

**HUE UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM**



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**A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING LOCAL  
RESIDENTS' SUPPORT FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH ONLINE PLATFORMS: A CASE STUDY OF  
CAN THO CITY**

**Major: Tourism**  
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**SUMMARY OF TOURISM DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

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The research was completed at:  
**School of Tourism, Hue Univeristy**

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1. National library of Vietnam
2. Library of the School of Hospitality and Tourism - Hue  
University

## **PART I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Research Background**

Tourism is a composite economic sector that requires close cooperation from multiple stakeholders, with local residents playing a particularly crucial dual role: they are both directly impacted by tourism activities and are key to the success and sustainability of the industry (Nunkoo et al., 2023; Chang, 2021). Although the topic of residents' support for tourism development has been studied since the 1970s, the complexity and diversity of local contexts have ensured its enduring relevance. Factors such as historical and cultural characteristics and the developmental stage of a destination create significant differences in the attitudes and behaviors of residents in various areas (Chang, 2021; Hadinejad et al., 2019). This accounts for the growing interest in this topic, evidenced by the increasing quantity and quality of studies published in leading international tourism journals.

Previous studies have shown that residents' support for tourism development is influenced by several factors, including demographic characteristics, perceptions of tourism impacts (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental), and trust in local authorities (Li et al., 2023). However, most of these studies have focused on physical contexts, with only a few addressing the influences of online environments created by social media (Nunkoo et al., 2023; Senyao and Ha, 2022). The rapid growth of social media has transformed how people share information and engage in socio-economic activities (Dolan et al., 2019; Giglio et al., 2019). In tourism, social media serves not only as a tool for destination promotion but also as a space for multidimensional interaction among stakeholders. However, previous studies have primarily focused on the relationship between service providers and tourists, with the role of the destination community has remained underexplored (Nunkoo et al., 2023). In fact, social media has become a key factor in shaping residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism development by providing platforms for information access, sharing views, and

providing feedback on tourism policies (Senyao and Ha, 2022). When the content is positive, it enhances perceived value and boosts support for tourism development; conversely, negative content can reduce support and lead to opposition.

In Vietnam, research on this topic is still limited, especially in the context of the ongoing digital transformation promoted by the government. In Can Tho City, despite the implementation of a digital media ecosystem since 2017 under the “Du lịch Cần Thơ – Can Tho Tourism” brand, public awareness and engagement with the official channels remain limited. In contrast, privately managed online community pages have become effective spaces for interaction between local residents, businesses, and tourists, as well as among the residents themselves.

Based on these points, this thesis titled “*A Study on the Factors Influencing Local Residents' Support for Tourism Development through Online Platforms: A Case Study of Can Tho City*” aimed to explore the role and impact of digital environment factors on the local community's attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

## **2. Research Objectives**

The primary aim of this thesis is to identify and analyze the factors influencing residents' support for tourism development in Can Tho City, with a specific focus on the role of social media influence. The study focuses on three main objectives:

- To systematize the theoretical foundation and clarify the models and theoretical frameworks underlying residents' support for tourism development..
- To identify and measure the impact of online factors on residents' perceptions of and support for tourism development.
- To propose managerial and policy implications aimed at enhancing residents' support for tourism development on online platforms.

## **3. Research Subjects**

### **3.1 Research Focus**

This thesis examines the theoretical and practical issues

concerning the factors influencing local residents' support for tourism development on online platforms in Can Tho City.

### **3.2 Scope of Study**

*Content Scope:* This study explores and analyzes the influence of online factors on local residents' support for tourism development..

*Spatial Scope:* The study focuses on Can Tho City, where data was collected from both in-person surveys and online sources..

*Time Scope:*

*Secondary Data:* Secondary data was compiled from reliable domestic and international documents, studies, and data sources, spanning the period from 2010 to the end of 2024.

*Primary Data:* Primary data was collected from 2023 to 2024, through in-depth interviews and direct surveys of residents in Can Tho.

## **4. Contributions of Research**

### **4.1 Theoretical Contributions:**

□ The thesis expands the research context regarding the impact of the online environment on residents' perceptions and attitudes toward local tourism development.

□ The study identifies and adapts the concept of "Local Online Community Engagement" from the "Online Brand Community Engagement" (OBCE) model to fit the context of online communities with a local focus.

□ The results demonstrate that online factors significantly affect residents' perceptions and attitudes. Specifically, local online community engagement positively impacts perceived value, while social media usage exerts a stronger positive effect on local residents' support for tourism development.

□ The study identifies the mediating role of social media usage and local online community engagement in the relationship between online social support, perceived value, and local residents' support for tourism development.

#### ***4.2 Practical Contributions***

- Providing a scientific basis for local policy formulation: The thesis offers valuable information to support relevant departments and agencies in destination management and tourism promotion, thereby assisting them in developing effective policies and communication strategies for the digital era."

- Leveraging online communities to enhance tourism awareness. The study suggests that utilizing online communities can effectively raise tourism awareness among local residents.

- Providing strategic guidance on attracting and maintaining residents' participation in local online communities. This guidance is expected to improve destination management effectiveness.

- Proposing a framework for stakeholder collaboration in developing local online communities. The thesis recommends a framework to facilitate this collaboration, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of online community development.

**PART II: RESEARCH CONTENT**  
**CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW OF RESIDENTS'**  
**SUPPORT FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

**1.1Residents' support for tourism development**

***Local residents and their role in tourism development***

According to Morrison (2013), local communities consist of five groups: elected representatives; community groups that represent specific populations or ethnic groups; groups with specific interests, such as tourism associations, conservation groups, historical societies, and cultural preservation groups; individuals, who are local residents not belonging to any group; and business community groups, which include businesses operating within and outside the tourism sector. Among these, local residents are those who reside permanently in the destination; they may work in tourism, but typically, most residents do not engage in tourism activities (Morrison, 2013). In a modern context, Senyao and Ha (2022) provide an additional perspective, suggesting that local residents are internal customers of the destination's brand, playing a crucial role in shaping the destination's authentic image, and are an effective source for resource exchange activities.

***Residents' support for tourism development***

In the literature on residents' support for tourism development, terms such as residents' perspectives, attitudes, and intentions and behaviors are used interchangeably. (Chang, 2021; Nishinaka et al., 2023), and residents' intentions and behaviors supporting tourism (Erul & Woosnam, 2022) coexist. The term “support”, as referred to in this thesis, is defined as residents' attitude toward tourism development. According to Kotler (2010), attitude reflects a person's consistent views on perceived value, emotions, and behavioral intentions toward something.

**1.2Perceived value**

According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value is an individual's overall evaluation of the worth of something, based on their perception of what they receive and the cost they pay. A higher

perception of value often correlates with more positive support (Ganji et al., 2021; Viana-Lora et al., 2023).

### **1.3 Social media usage**

Social media usage is conceptualized as a way for individuals to acquire important information and connect socially in an effective manner (Nunkoo et al., 2023; Ku et al., 2019). A widely used social media application such as Facebook can be explained by its ability to provide information for entertainment and communication, it also offers access to knowledge and expertise by allowing users to seek advice from their social networks (Ali-Hassan et al., 2015).

### **1.4 Local online community engagement**

A local online community is conceptualized as social media pages that share distinct characteristics of a specific locality. Members actively contribute to local social media pages because they perceive their actions as bringing multiple communal benefits: providing information, offering emotional support, helping resolve issues efficiently, and benefiting their local community (Jonsson and Gaddefors, 2023). Such communities are especially reliant on local residents to share their knowledge, thereby increasing value for existing members (Jonsson and Gaddefors, 2023).

Local online community engagement (LOCE) refers to the social connection among residents within the same locality, which is supported by a social media platform provided by an organization. Furthermore, local online community engagement also refers to the intrinsic motivation and attractiveness of the local online community page, which leads to continuous interaction between residents and the page (Senyao and Ha, 2022).

### **1.5 Social Support**

Social support is understood as the feeling that individuals are valued and cared for by their social network, as well as the level of integration into communication networks and social obligations (Stephens et al., 2015). Sheikh et al. (2019) suggest that social support is a multidimensional structure, including various components that are applicable in different contexts. This study

considers social support as a multidimensional concept, encompassing informational support, emotional support, and peer support that individuals receive when using social media (specifically, Facebook).

#### ***1.5.1 Informational Support***

Information can be defined as data in which messages are analyzed or transmitted contextually, with differences depending on the recognition of the recipient (Seo et al., 2020). The informational support individuals receive when using social media helps them improve their self-esteem and enhance their awareness of social capital (Selkie et al., 2020).

#### ***1.5.2 Emotional Support***

According to Hu et al. (2019), emotional support refers to the emotional care an individual receives, such as concern, understanding, or empathy from a social group. Emotional support is also described as mutual participation in "common obligations," while others view it as a subjective perception of being accepted, loved, and respected (Langford et al., 1997).

#### ***1.5.3 Peer Support***

In this study, peer support refers to the support from others who share their experiences by providing information related to the issue at hand, acting as equals, without regard to education level or social status. Peer support from other members on social media can aid the decision-making process and reduce self-uncertainty (Hu et al., 2019; Zhong et al., 2021).

### **1.6 Factors Influencing Residents' Support for Tourism Development**

Throughout the history of research on this topic, residents' support for local tourism development has been shaped by a variety of factors. These include external, macro-level factors such as economic crises, trust in government, and empowerment (Li et al., 2023). Additionally, internal factors such as demographic characteristics, including age, gender, proximity to tourist sites, and

length of residence- also play a role (Dutt et al., 2023; Ma, 2020; Nishinaka et al., 2023; Papastathopoulos et al., 2020).

### **1.7Hypotheses and Research Model**

Hypothesis 1: Online social support has a positive impact on residents' social media usage.

Hypothesis 2: Online social support has a positive impact on local online community engagement.

Hypothesis 3: Online social support has a positive impact on residents' perceived value of local tourism development.

Hypothesis 4: Social media usage has a positive impact on residents' perceived value of local tourism development.

Hypothesis 5: Social media usage has a positive impact on residents' attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

Hypothesis 6: Local online community engagement has a positive impact on residents' perceived value of tourism.

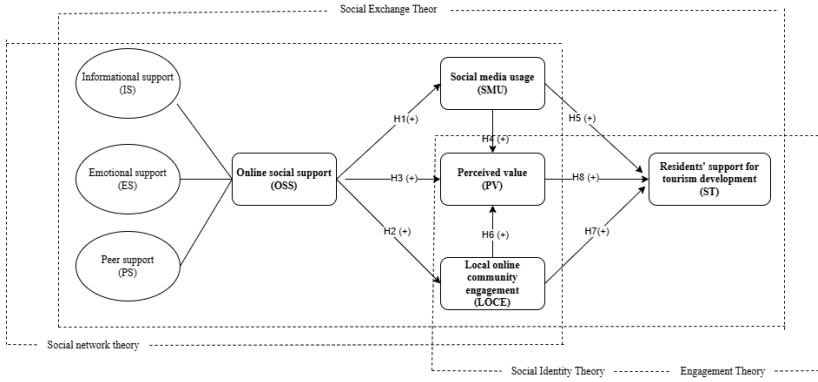
Hypothesis 7: Local online community engagement has a positive impact on residents' attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

Hypothesis 8: Perceived value has a positive impact on residents' attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

Hypothesis 9 (H9abc): Social media usage mediates the relationship between online social support, perceived value, and attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

Hypothesis 10 (H10abc): Local online community engagement mediates the relationship between online social support, perceived value, and attitudes toward supporting tourism development.

Hypothesis 11 (H11abc): Perceived value mediates the positive relationship between online social support, social media usage, local online community engagement, and residents' support for tourism development.



**Figure 2.1 Proposed Research Model**

## **CHAPTER 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH LOCATION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1.Characteristics of the Research Location**

Can Tho, with an area of 1,401 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of over 1.2 million people, is known as the "Western Capital" and serves as a hub for tourism, trade, and culture in the Mekong Delta region. Similar to other tourism-developing areas in Vietnam, Can Tho has witnessed the rapid growth of local online communities during the social distancing period caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, in addition to updating local news, local online communities in Can Tho frequently post information about tourism programs, dining spots, entertainment venues, etc., thereby attracting not only local residents but also tourists interested in visiting Can Tho. The establishment of pages such as Can Tho Ngay Moi (2021), Review Can Tho (2022), and the development of Du lịch Cần Thơ - Can Tho Tourism (2017) highlight the interest of both the government and private sectors in utilizing social media as a tourism promotion tool. However, official pages maintain a low post frequency, focusing on one-way promotional information, whereas private pages are more dynamic, interactive, and personalized. As a result, the engagement and interaction of residents with the “Du lịch Cần Thơ - Can Tho Tourism” page are limited. The challenge lies in improving content strategies and enhancing interaction on official platforms to compete with private pages and attract the residents' interest.

### **2.2. Research Process**

The research process consisted of two main stages: qualitative research and quantitative research. The qualitative research stage was divided into three steps: desk research, qualitative interviews, and preliminary quantitative research. The first step is desk research to review the literature on the topic, followed by interviews to refine the measurement scale. The quantitative research stage was conducted in two steps: preliminary quantification and official quantification.

#### **2.2.1 Data Collection Method**

Due to the prevalence of online fraud through malicious links,

the online survey process presented challenges. Therefore, data collection was carried out through two channels: online and direct, using judgmental and snowball sampling methods.

According to Hair et al. (2010), when using SEM, the sample size should be at least 10 to 20 observations per observed variable in the model. Assuming the research model includes about 36 observed variables, the required sample size to ensure statistical reliability will range from 360 to 760 observations. Based on these methodological considerations and analysis requirements, the study chose a sample size of 600 observations.

### ***2.2.2 The Method for Handling and Analyzing Official Quantitative Data***

In this thesis, SPSS version 23 and AMOS version 24 software were used to perform data analysis in two stages: measurement model testing and structural model testing.

## **CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **3.1. Sample characteristics**

A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to residents living in Can Tho. The total number of returned completed surveys was 582. Regarding gender, females accounted for 335 respondents (59.6%), while males accounted for 227 respondents (40.4%). The age group from 18 to 25 years constituted the highest proportion, at 45.9%. Most of the participants had a university degree or higher, accounting for 65.3%. In terms of occupation, freelancers represented the largest group at 27.2%, followed closely by students at 26.9%. Regarding income, 54.4% of respondents had an income of less than 10 million VND, while 35.4% had an income between 10 and 20 million VND.

### **3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)**

During the exploratory factor analysis, the researcher noticed that a variable had a convergence coefficient of 0.408, which is smaller than 0.5, indicating that it did not meet the convergence level. Therefore, this variable was excluded, and the EFA was run again for the second time. In the second factor analysis, after excluding the variable LOCE1, all observed variables met the required conditions. The KMO coefficient was 0.937 ( $> 0.5$ ); Bartlett's Test of Sphericity showed a significance value of 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ); the extracted variance was 57.271%; and the Eigenvalue of the seventh factor was 1.041. The reliability test of the measurement scale, using Cronbach's Alpha, showed values greater than 0.70 for all factor groups, indicating high reliability (Kline, 2011).

### **3.3. Measurement Model Testing and Scale Reliability**

#### ***3.3.1. Measurement Model Testing for Online Social Support - Second-Order Structure***

The CFA analysis results for the second-order measurement model of online social support, with 14 variables, showed that the model fits the research data well (Figure 3.2). The fit indices are as follows: CMIN/df = 2.819 ( $< 3$ ); GFI = 0.950; CFI = 0.967; TLI = 0.959; and RMSEA = 0.057. The standardized regression weights for all variables were greater than 0.50, with the smallest being 0.703.

### ***3.3.2 Measurement Model Testing for First-Order Structure***

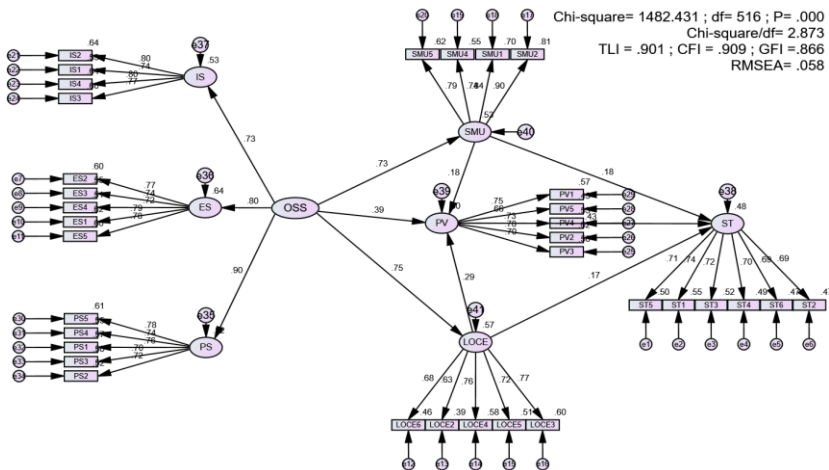
The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for the measurement scales in the model indicate that most of the indices meet the criteria for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Specifically, the model fit indices are acceptable: Chi-square = 1440.801; CMIN/DF = 2.847 ( $< 3$ ); CFI = 0.912 and TLI = 0.902 (approaching a value of 1); RMSEA = 0.057 ( $< 0.08$ ). The composite reliability (CR) for the factors ranges from 0.837 to 0.889, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7 according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), which indicates high stability of the measurement scales. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all factors is greater than 0.5, confirming convergent validity. Additionally, the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) for each factor is smaller than the corresponding AVE, and the square root of AVE is greater than the correlation coefficients between factors, which proves discriminant validity between the constructs in the model.

### ***3.3.3 Overall Measurement Model Evaluation***

The CFA results for the overall measurement model indicate that the model fits the research data well, with the following fit indices: CMIN/DF = 2.876; GFI = 0.866; CFI = 0.909; TLI = 0.901; and RMSEA = 0.058. The results also show that the CFA weights for most of the measurement variables are greater than 0.50. The Composite Reliability (CR) for the components in the model ranges from 0.838 to 0.889, demonstrating that all measurement scales have high reliability (Nunnally, 1994). The AVE is greater than 0.5, confirming that the measurement scales meet the requirements for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019).

## **3.4. Testing the Research Model and Hypotheses**

After conducting the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, the results show the following model fit indices: Chi-square = 1482.431; CMIN/DF = 2.873 ( $< 3$ ); CFI = 0.909 ( $\sim 1$ ); TLI = 0.901 ( $\sim 1$ ); and RMSEA = 0.058 ( $< 0.08$ ). These indices meet the criteria for good model fit, therefore, it can be concluded it can be concluded that the measurement model is appropriate for the market data.



**Figure 3.1. Results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis**

*Source: Analysis results from AMOS 24 software*

After verifying the compatibility of the research model with the data, the research hypotheses were tested. In this study, there are 08 hypotheses concerning direct effects and 09 hypotheses concerning indirect effects that were formulated and tested using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

**Table 3.1. Results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Model Testing**

| Hypothesis |      |   |      | Estimate | A     | S.E.  | C.R.   | P-value |
|------------|------|---|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|---------|
| H1         | OSS  | → | SMU  | 0,891    | 0,729 | 0,062 | 14,406 | ***     |
| H2         | OSS  | → | LOCE | 0,648    | 0,754 | 0,053 | 12,295 | ***     |
| H3         | OSS  | → | PV   | 0,390    | 0,394 | 0,091 | 4,270  | ***     |
| H4         | SMU  | → | PV   | 0,145    | 0,180 | 0,049 | 2,970  | 0,003   |
| H5         | SMU  | → | ST   | 0,129    | 0,184 | 0,037 | 3,433  | ***     |
| H6         | LOCE | → | PV   | 0,329    | 0,286 | 0,080 | 4,128  | ***     |
| H7         | LOCE | → | ST   | 0,170    | 0,172 | 0,061 | 2,773  | 0,006   |
| H8         | PV   | → | ST   | 0,371    | 0,430 | 0,061 | 6,037  | ***     |

(Note: \*\*\* <0,001)

**Table 3.2. Testing Hypotheses of Indirect Effects through Mediating Variables in the SEM Model**

| <b>Hypothesis</b> | <b>Indirect Path</b> | <b>Unstandardized Estimate</b> | <b>Lower</b> | <b>Upper</b> | <b>Standardized Estimate</b> | <b>P-Value</b> |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| H9a               | OSS → SMU → PV       | 0,129                          | 0.045        | 0.228        | 0,131*                       | 0,014          |
| H9b               | OSS → SMU → PV → ST  | 0,048                          | 0.015        | 0.100        | 0,131*                       | 0,012          |
| H9c               | OSS → SMU → ST       | 0,115                          | 0.063        | 0.185        | 0,134**                      | 0,001          |
| H10a              | OSS → LOCE → PV      | 0,213                          | 0.117        | 0.323        | 0,216**                      | 0,001          |
| H10b              | OSS → LOCE → PV → ST | 0,079                          | 0.039        | 0.136        | 0,216***                     | 0,001          |
| H10c              | OSS → LOCE → ST      | 0,110                          | 0.041        | 0.182        | 0,130*                       | 0,012          |
| H11a              | OSS → PV → ST        | 0,145                          | 0.080        | 0.234        | 0,170**                      | 0,002          |
| H11b              | SMU → PV → ST        | 0,054                          | 0.017        | 0.106        | 0,077*                       | 0,013          |
| H11c              | LOCE → PV → ST       | 0,122                          | 0.060        | 0.211        | 0,123***                     | 0,001          |

*Nguồn: Kết quả phân tích trên phần mềm AMOS 24*

## **CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Discussion of Research Results**

#### ***4.1.1 The Role of Online Social Support in Promoting Social Media Usage and Strengthening Local Online Communities in Can Tho City***

The quantitative analysis affirms the pivotal role of online social support in promoting social media usage and community engagement. In Can Tho City, online networks act as a bridge for social capital, allowing residents to receive social support. The sense of support from the online environment increases the frequency of social media use for communication and sharing experiences, thereby reinforcing local community ties. Online social support functions as a catalyst, not only providing useful information but also enhancing a sense of belonging and collective responsibility. Online community platforms in Can Tho provide practical information such as policies, events, and public services, helping residents connect with societal issues. Frequent interaction with these platforms creates a positive feedback loop: the more useful information residents receive, the more they become engaged and participate, which in turn strengthening social networks, enhancing collective consciousness, and promoting consensus in community development activities.

#### ***4.1.2 The Impact of Social Media Usage on Perceived Value and Attitudes Toward Tourism Development Support in Can Tho***

The research results confirm the impact of social media on user perceptions, particularly in enhancing perceived value. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, form large social networks, connecting individuals with shared interests and providing useful information and new learning opportunities. These connections help residents of Can Tho access a wealth of information about local tourism, from services to cultural activities, in various formats such as images, videos, and articles. Social media uses AI algorithms to personalize the user experience, delivering information based on preferences, thus enhancing awareness of the value of tourism activities.

However, the study indicates that local online community engagement (LOCE) has a stronger impact on perceived value than the general use of social media. LOCE not only provides information but also builds a sense of belonging and collective responsibility within the community, encouraging actions to protect tourism resources and participate in promotional activities.

#### ***4.1.3 The Impact of Perceived Value on Residents' Support for Tourism Development***

Consistent with previous studies, the perceived value of tourism development remains a powerful factor influencing residents' support, with the Social Exchange Theory (SET) which continues to be the dominant framework for understanding residents' support for tourism (Ganji et al., 2021; Phuc & Nguyen, 2023). Studies have consistently shown that when residents perceive greater benefits in terms of economic, socio-cultural, and environmental values from tourism activities, as opposed to negative perceptions, they are more likely to support and engage in local tourism development (Gannon et al., 2020; Gursoy et al., 2019; Hadinejad et al., 2019).

#### ***4.1.4 The Mediating Role of Social Media Usage, Local Online Community Engagement, and Perceived Value in the Relationship Between Online Social Support and Residents' Support for Tourism Development***

The research results confirmed that online social support (OSS) has a strong impact on perceived value (PV) and attitudes toward tourism development support (ST) through various mediating mechanisms. While local online community engagement (LOCE) plays a stronger role in shaping perceived value, social media use (SMU) demonstrates a stronger transformation of OSS into attitudes supporting tourism development. SMU is an effective tool for rapidly disseminating information and stimulating immediate interest. For example, in Can Tho, social media campaigns such as the promotion of the Southern Folk Cake Festival or cultural events at Cai Rang Floating Market quickly captured the attention of both tourists and locals. However, SMU is more transient and dependent on the

quality of the media content. This requires campaigns to be designed in an engaging way that is capable of maintaining interest to optimize impact. The results show that OSS has a stronger impact on ST when mediated by both LOCE and PV, compared to SMU and PV. This highlights the importance of combining local online community engagement and perceived value in building sustainable support for tourism. In the context of the rapid development of social media platforms, online social support plays a crucial role in influencing individual perceptions and behaviors. However, not all sources of social support have the same level of influence. The research results indicate that support in the form of informational backing, emotional backing, and peer support from familiar communities (such as friends, family, colleagues, or tightly-knit online community groups) tends to be regarded as more reliable than commercial advertising or information from strangers on social media (Ibrahim et al., 2022). In today's social media environment, although information can spread quickly and widely, the credibility and real impact of the information largely depend on its source and the relationship between the information provider and the recipient. Support from familiar communities is not only more reliable but also has a stronger influence on individual perceptions and behaviors compared to advertising or information from unfamiliar sources on social media. This emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining close social relationships in both communication strategies and destination branding development.

## **4.2 Recommendations and Management Implications**

### ***4.2.1 Recommendations for Effectively Social Media Usage to Raise Public Awareness of Tourism Development***

- Appropriately tailored methods and content to engage the public
- Building social networks through collaboration with stakeholders
- Using effective social media marketing tools. Communication campaigns should focus on creative and engaging content that

encourages the public to share their experiences on social media. This will contribute to active participation and rapid information dissemination.

#### ***4.2.2 The Role of the Government and Local Authorities in Enhancing Local Online Community Engagement***

- Effectively managing local online community platforms, thereby enhancing professionalism and efficiency in online content management

- Increasing stakeholder involvement to enhance the online community engagement of local residents

- Promoting greater residents' interaction on local community platforms

- Encouraging the long-term engagement of residents with local online community platforms

#### ***4.2.3 Promoting Interaction Between Residents and Tourists on Social Media for Destination Promotion***

Firstly, the government and local authorities should prioritize promoting the role of local communities as “destination ambassadors” on digital platforms. To fully leverage this role, a network of local ambassadors should be developed by selecting and training individuals with positive influence. Training programs should focus on enhancing digital communication skills, tourism storytelling, and creative content creation. Additionally, a recognition system should be established, such as honorary titles, rewards, or incentive programs, to encourage active community participation.

Secondly, local authorities should implement bottom-up approaches to optimize interaction between local communities and tourists. Specifically, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) should build local online communities on social media platforms such as Facebook, Zalo, or local tourism forums to create spaces for information exchange and experience sharing between residents and tourists. At the same time, efforts should be made to promote two-way communication and interaction through direct

engagement activities such as live streaming, online Q&A sessions, or cultural exchange events on online. Encouraging tourists to share their real-life experiences through reviews, images, and videos is also an effective way to spread a positive images of the destination.

### **PART III: CONCLUSION**

The positive attitudes of residents have been shown to have a direct impact on the development of the tourism industry. Since the 1970s, numerous studies on residents' attitudes toward tourism have been conducted by scholars and tourism researchers (Almeida-García et al., 2020; Nunkoo et al., 2023) which indicates that this is one of the most researched topics in tourism studies it is one of the most researched topics in tourism studies.

**The main findings of this dissertation are:** The factors related to the online environment all affect residents' perceptions and attitudes to varying degrees:

(1) Online social support is an important precondition that promotes greater social media usage and strengthens local online community engagement.

(2) The more residents use social media, engage with their local community, and receive online social support, the more positive their perceived value of tourism activities becomes.

(3) Residents' support for tourism development is most strongly driven by the perceived value of tourism. Social media usage and local online community engagement also significantly influence local residents' support for tourism development.

(4) The mediating role of local online community engagement is stronger than the impact of social media usage on perceived value. However, the mediating role of social media usage is more positive in the relationship between online social support and residents' support for tourism development.

Additionally, it is determined that: Perceived value (PV) has a strong impact on attitudes toward tourism development support (ST), reaffirming the role of Social Exchange Theory (SET) in the context of this research.

#### **Practical Implications and Policy Suggestions:**

(1) Leverage social media to raise public awareness and attitudes about tourism: In Vietnam, local tourism development activities are often managed and controlled top-down, and most

residents are unaware of local projects and planning. Using social media as an effective tool for information exchange can help raise residents' perceived value of local tourism.

(2) Encourage residents' participation in the tourism development process through co-creation content: Effectively utilizing social media for information dissemination will be a convenient method for exchange and will create an engaging approach. Local residents with different levels of cultural awareness will trust the development process and, as a result, support businesses and the community in their development efforts (Nunkoo et al., 2023). Moreover, with the role of co-creating content, residents will be empowered and feel more comfortable participating in local tourism development activities both online and offline (Nunkoo et al., 2023; Senyao & Ha, 2022).

## **LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION**

### **Articles indexed in Scopus**

1. Nguyen Phuc, H., Dao Thi Tuyet, L., & Tran Huu, T. (2024). The impact of integrated social communication on resident's perception and support for tourism development. *Quality & Quantity*, 1-26. (Scopus Q1).
2. Hung, N. P., & Linh, D. T. T. (2025). Residents' support for tourism development: influences of the theory of planned behavior and local online community engagement. *Quality & Quantity*, 1-21. (Scopus Q1).

### **Articles listed in the State Professor Council's scoring list**

3. Linh, Đ. T. T., Tuấn, T. H., & Hùng, N. P. (2024). Research trends on residents' support for tourism development: a review of literature from 2010-2023. *Hue University Journal of Science: Social Sciences and Humanities*, 133(6D), 147-168. ISSN 2615-9724
4. Linh, D.T.T, & Tuan, T. H. (2025). The impact of online social support on perceived value and residents' support for tourism development in Can Tho city. *Journal of Economics and Management Science*. (34).

<https://tapchi.hce.edu.vn/index.php/sjme/article/view/455>. ISSN 2354-1350