

# Conflicts between Residents and Other Stakeholders at Community-based Tourism Destinations: A Case Study of Pu Luong Natural Reserve, Vietnam

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*Received: March 25, 2022*

*Revised: August 22, 2022*

*Accepted: October 7, 2022*

## Abstract

The study of conflicts at tourism destinations is crucial for inclusive and sustainable development. This article investigates conflicts in the context of a community-based tourism destination in Vietnam to clarify information about typical conflicts between residents—the most important component of community-based tourism—and other parties (tourists, tourism businesses and local government). The study used semi-structured interviews to investigate perceptions of 26 tourism stakeholders, including 14 residents who are representatives of tourism participants and nonparticipants, six tourism government officials, two representatives of non-citizen accommodations, two representatives of travel businesses and two tourists. The findings show that the groups disagree with each other on various socio-cultural, economic and environmental issues. The hosts have conflicts with tourists mainly because of cultural differences and negative impacts on the local culture, social structure, and environment. The conflicts are related to socio-cultural, economic, and environmental issues. With local authorities, conflicts are usually related to policies to develop tourism and the lax control by authorities. The results of this study will be evidence upon which to make some recommendations for the authorities in the process of planning and managing destination development.

**Keywords:** community-based tourism, stakeholder conflict, resident attitudes

## Introduction

Until recently, most researchers on tourism have maintained that the development of community-based tourism (CBT) will bring many benefits to the locality in terms of the economy, culture, society, and the environment. Community-based tourism creates jobs and increases income (Kungwansupaphan, 2021), attracts investment (Tao and Wall, 2009), supports the development of traditional local industries (agriculture, forestry, traditional crafts) and promotes local commerce (Lee, 2013). The development of community-based tourism helps to improve infrastructure and create entertainment facilities for tourists that the residents can also use (Fan et al., 2019). Community-based tourism can also contribute to the restoration and protection of local cultural values and help communities increase environmental awareness, thereby contributing to the protection of the natural environment and ecosystems (Nair and Hamzah, 2015).

However, CBT can also have negative impacts. Many localities have faced problems and struggles, such as unfair distribution of benefits (Feng and Li, 2020), inflation, poor management (Goodwin and Santilli, 2009) or environmental pollution, resource degradation, cultural change, loss of traditional livelihoods, social order changes, traffic congestion, etc. (Kim and Kang, 2020; Yanes et al., 2019). The economic benefits mentioned in most studies are also questioned by some scholars because most of the profits do not stay in the community. CBT creates jobs and incomes, but the salary that residents receive is very low (Goodwin and Santilli, 2009). Those dark sides of community-based tourism have led to tensions and conflicts between residents and other stakeholders. At some destinations, residents protested and boycotted tourism businesses (Jinsheng and Siriphon, 2019), burned tourist coaches, vandalized boats, and burglarized the administration office (Ebrahimi and Khalifah, 2014). The tensions and conflicts between stakeholders may lead to the destruction of the destination's charm, reduce the value of stakeholder cooperation (Prior and Marcos-Cuevas, 2016), and negatively affect the sustainability of society, the environment, and the

economy (Yang et al., 2013). Promoting effective strategies to manage and resolve conflict is essential to avoid value deterioration and to strengthen cooperation and resource integration, which will support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Apostolidis and Brown, 2021). Consequently, the study of conflicts at tourism destinations is crucial for inclusive and sustainable development.

This article will analyze tourism conflicts between residents—the key component at CBT destinations—with other stakeholders at Pu Luong Nature Reserve, a typical CBT destination in northern Vietnam. The result will be a contribution to the theoretical issue of tourism conflict. Moreover, the results will be useful evidence for the authorities at Pu Luong Nature Reserve, in particular and at other CBT destinations in general, to propose actions and strategies to manage and sustain tourism development.

## Literature Review

Conflict is an inherent part of social relations and exists in all aspects of society (Coser, 1956). It arises when one party perceives that another party has bothered or will bother them (Thomas, 1976: 891). Conflict may occur on different levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group, and intergroup. It may be manifested in attitudes, opinions, interests, goals, or in specific behaviors (Mele, 2011). In this article, the authors will approach intergroup conflict between residents and three other parties: tourists, tourism businesses, and local authorities.

Previous studies have revealed that intergroup conflict may arise among residents and all other parties. Hosts may clash with tourists about sociocultural gaps (Shen et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2013; Ye et al., 2013), and resource interference (Kim and Kang, 2020). They are annoyed with local government because of non-transparent management, along with unfair and ineffective policies that not only prevent the locals from getting benefits (Jinsheng and Siriphon, 2019; Xue and Kerstetter, 2018), but also cause negative impacts on community resources and the living environment (Kim and Kang, 2020; Kreiner, et al., 2015).

To promote tourism, the local authorities often call for support from outside investors. However, when outside investors are involved, the locals cannot compete and maintain control over the tourism industry. As a result, conflicts between villagers and local authorities arise (Jinsheng and Siriphon, 2019; Wang and Yotsumoto, 2019; Xue and Kerstetter, 2018). Residents often have disputes with tourism businesses over issues of unfair benefit distribution (Jinsheng and Siriphon, 2019; Lo and Janta, 2020). Tourism businesses are also criticized for polluting the local environment (Ebrahimi and Khalifah, 2014; Jinsheng and Siriphon, 2019) and destroying the natural landscape with continuous construction projects (Kreiner et al., 2015). In addition, tourism businesses have been blamed for cooperating with authorities to take over and control important resources (especially land resources) (Lo and Janta, 2020; Wang and Yotsumoto, 2019; Xue and Kerstetter, 2018), causing the loss of local cultural value and the reduction of community cohesion (Kinseng et al., 2018; Xue and Kerstetter, 2018). According to Jinsheng and Siriphon (2019) and Wang and Yotsumoto (2019), local government is the group that residents are most opposed to.

## Methodology

### Study Site

Pu Luong Nature Reserve (PLNR) is a famous community-based tourism destination in Thanh Hoa, Vietnam, about 170 km from Hanoi and 130 km from Thanh Hoa city. With a unique culture, rustic lifestyle of ethnic minorities (Thai and Muong people) along with unspoiled nature, picturesque landscapes, and fresh air, PLNR has attracted a large number of visitors since the early 2000s. Realizing the investment opportunities, many investors (both domestic and foreign) have come to start up tourism businesses in the locality. They buy potential areas or rent local houses/land to build homestay resorts. So far, PLNR has hundreds of tourism enterprises, operating in three models: citizen-owned, jointly-owned, and noncitizen-owned tourism enterprises. To promote tourism development, some localities have established village tourism

management boards. In this study, the researchers purposefully approached four most-developed destinations (the villages of Don, Hieu, Bang, and Hang) as the study sites. All four have tourism enterprises and management boards, and they frequently attract tourists.

### Research Approach

The qualitative research method is recognized as a dominant methodology in social science research, as it assists researchers to gain insight and take a closer view of the studied phenomena (Patton, 2014). It has been described as a robust research paradigm that provides interpretations of how social matters are experienced (Yin, 2011). There are different qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, group discussions, and case studies. Among them, interviewing is an outstanding method since it helps researchers to fill knowledge gaps; assess respondent's opinions, attitudes and experiences; analyze complex behavior; and support investigators in empowering and expressing appreciation to respondents (Dunn, 2010: 313). The in-depth interview method was employed to achieve the research purpose. Specifically, the semi-structured interview was used to combine the strengths of structured and unstructured interviews. The authors listed a number of themes and open-ended questions that needed to be mentioned in each interview. Respondents were free to explain their views, emotions, and experiences. Also, they could ask questions of the interviewer to better understand the given questions. The content of questions was related to the status quo of the tourism industry at the locality (such as the number of tourists, tourism enterprise) and conflict between residents and other tourism parties (tourists, tourism enterprises, local authorities). The topic of stakeholder conflict will be discussed in terms of three domains, based on the definition by Thomas (1976).

### Purposive Selection of Key Informants

The subjects of interviews are representatives of four important stakeholder groups: residents, tourists, tourism enterprises, local

governments. Many scholars recommend that the number of key informants does not have to be large, as that would make it more difficult to encode information and data (Ha and Bui, 2019). The number of respondents may be small but they must have solid experience or good understanding of the research issues. For this reason, the researcher purposely selected a few representatives for the inquiry. Specifically, six officials in charge of tourism and culture in two districts and four communes were approached; the researcher then interviewed four village leaders or representatives of local tourism management boards. In the next step, the researchers asked the village leaders to introduce two representatives at each destination (one participant and one non-participant). Two tourists, two representatives of accommodation businesses operating in the community and two representatives of a travel company who frequently bring guests to PLNR were also approached (Table 1).

**Table 1** List of key informants

Code	Brief description	Code	Brief description
RS1	Male, resident, homestay owner, representative of village tourism management board	LA1	Male, district cultural officer
RS2	Male, resident, homestay owner, village leader	LA2	Female, district cultural officer
RS3	Male, resident, homestay owner, village leader	LA3	Male, commune cultural officer
RS4	Male, resident, homestay owner, village leader	LA4	Male, commune cultural officer
RS5	Male, resident, staff at a homestay	LA5	Male, commune cultural officer
RS6	Female, resident, staff at a homestay	LA6	Male, commune cultural officer
RS7	Male, resident, motorbike transporter	HS1	Male, manager at a non-citizen owned homestay
RS8	Female, resident, grocery store owner	HS2	Female, manager at a jointly owned homestay
RS9	Male, resident, non-participation	TE1	Male, tour guide from a travel operator
RS10	Male, resident, non-participation	TE2	Female, travel operator owner
RS11	Female, resident, non-participation	TR1	Male, Vietnamese tourist from Hanoi
RS12	Male, resident, homestay owner	TR2	Female, Vietnamese tourist from Thanh Hoa city
RS13	Female, resident, homestay owner		
RS14	Male, resident, homestay owner		

Normally in Vietnam, communication is easier if the researcher is introduced formally by a community member (Truong Van Dao, 2014). Therefore, the interviewer asked for the support of the local guide who is an ex-student of the interviewer to meet the village leaders. When

the village leaders understood the purpose of the survey, they agreed to help investigators connect with other families in the villages. All interviews were conducted face to face. This process was carried out during the period from July to September, 2021.

The interview data after being transcribed was carefully read and studied. Each respondent's statement or paragraph of the transcript was considered as a unit of analysis. In the next step, the researcher classified the data and encoded the content by topic. The MAXQDA software was used to assist the sorting process. Based on the literature review and category of the interview questions, the topics were categorized into three themes: conflicts between residents and tourists, conflicts between residents and tourism businesses, and conflicts between residents and authorities. In each of these topics, the researcher arranged the themes into three subthemes (types of conflict): sociocultural, economic, and environmental.

## Results

After carefully studying and classifying the data, the researchers reached a total of 209 analytical units (103 units mentioned conflict between residents and tourists, 80 units were about conflict between residents and tourism businesses, and 26 units related to conflicts between residents and local authorities) (Table 2).

**Table 2** Transcripts coded

Code	Frequency
<b>Resident-tourist conflicts</b>	<b>103</b>
<i>Sociocultural conflicts</i>	
Tourists have different living habits from local residents.	18
It is hard to communicate with tourists.	15
Tourists influence and change the local lifestyle.	10
Tourists do not comply with local regulations.	10
Tourists can infect local people.	5
Tourists have bad behavior.	3
<i>Resource conflicts</i>	
Tourists increase traffic congestion.	11

**Table 2** Transcripts coded (cont.)

Code	Frequency
Tourists occupied at recreational resources.	15
Tourists make noise and pollution.	8
Tourist coaches cause roads to deteriorate.	8
<b>Resident-tourism business conflicts</b>	<b>80</b>
<i>Sociocultural conflicts</i>	
Tourism business have changed the traditional local lifestyle.	19
Tourism business have reduced community cohesion.	17
Tourism business present the wrong culture.	5
<i>Economic conflicts</i>	
Tourism businesses do not share economic benefits with locals.	11
External investors have controlled local tourism resources and activities.	9
<i>Environmental conflicts</i>	
Tourism business have polluted the local environment.	9
Tourism businesses have disrupted the original landscape.	10
<b>Resident-local government conflicts</b>	<b>26</b>
The local government is unfair in supporting households to join tourism projects.	8
Tourism-development policies stipulated by the government are partial to the goal of attracting tourists and investors over the interests of the locals.	4
The collection and distribution of community tourism funds is not transparent.	9
The limited ability and mistakes of local authorities in managing tourism disturb local environmental resources.	3
Residents do not cooperate with the government in planning tourism projects.	2

### Resident–Tourist Conflicts

Residents and visitors often have tensions relating to cultural gaps, as well as social and environmental issues. The cultural dissimilarity is especially prominent during the period of exploration. Some residents recalled that in the early 2000s, when the first groups of tourists came to PLNR, most were international tourists who had moved from Lac village (Mai Chau, Hoa Binh province), one of the first famous CBT destinations in Vietnam. Their appearance, language, and actions appeared strange to the local residents in PLNR. Moreover, some of their behaviors deviated from local customs and traditions. One resident recounted:

When foreign tourists came to swim at the waterfall, they wore bathing suits and bathed in the sun near the waterfall and the stream. Many people, especially the elderly residents, felt weird

and complained that those actions were bad and unacceptable in our homeland (RS4 [Participant code], 2021).

For domestic tourists, although the culture is not so different from that of the locals, their habits and requirements still may differ from local traditions. According to many respondents, tourists from big cities always want to be served quickly and professionally. This is opposite to the local practice of working moderately. Gradually, the emergence of tourists' living habits and thoughts has changed the local lifestyle. People now welcome visitors differently, certain steps are skipped and the movements are speeded up. Also, their way of dressing follows that of tourists to a certain extent.

Another frustration of residents about tourists is that many tourists do not comply with local regulations. Many tourists leave litter in the wrong places, make noise after the stipulated time (10 p.m.) or deliberately drive into places that are not allowed. At most tourist villages in PLNR, the resident board makes a regulation that all cultural activities should not continue past 10 p.m., but many inebriated guests deliberately turn on music past the One resident recalled: "There was a case when the owner of the homestay reminded the guest to turn off the music, the guests beat the owner" (RS11 [Participant code], 2021).

Another resident revealed that their family had to put up a stake in the middle of their yard to prevent guests from entering his house. He said, many drivers drove their car to his house to turn around (due to the narrow size of road) and damaged his yard. Thus, he was quite disgruntled. This resident also added that some households in the village had to put up a fence in the field to prevent guests from entering to take photos. He explained that many visitors entered and damaged the boundary and trod down the resident's rice and corn. Some households had to replant twice and were quite upset about this. A resident responded with annoyance: "There are tourists who are really ignorant. They used the bundle of rice that I had just harvested for photo shooting, threw it into the sky, and then even stepped on the rice" (RS10 [Participant code], 2021).

Another problem that annoys residents is that tourists can infect local people with diseases. Many homestay owners said that they closed their business and refused guests (especially guests from epidemic zones of Covid 19) for fear that outsiders would infect their families and localities. The arrival of tourists also affects the peaceful life of locals. From a “forgotten” village in the valley, tourism activities have made their homeland crowded and bustling with tourists. Public areas or natural sites like waterfalls, caves, and cultural relics are now constantly occupied and sometimes are full of visitors.

From the perspective of tourists, the respondents answered that they come to PLNR mainly to savor the beauty of nature, take photos of clouds and terraced fields, and have little opportunity to interact with residents other than staff or homestay owners, so basically, they have no comment. For international visitors, because the Covid-19 epidemic was quite complicated at the time, the survey team arrived in PLNR (in 2021, Vietnam did not accept international tourists), then the investigators could not reach this subject. However, the researchers searched for guests’ reviews of PLNR on TripAdvisor, the largest, most popular social media site among travel consumers (O’Connor, 2010). And, remarkably, all international visitors to PLNR were impressed by the friendliness of the local people. Specifically, in 156 reviews, along with comments and assessments of natural landscapes, 38 reviews mentioned locals. And in their eyes, the people in PLNR are friendly, kind, and always smiling to welcome guests, inviting guests into the house to enjoy tea even if they are strangers.

### **Resident–Tourism Enterprise Conflict**

The relationship between residents and tourism businesses also received many comments from respondents with 80 units of analysis, divided into seven open codes. Many residents reported that tourism businesses (accommodation businesses in particular) have commercialized or even inaccurately promoted local traditional culture. Many homestay businesses display, rent, and sell ethnic costumes, but they are the costumes of other ethnic groups (Hmong, Northwest Thai), instead of

the local costume of Thai Pu Luong. One resident explained that the costume of the Northwest Thai is more colorful, so the guests are likely to rent them. Some families even display and rent Hmong skirts to their guests to participate in Thai cultural activities.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, the tourism business has changed the lifestyle of some households in the village. Thai ethnic people are well-known for their honesty and friendliness. However, some tourism business owners nowadays have become accustomed to lying to guests, lying about the origin of food, agricultural products, and souvenirs. People buy food from outside markets to serve tourists, and lie to them in saying that the food is clean and grown in the village. The cohesion and solidarity in the community have also been negatively affected. People nowadays have less tendency to help each other than before. Jealousy and envy also arise between households, between tourism participants and non-participants, or within households doing tourism business.

In our village, there are households showing some jealousy toward tourism homestays, and they often quarrel with tourists. One of them deliberately refused to move a cattle pen, resulting in a bad odor for the neighboring homestays. When the management board came to remind and ask them to move the pen to the proper area, they said they owned the land, and they could do whatever they liked. This issue has not been resolved thus far (RS1 [Participant code], 2021).

The sharing of tourism economic benefits is another issue of tension between residents and tourism enterprises. Many residents claimed that tourism profits mainly fall into the hands of a few tourism households or investors, while the others get none. Specifically, when some households in the village have a nice view, outside investors from Hanoi come to contribute capital for cooperation, so their income is very good. But many other families get very little benefit from farming

<sup>1</sup> These activities include watching a performance of the Stall dance, which involves stepping over bamboo poles, and sampling local Can liquor, a drink made from fermented glutinous rice and herbs, drunk through straws from the earthenware jug in which it is made.

products. Some families even replied that their lives have become more stressful because of the development of tourism in the locality.

Regarding the environment, people are quite upset about the problem of environmental pollution. Residents said that many accommodations discharge wastewater directly into streams and residents' fields, causing strange odors and discoloring the water. Previously, spring water was so clean that it could be bathed in and drunk directly, but now it is impossible.

Three pipes of a resort discharge sewage directly into my family's rice field. Up until now, the field water has a strange smell, when I wade in, my feet are itchy. My family has proposed that the business owner must pay a compensation fee, but it has not been resolved yet (RS10 [Participant code], 2021).

To deal with garbage, households in the village use traditional methods of burying or burning waste. When there are no tourists, these methods are acceptable as there is a small amount of waste, but when there are many tourists, the amount of waste becomes larger and larger, and the burning of garbage causes air pollution. Currently, an environmental sanitation company has come to collect garbage weekly, so the issue of burning garbage is reduced. However, there is a new controversy about how to pay the environmental fee in a fair way. Each village in PLNR has a different solution. At some places, the fee is divided per capita, by classification of tourism business households versus original households, by volume, etc. Some villages have resolved the issue and reached a general consensus, but there are other villages that are still arguing and have no final agreement.

Another issue related to the tourism business mentioned by locals is the continuous construction of accommodation facilities, which has disrupted the natural ambiance of the locality. A resident replied:

In recent years, investors from other places have come to buy land and continuously build accommodation facilities. Excavators, bulldozers, and trucks carrying soil come in and out incessantly. This has turned a pristine green mountain area

into a jagged yellow wasteland filled with unfinished projects. Electricity poles and wires are crisscrossed everywhere. Previously this village was as beautiful as a picture. That's a pity (RS5 [Participant code], 2021).

From the perspective of businesses towards residents, the manager of a non-citizen owned accommodation said the resort is isolated from resident villages so there are no disputes or conflicts with the residents. Another manager from a jointly-owned homestay stated: "To bring water to the homestay's pool, we use pipes to bring water from the stream. However, the pipes are across the fields of some households. Then for some reason, people kept cutting off our water pipes. Perhaps, they are jealous of my family" (TE2 [Participant code], 2021). With travel businesses, one respondent said he has only contacted the homestay owners or service staffs, so there are not many conflicts with residents. The other revealed that she just had some disputes over the service prices with the resident entrepreneurs.

### **Resident–Local Government Conflicts**

There seem to be fewer conflicts in the relationships between residents and local government than the others. When residents were asked about their views of the local management board or tourism authorities, relatively few expressed being upset. The authors found that out of 209 units that mentioned conflict, 80 were about conflict between residents and tourism businesses, 103 were about conflict between residents and tourists, and only 26 were about conflicts between residents and local authorities. The conflicts mainly cover the following issues.

First, the local government is not fair when supporting certain households in doing tourism. Specifically, only people running tourism homestays are invited to attend meetings and training courses related to tourism. One resident noted,

In 2009, the management board of PLNR had a project to develop community-based tourism in the locality. The project supported three households in the village to build toilets and

train them on how to welcome guests. The households that applied later, like us, got no financial support at all (RS13 [Participant code], 2021).

Second, the residents are unsatisfied with the lack of control by the tourism management board that leads to inequality among tourism business households and the losses of community funds. The lack of transparency in the collection and use of community tourism funds is another issue mentioned by residents. In order to share benefits, localities have stipulated that each tourism business household will set aside 10,000 VND from its revenue per guest and contribute to the community fund. This budget is used to clean the village and improve roads and landscapes. However, as mentioned by most of the residents, they have no idea how much this money is or how it is collected and distributed. As one respondent pointed out,

Many households welcome guests even if they have not registered to run a business. Many others gave the wrong declaration of guest numbers to reduce the contribution to the fund, but were not fined (RS14 [Participant code], 2021).

Finally, there is a prominent problem with attractive destinations: the most beautiful locations are purchased and controlled by outside investors who are from Hanoi. The local residents with limited knowledge and finances have a hard time competing with outsiders. However, when approaching local authorities to ask about this situation, they are told that the outside investors can develop local tourism to attract more tourists and bring more jobs to local people. In the coming period, attracting more external investors is still one of the strategic directions for development goals. It can be seen that the goal of increasing the number of visitors seems to be a top priority for the government.

From the authorities' point of view, their conflicts with residents often occur at the planning stage. To start a tourism project, the government must acquire the land from residents for public services areas and widening roads. During this process, many residents refuse

to cooperate. They remain in the project area and ask for a higher compensation. Some households do not turn over the land as they see the opportunities of running a tourism business in their neighborhood in the future. In addition, one tourism official revealed that currently, some localities at PLNR have a plan to collect village entrance fees from tourists. If this plan is implemented, the issue of revenue sharing will certainly cause new problems and new tensions between these two groups (LA1 [Participant code], 2021).

### **Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendation**

This study supports the confirmation of Coser (1956) that conflict is always present in social relations. Tourism is an integrated economic sector that needs the involvement of many parties. During their interactions, disagreement and conflict among parties are unavoidable. With particular objectives, values, and interests, residents oppose other stakeholders in all aspects of sociocultural, economic and environmental. Specifically, the disagreements are about cultural differences, social norms, and the use of community resources. Differences in communication language, living habits, ethical standards, and social norms lead to disagreements between the two groups. Some tourists who are bad-mannered and do not follow the community regulations also create a bad impression. In some cases, arguments and even fights have occurred, creating a negative image of a destination in the minds of tourists. For residents, the most pressing issue about tourism businesses is the problem of waste treatment from operating activities that pollute the environment. The next one is the continuous construction projects that have disrupted the landscape and affected the lives of residents. With local authorities, residents need transparency, clarity, and fairness in managing and coordinating tourism activities. These codes of conflict may be applied to generate questionnaire items for a quantitative survey of conflict between stakeholders. Based on the number of codes in each theme, conflicts between residents and tourists are the ones most frequently mentioned by the respondents. Surprisingly, the conflicts



between residents and local authorities are the least mentioned by residents, with 26 comments. This is different from the studies of Wang and Yotsumoto (2019) and Jinsheng and Siriphon (2019), which found that local authorities are the group that is most antagonistic to residents.

The conflicts may lead to hostile behavior and actions which would not only worsen the destination image but also disrupt development of the tourism industry. Proper actions should be proposed before the tensions go too far. Some recommendations are listed below.

First, residents' awareness and competence should be strengthened so that they will be able to participate more actively in tourism activities. If the residents are involved in tourism, they will have more opportunities to benefit from it. In addition, involvement in management and decision making may create incentives for residents to integrate tourism into the local economy (Aas, Ladkin, and Fletcher, 2005). Therefore, the more community members are involved in tourism, the more they will support its development (Nugroho and Numata, 2020).

Second, residents should confer directly with tourism businesses or ask for third-party intervention to propose a cooperation mechanism (Rubin, 1994). In this way, the community could preserve natural landscapes along with traditional culture, protect the natural environment, and create a beautiful destination image to attract tourists. In reciprocation, tourism businesses that take advantage of local cultural values must share benefits with residents. They must help locals to preserve local culture and festivals, and protect historical sites and natural landscapes. In addition, enterprises must comply strictly with regulations on environmental protection, offer training courses, and recruit locals with reasonable remuneration. Businesses should prioritize local labor to bring job opportunities for locals and help them benefit from tourism development.

Third, the authorities' management competence should be enhanced and controlled to reduce revenue leakage and lessen the negative impacts of tourism. Through open meetings, local governments should publish information about tourism fund collection and distribu-

tion. Open communication and transparency along with trust are the major requisites for controlling conflict (Burgoyne et al., 2017). Moreover, an appropriate power structure that clearly defines the power of government should be promoted (Xue and Kerstetter, 2018; Wang and Yotsumoto, 2019). Finally, it is necessary to establish and announce a tourism code of conduct to all stakeholders, especially rules related to Covid-19. In this regard, all stakeholders must heighten vigilance, strictly follow principles of epidemic prevention, especially enforcing the "5-K" message: wearing facemasks (*khau trang*), disinfection (*khu khuan*), social distancing (*khoang cach*), not gathering in large groups (*hong tu tap*), and health declaration (*khai bao y te*). Epidemic prevention applications should be used, including online medical declaration through the QR Code; "Vietnam Safe Travel," and digital technology in online service sales, such as online payment. Moreover, administrative sanction is an effective way to control conflict (Needham et al., 2017). The destination management board should educate stakeholders, raise awareness, and encourage mutual understanding between residents and outsiders (Apostolidis and Brown, 2021; Panbamrungskij and Swangchan-Uthai, 2021).

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study was carried out at community-based tourism destinations that are in the process of developing in the mountainous area of Vietnam. The residents are mostly ethnic minority groups who are known to be very gentle, humble, and hospitable. In other contexts, such metropolitan areas or in other countries around the world, with differences in economic, political, socio-cultural conditions, the results may be different. Thus, more studies should be conducted with a broader scope to corroborate the results. In addition, a quantitative survey with a large sample size should be done to verify the results of this study.

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### Interviews

- LA1 (Participant code). (2021, August 3). **Interview**. District cultural officer.
- RS1 (Participant code). (2021, July 30). **Interview**. Resident, homestay owner, representative of the village tourism management board.

- RS4 (Participant code). (2021, July 30). **Interview**. Resident, homestay owner, village leader.
- RS5 (Participant code). (2021, July 30). **Interview**. Resident, staff at a homestay.
- RS10 (Participant code). (2021, July 31). **Interview**. Resident, non-participation in tourism.
- RS11 (Participant code). (2021, July 30). **Interview**. Resident, homestay owner, village leader.
- RS13 (Participant code). (2021, July 31). **Interview**. Resident, homestay owner.
- RS14 (Participant code). (2021, July 31). **Interview**. Resident, homestay owner.
- TE2. (Participant code). (2021, August 10). **Interview**. Travel operator owner.