourism development.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Conclusion

After investigation, analysis, and field surveys, the study “Factors Affecting Tourist Satisfaction with Community-Based Tourism in Mang Den Commune, Quang Ngai Province” clarified many important aspects of local community-based tourism activities. The results show that tourist satisfaction depends not only on infrastructure or tourism services but is also strongly influenced by human factors, natural environment, local culture, and the actual experiences tourists have during their visit. Specifically, the attitude, friendliness, and sincerity of local people were identified as top factors, creating positive impressions and emotions for tourists.

Residents in Mang Den are generally gentle and hospitable; however, communication skills, professional service capacity, and tourism knowledge remain limited, sometimes reducing the quality of tourist experiences. Natural environment and

landscapes are notable strengths, offering fresh air, tranquility, and closeness to nature. Nevertheless, issues such as litter at some attractions and insufficient visitor management may threaten the natural scenery and ecosystem.

Regarding tourism infrastructure, although there has been investment, it remains fragmented, especially in road access, parking, public restrooms, and signage. Supporting services like restaurants, accommodation, and entertainment are also limited, restricting tourists' options for longer stays. Promotion and marketing efforts are weak, with no unified, modern communication strategy connecting authorities, businesses, and communities. Many visitors learn about Mang Den mainly through word-of-mouth or social media rather than official sources. Overall, Mang Den has great potential for community-based tourism with unique natural and cultural advantages, but improving tourist satisfaction and achieving sustainable development require a long-term, coordinated strategy among authorities, businesses, and local communities.

6.2. Recommendations

6.2.1. For Authorities and Management Agencies

Local authorities should develop community-based tourism plans linked to environmental and cultural preservation, avoiding overexploitation. Infrastructure investment is needed in transportation, electricity, water, telecommunications, public restrooms, and signage. Tourism promotion should build Mang Den as a representative community-based destination in the Central Highlands, including collaboration with travel companies, schools, and tourism organizations to organize fam trips, workshops, and festivals. Policies should encourage investment in homestays, food services, and experiential tourism, alongside training for local managers and guides to improve service quality and product development.

6.2.2. For Local Residents and Communities

Residents are central to community-based tourism, so raising awareness of sustainable tourism is crucial. They should act as cultural ambassadors, treat tourists politely, protect the environment, and participate in training to improve service and communication skills. Communities should organize into cooperatives to share experience and manage resources collectively. Encouraging young people to engage in tourism development can help promote the destination using technology and social media. When communities are cohesive, responsible, and benefit fairly, community-based tourism in Mang Den can develop stably and sustainably.

6.3. Research Limitations and Future Directions

6.3.1. Limitations

Due to time and budget constraints, this study surveyed a limited sample, mainly at key community-based tourism sites in Mang Den, which may not fully represent all tourists. Data collection relied primarily on self-administered questionnaires, which could introduce subjective bias.

6.3.2. Future Research Directions

Future studies should expand surveys to other communes in the Central Highlands or compare community-based tourism across different provinces to identify effective models and lessons. Research could also explore the relationship between satisfaction, loyalty, and return behavior, or assess the impact of digital media and social networks on Mang Den's tourism image. Applying modern data analysis methods, such as SEM, could provide more scientific and objective results. Subsequent research will enhance theoretical foundations and offer practical evidence for building professional, friendly, and sustainable community-based tourism policies in Mang Den.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

Both authors strongly agreed on the publication of this paper, and there was no contention or rivalry during the finishing of the work. In other words, the authors declare no conflicts of interest in this article. Both authors are fully and equally responsible for the benefits and harms after this article is published. The authors, moreover, declare that the material presented by us in this paper is our original work and does not contain any materials taken from other copyrighted sources. Wherever such materials have been included, they have been clearly indented or/and identified by quotation marks, and due and proper acknowledgements have been given by citing the source at appropriate places.

About the Authors

Mr. Nghị Bao Duy is a senior Tourism student in Department of History–Geography–Tourism (DoHGT), School of Political Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (SPSSSH) at Can Tho University (CTU). His academic interests focus on tourism research, particularly in the areas of tour guiding, hospitality, tourism education, sustainable tourism startups, and tourism development. He can be contacted at nghiduy01042004@gmail.com.

Mr. Nguyễn Mai Quốc Việt is a lecturer at Department of History–Geography–Tourism (DoHGT), under the School of Political Science, Social Sciences and Humanities (SPSSSH) at Can Tho University (CTU). His research focuses on community-based tourism, cultural tourism, and sustainable development in the Mekong Delta and other areas in Vietnam. He can be contacted at nmqviet@ctu.edu.vn.

Dr. Thái Công Dân is a Senior Lecturer in English at the School of Foreign Languages, Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam. He earned his PhD in Educational Administration (English Program) from Naresuan University, Thailand (2010), and his M.A. in Cultural Aspects and Literature from the University of Notre Dame du Lac, USA (1999). His research interests encompass TEFL/TESOL, intercultural communication, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), curriculum design, language assessment, and tourism education. He can be reached at tcdan@ctu.edu.vn and ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9566-8128>.

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