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REVIEW OF CULTURAL TOURISM AND BEACH RESORT TOURISM IN QUANG NAM - DA NANG

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ABSTRACT

This paper will examine the present state and quality of cultural tourism sites and beach resort venues at Quang Nam -Da Nang in Vietnam with the view of determining its strengths, weaknesses and development perspective. The mixed-methods research design was adopted, which involves synthesis of theories and a quantitative study of 280 domestic and international tourists via a survey method. The analysis of the data was done through descriptive statistical analysis to determine the level of satisfaction based on seven destination quality criteria. These findings show that the tourism capacity, traffic connectivity and local policy support have been ranked highly with mean scores being 3.75-3.85, which denotes an efficient infrastructure and administration. By contrast, the seasonality, cultural resources peculiarities, and development stage of the craft village tourism and traditional festivals were rated lower with the average scores of 3.31-3.46 that require more innovativeness and diversification. The research suggests the advancement of community-based cultural tourism, the creation of year-round tourism products, better transport infrastructure, and digital infrastructure, as well as the intensification of coordination between government, business, and local communities. The results have a scientific foundation on the development of sustainable tourism plans to promote balanced development and the safeguarding of the culture of the Central region of Vietnam.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Tourism; Beach Resort Tourism, Quang Nam – Da Nang, Sustainable Development, Destination Quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Tourism is emerging to be one of the most vibrant fields in the socio-economic transformation in Vietnam and it has become a vital source of employment, preservation of culture and competitiveness of the region. In this development terrain, two supplementary and tactical types of sustainable tourism have come up, namely, cultural tourism and beach resort tourism. The provinces of Quang Nam as well as Da Nang that lie along the Central Coast of Vietnam are symbolic of this two-fold model. The area has a unique cluster of cultural heritage and natural resources Hoi An Ancient Town and My Son Sanctuary that are of world cultural heritage, and My Khe, Cua Dai, and Non-Nuoc among the most beautiful beaches in Asia (Bui and Phi, 2022; Anh, An, and Tuan, 2023). Having a cultural identity and a coastal ecology, which have their unique intersections, has enabled Quang Nam - Da Nang to establish itself as a competitive international tourism destination that can contribute to the diversification of Vietnam economy and cultural diplomacy.

Despite this potential, the region faces several challenges threatening its sustainability. Rapid urbanization and uncontrolled resort development have caused environmental degradation that has resulted in severe problems of beach erosion, waste buildup, and biodiversity loss (Hue and Thanh, 2019; Huong et al., 2022). Likewise, excessive commercialization and unbalanced organization of cultural sites have degraded the authenticity of those sites and reduced the cultural experience of visitors (Bui, Le, and Jones, 2022). Disconnect of the tourism industries, inability to connect cross-regions, and seasonality in the tourist flows have also contributed to the fact that the region has limited the ability to deliver consistent and high-quality services (Thin, Thanh, Tuyen, and Hens, 2019). These problems demand a thorough and empirical evaluation of the tourism machine to drive sustainable development policies.

The most recent scholarly debate has focused on the need to measure tourism quality in multidimensional scale regarding the physical, cultural, managerial and policy variables (Jug anul sâr et al., 2025; Lukoseviciute and Panagopoulos, 2021). The main criteria of assessment will be determined in terms of abundance of both natural and cultural resources, availability of adequate infrastructure, accessibility of the tourism sites by tourists, sustainability of the environment,

institutional coordination and support of the government. Diem, Trang, and Ngoc (2021) observe that when these factors are not incorporated well, it leads to disconnected tourism performance, which is not sustainable. Through satisfaction and perceptions of tourists towards these criteria, scholars can point out a set of strengths and weaknesses in the tourism system of a certain destination- hence giving viable information in terms of policy and planning.

Quang Nam - Da Nang is the perfect example on which we can assess Vietnam in terms of its endeavors to blend cultural conservation with contemporary tourism activities. Da Nang has served as an entry point to the tourist destination as well as a pilot project in sustainable tourism management, as Holladay et al. (2025) observe. The success of the region lies in the ability to find a balance between the economic development and preservation of ecological and cultural resources. Consequently, the research is aimed at evaluating the perceptions and the level of satisfaction of tourists with regards to quality of cultural tourism and beach resort destinations wherein the empirical evidence is used to develop the strategies that are congruent with the objectives of sustainable tourism development.

1.2. Problem Statement

Despite these cultural and beach resort tourism in Quang Nam - Da Nang have demonstrated a good growth; absence of thorough evaluation and synchronization of management has remained a challenge to sustainable development. Past researchers have addressed these types of tourism individually with the emphasis on either cultural heritage conservation or the development of the coastal resorts without evaluating their interconnection and the overall impact on the entire tourism system (Anh et al., 2023; Trinh, 2016). Consequently, resource allocation, infrastructure planning and policy coordination do take place in solitude. Additionally, the seasonality, the lack of uniformity in service quality, and the lack of online marketing make the region less competitive with other destinations in Southeast Asia (Hue & Thanh, 2019). It is also a less clear picture on how the tourists would value the quality and uniqueness of the tourism products of Quang Nam - Da Nang although they are very important in developing the destination image and market sustainability. Therefore, both cultural and beach resort tourism require a systematic assessment to determine the strengths, weaknesses, and possible ways of improvement, which will establish the grounds on

which the policies can be designed on evidence and on which the management of the destination can be designed.

1.3. Research Questions

1. How do domestic and international tourists perceive and evaluate the quality of cultural tourism and beach resort tourism destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang?
2. What are the key factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and perceptions regarding cultural and coastal tourism in the region?

1.4. Research Objectives

1. To determine the existing quality of cultural tourism and beach resort tourism destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang as per the level of satisfaction and perception of the tourists.
2. To find and discuss the key influences that impact the quality of tourism strengths and weaknesses, such as infrastructure, accessibility, and efficiency of management.
3. To make suggestions and strategic recommendations on how to improve the sustainable development of cultural and beach resort tourism in Quang Nam - Da Nang.

1.5. Significance Of the Study

The study has theoretical and practical implications on the tourism development agenda of Vietnam. As a matter of theory, it adds to the mounting literature on sustainable tourism by bringing together cultural and coastal tourism evaluation into one analysis. In practical terms, it provides useful insights to policymakers, tourism managers, and local businesses in terms of designing approaches that offer economic advantages at the same time as promoting cultural and environmental sustainability (Bui and Nguyen, 2021; Diem et al., 2021). The study, through the analysis of the perceptions of the tourists, empirically offers information on how to enhance service quality and infrastructure and destination management and comes in line with the national goals of the Green Tourism Strategy of Vietnam. Moreover, the results can be used as a guide in other provinces wishing to adopt the integrated tourism model that balances the protection of heritage, involvement of the locals, as well as the economic growth. The final finding of this study will aid in the realization of a vision to make Quang Nam - Da Nang a smart, culturally and sustainable tourism model in the Central region.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptual Framework of Cultural Tourism and Beach Resort Tourism

Tourism is multidimensional phenomenon of interaction between human being, culture and nature. Among its different forms, cultural tourism and beach resort tourism are two forms that are the most influential and which are shaping the development of tourism in Vietnam. Cultural tourism is travel inspired by the wish to experience and understand the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the host communities, the heritage that includes architecture, festivals, crafts, cuisine and spiritual practices that are the expression of local identity (Bui, Le, & Jones, 2022). This type of tourism aids heritage preservation and cultural education and creates socio-economic benefits for the local population. In contrast, beach resort tourism utilizes the natural coastal resources, including the beach, coral resources, and tropical climate in order to offer recreation, relaxation, and health-related services (Anh et al., 2023). In the context of Quang Nam - Da Nang, these two forms have complementary value regardless of their different characteristics, creating a unique tourism identity through a combination of natural beauty and cultural richness (Bui & Phi, 2022). The mingling of cultural and coastal experience is a great example of Vietnam's wider aim of sustainable tourism diversification through promoting the balance between environmental conservation and cultural preservation.

2.2. Theoretical Perspectives on Tourism Quality and Sustainability

Scholars have long highlighted that the sustainability of tourism development is dependent on a multidimensional definition of destination quality. Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos (2021) present the destination quality as the synergy between the aesthetics of the environment, the reliability of infrastructures and the quality of services, suggesting that the experience is directly related to the visitor's satisfaction, which is based on the consistency of the experience. Similarly, Jugarnaru et al. 2025 emphasize the relevance of ecological and social carrying capacities to reduce degradation of natural and cultural resources as a result of overdevelopment. Bui & Nguyen (2021) support the social-ecological systems approach to argue that the sustainability can only be ensured through inclusive governance in which local communities are involved in tourism value chain actively. Integrating development is of particular significance in the context of Vietnam, where tourism

development takes place in environmentally fragile and highly cultural areas. Therefore, sustainability has to reconcile economic growth with the maintenance of cultural identity and the stability of the environment. This theoretical background serves as the basis for the present study which carried out a multidimensional analysis of the tourism ecosystem of Quang Nam - Da Nang.

2.3. Criteria For Evaluating Destination Quality

The assessment of the quality of tourism destinations incorporates both tangible and intangible components of quality that together constitute the experience of a tourist. Based on theoretical synthesis, often seven criteria are used to assess destination quality: (1) richness and value of natural and cultural resources, (2) adequacy of infrastructure and services, (3) accessibility and connectivity of the destination for tourists, (4) seasonal stability of tourism activities, (5) destination capacity, (6) management organization, and (7) policy and investment support (Diem et al., 2021; Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos, 2021). These are the factors that influence how well destinations are able to attract and maintain visitor flows without destroying the integrity of resources. Bhati et al. (2021) highlight that service and infrastructure quality have a direct influence on visitor satisfaction and repeat visitation, whilst Bui et al. (2020) contend that adaptive heritage management helps to improve cultural resilience to pressures from mass tourism. Trinh (2016) and Diem et al. (2021) emphasize that policy coordination and inter-regional cooperation are crucial for integrated tourism planning. Thus, destination quality has to be approached holistically and recognize both the physical and managerial aspects of sustainability.

2.4. Cultural Tourism and Heritage Conservation

A type of cultural tourism is of great importance in contributing to Vietnam's image of a country of living heritage. Cultural Heritage as both History and Cultural Experience: The Hoi An Ancient Town and My Son Sanctuary are just two of the many destinations that showcase how culture can be used to reflect history and provide a modern cultural experience (Bui et al., 2022). These sites are the witness of the development of the Vietnamese civilization and are visited by millions of tourists every year. However, with the growth and commercialization of tourism, the authenticity and preservation of cultural assets have been called into

question. Bui et al (2020) caution against over-commodification of cultural spaces becoming profit-oriented shows that negate their inherent cultural, social and educational functions. This is supported by Ribeiro (2019), who states that the ethnographic approach of the behavior of tourists can show the way local traditions were adapted to cater for the external expectations. Meanwhile, Holladay et al. (2020, 2025) emphasize that stakeholder perceptions and the model of governance play an important role in ensuring the sustainability of heritage destination, particularly in dynamic urbanizing cities like Da Nang. Therefore, a sustainable cultural tourism cannot be developed without balance between conserving the historical identity, and the demand of globalization of tourism market.

2.5. Beach Resort Tourism and Environmental Management

The growth of beach resort tourism has provided economic benefits to the coastal provinces of Vietnam but has also increased environmental problems. Hue and Thanh (2019) show that large-scale resort projects accelerated coastal erosion and disturbed natural habitats on the central coastline. Similarly, Huong et al. (2022) demonstrate that the unchecked exploitation of beaches has impacted the resilience and quality of ecosystems and water resources. In Quang Nam - Da Nang, these environmental pressures are not only endangering biodiversity but also the long-term attractiveness of destinations in the region, such as My Khe and Cua Dai. Trinh et al. (2019) provide some further estimates of significant economic losses caused by beach erosion in Hoi An, underlining the direct influence that ecological degradation has on tourism revenues. Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos (2021) also add that the perception of tourists regarding the cleanliness and the quality of the environment is one of the main determinants of the destination's competitiveness. Giampiccoli & Mtapuri (2021) suggested that a preference to move away from traditional mass tourism to community-based and eco-tourism tourism models will help mitigate their effects by promoting environmental stewardship and fair benefit sharing. The success of beach resort tourism therefore depends to what extent local authorities and investors take ecological sustainability into account in tourism planning and management.

2.6. Policy, Governance, And Community Participation

The proper governance frameworks are needed for sustainable development of cultural and coastal

tourism in the long term. Diem et al. (2021) point out that the lack of coordination among government agencies, private sectors, and communities and the fragmented management are constantly a hindrance in tourism development in Vietnam. Bui & Nguyen (2021), in their book, suggest that participatory management where local people are enabled to be involved in the tourism planning process can lead to greater responsibility, ownership, and sustainability. Furthermore, Dai Quang and Vo-Thanh (2025) implore that regional policy harmonization is needed in which the integration of tourism development goals with socio-economic and environmental goals is considered as well as the role of local governance in the development of competitive tourism landscapes. Holladay et al. (2025) determine the success of destination branding and sustainable tourism implementation success at Da Nang and Quang Nam is based upon the cooperation of stakeholders. Such coordination should also be adapted to the digital transformation, including intelligent tourism technologies for improved access, monitoring and promotion. Finally, Vietnam's Vision 2050 for sustainable tourism advocates for the inclusion of policy coherence, cultural protection and community-driven innovation as key pillars of sustainable development.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study used research method based on approach mixed methods combining both the qualitative method and the quantitative method measure comprehensively the quality of cultural tourism and beach resort destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang. The combination of these two approaches ensured depth as well as breadth of understanding about the perceptions and the levels of satisfaction of the tourists. The qualitative component included analysis of the existing literature, policy documents and theoretical models to build a framework for the evaluation of the tourism quality, whereas the quantitative component was applied to collect and analyze the perception by tourists through the structured surveys. This design accommodated triangulation and consequently boosted the reliability and the validity of the findings (Bui & Nguyen, 2021; Diem et al., 2021). The research was exploratory in nature as the aim was to not only measure the satisfaction of the tourists but to identify sites where it could be improved in a sustainable way. By combining theoretical constructs with empirical data, the research design is conducive to making evidence-based recommendations on

working towards higher sustainability and competitiveness of the tourism system in Quang Nam - Da Nang.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection is based on document analysis and field survey. The qualitative phase consisted of reviewing the literature, government reports, and tourism development plans to establish key dimensions that affect tourism quality. The second part of the study was the quantitative one where a structured questionnaire was developed and administered to the tourists in order to collect their perceptions and satisfaction levels of cultural and beach tourism destination. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: (1) demographic and travel information and (2) evaluation items, which comprised seven destination quality sub-dimensions identified in the theoretic framework for quality evaluation. Data collection was conducted between the April and September 2023 period, at typical tourism sites of Quang Nam and Da Nang such as the My Khe Beach, Cua Dai Beach, A Bang Beach, Ngu Hanh Son, Hoi An Ancient Town and the My Son Sanctuary. Domestic and international tourists who had visited these sites were invited to take part. A total of 280 valid respondents were collected, which represents an adequate representation of different tourist groups and travel purpose (Hue & Thanh, 2019; Huong et al., 2022).

3.3. Data Analysis

After completion of the field survey, the quantitative data were processed and analysed with SPSS version 20.0. The analysis was mainly based on descriptive statistical methods including frequency, mean, percentage, and standard deviation to summarize the evaluation of each destination quality factor by tourists. Analysis of satisfaction and determining areas of strengths and weaknesses in cultural and coastal tourism services was done using these measures. Seven quality indicators: resource richness, infrastructure, accessibility, seasonality, destination capacity, management efficiency and policy support were analyzed by using the Likert scale response measures of tourists on a 5-point scale from the perspective of tourists (strongly disagree, strongly agree). The study also compared the results of cultural tourism and beach resort tourism in order to find out the difference in the satisfaction level. In addition to the quantitative analysis, open-ended responses and secondary data were qualitatively analyzed, which led to a better contextualization of statistical results to interpret bigger sustainability

issues (Jugnanaru et al., 2025; Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos, 2021).

3.4. Sample Size

The total number of survey respondents was 280 people (including the domestic and foreign tourists traveling to an area of province of Quang nam and Da Nang) in the period of the research. The sample was diversified in terms of age, nationality, and travel motivation to ensure data heterogeneity and generalization. The selection was made using a purposive sampling method of tourists, who had experience in cultural and coastal places in the region. This allowed researchers to get the feedback about both types of tourism in detail and relevance. As the most popular regions in Vietnam are Da Nang and Quang Nam, the sample size of 280 was considered statistically sufficient for obtaining valid descriptive information (Anh et al., 2023; Holladay et al., 2025). To reduce sample bias and increase response accuracy, questionnaires were administered at popular cultural sites and beaches.

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

4.1. Overview Of the Current Status of Cultural Tourism and Beach Resort Tourism in Quang Nam - Da Nang

In the Vietnam tourism system, the combined advantages of cultural relics and natural resources are characterized by the ancient urban landscape, Cham Pa relics, and the natural beaches of the province of Quang Nam - Da Nang. The region is a central link in the corridor between the South-Central Coast and the Central Highlands and one of the major growth corridors for tourism in the country. The development of cultural tourism and that of touristic resorts of beaches has been closely linked to national tourism policies of both sustainability and diversification. These characteristics are consistent with the ideas in the Destination Quality Theory proposed by Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos (2021), where resource richness, accessibility and local policy support are emphasized as the core of a quality tourist experience.

As for resources, the region features important sights like Hoi An Ancient Town, a World Cultural Heritage site with its architectural and living cultural ecosystem, and My Son Sanctuary, a complex of relics of the Cham Pa people, among many other sights. Son Tra Peninsula is the "green lung" of Da Nang with high biodiversity while beaches of My Khe, Cua Dai, and A Bang have been evaluated by Forbes and TripAdvisor as one of the top beautiful

beaches in Asia (Anh et al., 2023). These various attractions are a reflection of a high degree of complementarities between cultural and coastal tourism, reinforcing the idea of the integrated destination system proposed by Bui & Phi (2022) within the framework of the Green Tourism Vision 2030 with a focus on the ecology balance and cultural diversity.

According to the Da Nang Department of Tourism and the Quang Nam Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the number of tourists continued to increase steadily from 2015 to 2019 at an average annual rate of 11.2%. In 2019 alone, Da Nang has welcomed approximately 8.69 million visitors, including 3.5 million international visitors (40%) (Dung & Thuy, 2024). Quang Nam received over 7.6 million visitors, with the nearly 45% international visitors being mostly concentrated in Hoi An and in the Hoi An - Dien Ban coastal cluster. Following the downturn of the tourism sector in 2020-2021 in response to the pandemic, the tourism industry has recovered well; in 2023, Da Nang had 7.4 million tourists and Quang Nam had 6.8 million tourists; domestic tourism accounted for 70-75% (Da Nang Department of Tourism, 2024; Quang Nam Provincial People's Committee, 2024). These recovery figures are reflected in what Diem et al. (2021) refer to as adaptive resilience in tourism systems where destination competitiveness is tied to the ability to reorient towards domestic markets and to diversify products when there are global disruptions.

From an investment point of view, the 2015-2023 period was a good time for the growth of large-scale projects, especially in the area of coastal resorts. Da Nang's has more than 110 licensed coastal resorts with a total investment of about 5.5 billion USD, located on concentration in this area: Vo Nguyen Giap Street, Truong Sa and Son Tra peninsula. Similarly, there are more than 80 coastal projects in Quang Nam from Hoi An to Tam Ky with significant investors including Vingroup, T&T Group, Four Seasons and Shilla Monogram (Diem et al., 2021). Hoi An has also pioneered the model of eco-tourism and community-based tourism in villages like Thanh Ha, Kim Bong and Tra Que which are in line with the Community-Based Tourism Model by Giampiccoli & Mtapuri (2021) which focuses more on sustainable livelihood through cultural participation.

However, challenges persist. Seasonality is still a big problem, as beach resorts tend to receive most visitors from April September, and the occupancy rate drops off in the off months. Environmental degradation - such as waste accumulation and coastal erosion on beaches such as Cua Dai and Ha

My - is continuing to endanger long-term sustainability (Hue & Thanh, 2019; Huong et al., 2022). These conditions support the Sustainability Theory championed by Jugănar et al. (2025) which warns that environmental management and capacity planning are part of destination stability. Furthermore, lack of high-quality human resources, especially in management and tour guiding, is one of the reasons for the unequal quality of services. Infrastructure is still uneven, with little inter-regional integration of transport, despite short distances between major hubs. Although Da Nang and Hoi An are just 30 km apart, insufficient specialized tourism transport system curtails the synergy between the heritage and coastal tourism destinations (Diem et al., 2021; Anh et al., 2023). The tourism structure in Quang Nam - Da Nang is strong but there are systemic gaps in sustainability, community engagement and infrastructure coordination.

Another key area of vulnerability that needs to be addressed is the Governance and Coordination Framework (Holladay et al. 2025) which emphasizes the interaction of policy, infrastructure, and community involvement in order to maintain a competitive advantage.

4.2. Survey Results of the Current Status of Tourist Destinations

4.2.1. Current Status of Quality of Cultural Tourism and Beach Resort Tourism Destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang

Conducting a survey of 280 people, including domestic and international tourists who have traveled to Quang Nam - Da Nang on the quality of cultural tourism and beach resorts in Quang Nam - Da Nang, the author obtained the following results:

Table 1: Current Status of Quality of Cultural Tourism and Beach Resort Tourism Destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang.

Content	Evaluation level										Average score	Standard deviation
	Totally disagree		Disagree		Confused		Agree		Totally agree			
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%		
1. Natural and cultural tourism resources in Quang Nam - Da Nang is rich and have unique values that attract tourists.	19	6.8	27	9.6	113	40.4	91	32.5	30	10.7	3.31	1.015
2. The infrastructure system and tourism services at the destinations basically meet the needs of tourists.	25	8.9	37	13.2	53	18.9	97	34.6	68	24.3	3.52	1.241
3. The ability to connect traffic and access tourist attractions for domestic and international tourists is convenient and diverse.	28	10.0	4	1.4	59	21.1	108	38.6	81	28.9	3.75	1.183
4. Tourism exploitation time at destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang lasts all year round and is less affected by the season.	22	7.9	33	11.8	60	21.4	124	44.3	41	14.6	3.46	1.119

5. Destinations have suitable capacity to serve a large number of tourists during peak tourist seasons.	17	6.1	2	0.7	61	21.8	127	45.4	73	26.1	3.85	1.017
6. Management organization at tourist destinations is clear, effective and ensures professionalism.	13	4.6	21	7.5	92	32.9	110	39.3	44	15.7	3.54	0.997
7. Local authorities have policies to support and actively invest in the development of cultural tourism and beach resorts.	20	7.1	29	10.4	65	23.2	109	38.9	57	20.4	3.55	1.138

According to Table 1, average scores range between 3.31 and 3.85, which is generally positive evaluation. The mean for “destination capacity” was the highest (3.85), followed by “traffic connectivity” (3.75). These results are validations of Destination Quality Model by Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos (2021), which finds that accessibility and capacity are the predictors of the most important consequence of visitor satisfaction. The high ratings for capacity imply that destinations can handle large volumes of visitors which is in line with Diem et al. (2021), who argue that infrastructure efficiency and coordinated management are key to regional competitiveness. “Policy support” (3.55) and “management effectiveness” (3.54) followed, reflecting greater confidence in local governance and institutional support. These results are in line with the Governance Model proposed by Dai Quang and Vo-Thanh (2025) emphasizing the public-private partnerships as basis to achieve quality in tourism. On the other hand, infrastructure and services (3.52) also gained a positive rating, in which development of facilities was improved. On the other hand, the

lowest dimensions were exploitation time (3.46) and uniqueness of resources (3.31) indicating sensitivity to seasonality and to the need for new product differentiation. These findings relate to the Social-Ecological System Architecture (Bui & Nguyen, 2021) which relates the quality of destination to the environment balance, cultural authenticity, and novelty. Referring to Jugnaru et al. (2025), the case of Quang Nam - Da Nang tourism demonstrates that despite the great development of tourism infrastructure and policies, there are still issues for a sustainable tourism destination with the balance between economic growth and environmental protection.

4.2.2. Current Status of Development of Typical Cultural Tourism Types in Quang Nam - Da Nang

Conducting a survey of 280 people, including domestic and international tourists who have traveled to Quang Nam - Da Nang on the current status of cultural tourism development, the author obtained the following results:

Table 2: Current Status of Development of Typical Cultural Tourism Types in Quang Nam - Da Nang.

Content	Evaluation level										Average score	Standard deviation
	Totally disagree		Disagree		Confused		Agree		Totally agree			
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%		
1. Cultural heritage tours (Hoi An ancient town, My Son Sanctuary, Ngu Hanh Son scenic spot, etc.) are invested in and	18	6.4	29	10.4	56	20.0	95	33.9	82	29.3	3.69	1.182

developed appropriately and attract tourists.												
2. Visits to historical and revolutionary sites and museums (Cham Museum, Hoi An Museum, Da Nang Museum, etc.) are organized regularly and have rich content.	15	5.4	1	0.4	76	27.1	137	48.9	51	18.2	3.74	0.942
3. Cultural experience tourism in traditional craft villages (Thanh Ha pottery, Kim Bong carpentry village, Tra Que vegetables, etc.) are effectively exploited and attract the attention of tourists.	24	8.6	33	11.8	88	31.4	97	34.6	38	13.6	3.33	1.116
4. Traditional cultural and religious festivals (Quan The Am Festival, Vu Lan Festival, Cau Ngu Festival, Quang Nam Heritage Festival, etc.) are preserved and closely linked with tourism activities.	20	7.1	47	16.8	56	20.0	97	34.6	60	21.4	3.46	1.203
5. Tourism types associated with local culinary culture (Cao Lau, Quang noodles, Banh To, etc.) are promoted and developed in sync with cultural tourism activities.	25	8.9	18	6.4	81	28.9	112	40.0	44	15.7	3.47	1.110

As can be seen in Table 2, the average scores fall between 3.33 and 3.74, indicating generally positive but uneven development. The best rated type is “visiting historical and revolutionary sites and

museums” (3.74) followed by “cultural heritage tours” (3.69). The results exhibit the prevailing position of Heritage Tourism in accordance with the Green Tourism Vision 2030 Framework (Bui & Phi,

2022) that encourages the Heritability into sustainable tourism ecosystems. Culinary tourism (3.47) stood in third place, illustrating an increase in its role in differentiation of destinations, although the differences in terms of promotion between the regions are still evident. Festivals (3.46) came close behind, and were culturally rich but poorly structured. The lowest score, "craft village tourism" (3.33), indicates insufficient innovation and insufficient engagement of the communities. This result confirms the Community-Based Tourism Model of Giampiccoli & Mtapuri (2021), which states that if there is little participation of locals, there is less authenticity and the experiential dimension of tourism is restricted. Improved access to such sectors could have a significant positive impact on visitors' satisfaction and social equity,

5. DISCUSSION

The results confirm that Quang Nam - Da Nang has important tourism infrastructures, accessibility, and destination capacity, which are three key components central to the Destination Quality Theory proposed by Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos (2021). These findings show that when an area is able to combine modern physical infrastructure with effective institutional coordination, the quality of the destination is substantially improved in terms of perception. In the case of Quang Nam - Da Nang, the common ratings of infrastructure, management and policy support show that the area has successfully attracted both governmental and private investment to create a competitive tourism system. Such outcomes confirm the views of Diem et al. (2021), who stated that destination resilience and competitiveness is not only attached to the occurrence of high-quality facilities but also to an integrated management of different tourism actors. Post-pandemic recovery patterns are also indicative of the adaptability of the infrastructure and policy of Quang Nam - Da Nang, as it was able to recover more quickly than other regional destinations and shows good operational and administrative capacity.

Despite these infrastructural and managerial strengths, the results reveal significant gaps in terms of sustainability, cultural innovation and seasonality management. The relatively low scores for seasonality with 3.46 and uniqueness of tourism resources with a score of 3.31 indicate that despite the physical capacity of the region is at an advanced level, the cultural and ecological resources of the region are not being transformed innovatively into a diversity of tourism products offering year-round value. This weakness can be associated with the

Sustainability Theory stated by Jugănar et al. (2025) that overdependence on traditional tourism forms combined with the lack of an integration of environmental and cultural innovation may lead to ecological fatigue and product stagnation. In the case of Quang Nam - Da Nang, the lack of differentiation for all the cultural and resort experiences implies a weak capacity for innovation in the field of storytelling, digital promotion and involvement of visitors. Moreover, as emphasized in Bui & Nguyen (2021), in their Social-Ecological Systems Framework, long-term competitiveness aims to maintain a balance between environmental resilience and a cultural authenticity. While beaches, forests, and heritage sites remain a natural attraction for the area, overdevelopment and environmental degradation (particularly in the coastal areas such as Cua Dai) is threatening the long-term value of these resources.

Community participation was another important dimension to be resolved. The survey results indicated that the mean scores of cultural and community-based types of tourism, in particular, traditional craft villages (3.33) and religious festivals (3.46), were lower than the other types of tourism. These conclusions represent restrictions of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Model (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2021) which states that the development of sustainable tourism relies on the empowerment and integration of the local communities. In both of the provinces of Da Nang and Quang nam, tourism planning remains to be top-down and the local artisans and local people are still viewed as the service providers rather than stakeholders in the decision-making process. This low participation affects the authenticity and the socio-economic benefits which tourism can bring to rural and peri-urban communities. When there is no community ownership, tourism products frequently become standardized which makes them less unique and hard for visitors to relate to. So, not only is local participation an ethical imperative, it can be seen as a strategic necessity for the diversification of the cultural product and for securing an equitable development. Better training, microenterprise assistance and incorporation into marketing networks can make local communities active cultural stewards and innovators.

Governance emerged as a counterpart capability and avenue of opportunity. The results show that the institution structures of tourism governance have been formed in the mature form in terms of policy support (3.55) and management effectiveness (3.54) in Quang Nam - Da Nang. These results validate the Governance and Coordination Framework proposed

by Holladay et al. (2025) and Dai Quang & Vo-Thanh (2025) where cross-sectoral cooperation between the government agencies, the private enterprises and local communities are very important. Good governance not only provides regulatory comparability but also encourages innovation through public-private partnerships. However, the administration in the area can be further improved with the implementation of digital administration tools such as electronic visitor management, open access to tourism data and destination analysis with artificial intelligence. Such tools can be used in line with the call in Bui and Phi (2022) for “smart governance” under the Green Tourism Vision 2030 Framework, which calls for transparency and participatory decision-making in tourism development.

Another aspect which the data brings to light is the lack of integration between cultural and resort tourism. Despite the geographical proximity there is nevertheless a geographical splitting between the beach resorts in Da Nang and the heritage sites in Quang Nam. This situation is similar to the problems outlined by Diem et al. (2021) who considers that inter-regional fragmentation restricts the achievement of integrated experiences at the destination. Measures such as strengthening transportation corridors, development of thematic cultural-resort itineraries as well as promoting cooperative marketing campaigns may help fill this gap. Such measures would also deal with seasonality because people could alternate between coastal recreation and cultural exploration and visitor flows would stabilize throughout the year. Moreover, this integrated approach is also consistent with the sustainability perspective of Jugănaru et al. (2025), in which diversification of experiences between ecological and cultural settings helps to reduce stress on the environment and to provide greater economic resilience.

In the field of sustainability and environmental governance, the results indicate that the province of Quang Nam - Da Nang has progressed effectively, but not yet fully achieved the targets in Vietnam's Green Tourism Vision 2030 Framework (Bui & Phi, 2022; Diem et al., 2021). Despite the commendable infrastructural developments and investments, it is important to integrate environmental consciousness into its operations, for example, through environmental management of waste, integration with renewable energy sources, and coastal protection programs. This empirical observation of the study provides evidence that regardless of policies undertaken by local authorities for eco-

tourism development, enforcement and monitoring mechanism is not consistent. In accordance with Bui & Nguyen (2021), it seems as though for effective implementation, tourism development strategies must have sensitivity to the carrying capacity of the natural system as well as the social welfare of the host community. The inclusion of eco-certification schemes for hotels and tour operators could also be used to increase accountability and public awareness. The debate also focuses on the importance of digital transformation in achieving sustainability and competitiveness. Facility innovations like virtual reality, big data analytics and AI-powered tourism marketing can help destinations reach younger, tech-savvy travelers while not significantly impacting the environment. Policy integration of these technologies can assist in increased visibility, off-peak visitation, and cultural personalization. This is very similar to the concept of “smart destination management” put forward by Holladay et al. (2025) which emphasizes on leveraging the digital innovation to simultaneously achieve sustainability and visitor satisfaction.

The theoretical combinations and results help substantiate the argument that the tourism system in Quang Nam - Da Nang is a case of hybrid developmental stage - strong in terms of infrastructure, management and policy, but still in the process of developing in terms of cultural differentiation, sustainability and inclusivity. The evidence further confirms much of the literature that focuses attention on the fact that tourism destinations in transition economies tend to suffer from the paradox of fast physical development with slow cultural and environmental development. Facing these asymmetries requires what Jugănaru et al. (2025) refer to as a regrowth or regenerative system of tourism, in which development is compatible with ecological restoration and cultural preservation. Empirical evidence is a logically consistent combination of theoretical predictions in several models. In accordance with the Destination Quality and Destination Governance theories, the strengths of Da Nang are as follows: Infrastructure and investment, which have been effective during the period of the significant growth of the province of Da Nang, known as Qiang Nam - Da Nang. However, seasonal challenges, cultural innovation and community participation are challenges identified in the frameworks on Sustainability, Community-based Tourism and Social-Ecological Systems. Therefore, future strategies should integrate these insights into practice by means of these policies: (1) encouraging more inter-sectorial coordination; (2) encouraging

community-based tourism models; (3) encouraging ecological design and monitoring; and (4) scaling up digital transformation to enhance transparency and sustainability. As in Bui & Nguyen (2021) and Juganaru et al. (2025), sustainable tourism is not the outcome of one-off interventions but is the result of the constant interaction between the cultural authenticity, environmental stewardship and adaptive governance. The theoretical and empirical synthesis presented in this discussion confirms that, if the balance between infrastructure, culture and ecology is at the core of future development agenda, Quang Nam - Da Nang has the basis to become a model destination to build sustainable tourism for Vietnam and the wider Southeast Asian region.

6. CONCLUSION

The research has assessed the quality of cultural tourism and beach resort destinations in Quang Nam - Da Nang both qualitatively and quantitatively based on theoretical synthesis and empirical results (Bui & Phi, 2022; Diem et al., 2021). The survey information of 280 domestic and international tourists was tangible evidence in terms of the satisfaction and the awareness of the stakeholders about these two key types of tourism. These findings demonstrate that the tourism of the region is in the positive development with significant strengths in the destination capacity, traffic connectivity, and local policy support (Anh, An, and Tuan, 2023). Destination capacity ($M = 3.85$) and traffic connectivity ($M = 3.75$) were the criteria with the highest rating, which is confirmed by the fact that infrastructure and management are effective to meet the growing demand of the visitors. Another area that received high ratings was cultural tourism, especially the visits to the heritage and museums ($M = 3.74$) that reflects the historical significance attributed to the area (Bui et al., 2022). Nevertheless, there are still limitations in seasonality ($M = 3.46$), the lack of community-based cultural products of the first level like craft villages and festivals ($M = 3.333.46$), and low impression of uniqueness of resources ($M = 3.31$). These results resonate with the previous research on the sustainability issues in central Vietnam (Hue & Thanh, 2019; Huong et al., 2022) and prove that innovation, diversification, and sustainability in destination management are necessary.

6.1. Limitations

Despite the accomplishment of the study objectives, a number of limitations must be stated. The 280 respondents surveyed can be considered

representative, but this sample might not represent the entire diversity of the tourist demographics in all markets. The study used primarily descriptive statistics and thus restricted the investigation of the cause-and-effect relationships of variables. Additionally, since the post-pandemic recovery period was selected as the moment of data collection in 2023, the temporary changes in the market might have also changed the perceptions of the respondents (Dung and Thuy, 2024). This dependency on the secondary institutional reports provided by the Da Nang Department of Tourism (2024) and Quang Nam Provincial People's Committee (2024) made reliability, but might not represent the tourism at the informal or community level. These drawbacks indicate that any subsequent research ought to extend the scope of sample, add longitudinal or inferential procedures and introduce more in-depth qualitative approaches to increase validity and generalizability.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the finding of this study, a few recommendations are given to enhance sustainable and competitive tourism in Quang Nam -Da Nang. To begin with, the authorities and stakeholders are to strengthen experience-based and community-based tourism through investing in pre-modern festivals, craft villages, and foodstuffs tied to a specific cultural story (Bui and Nguyen, 2021). Second, year-round diversification of tourism products would be needed to minimize the seasonality due to integrated cultural-ecological-resort packages that can be adjusted to the climatic conditions (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2021). Third, there should be an improvement in transport and digital infrastructure, particularly the inter-regional routes connecting Da Nang-Hoi An-My Son-Tam Ky which should be backed by multilingual tourism sites (Lukoseviciute & Panagopoulos, 2021). Fourth, sustainable and green branding should be promoted through digital marketing with the help of technologies like AI, VR, and big data to reach international markets (Holladay et al., 2025). Lastly, the government, businesses, and communities should work much closer to enhance human resource training, professionalism in operations and inclusive destination management (Dai Quang & Vo-Thanh, 2025). These recommendations are consistent with the governance coordination framework discussed by Holladay et al. (2025) and Dai Quang & Vo-Thanh (2025), who stress that sustainable destination management requires synergy between public authorities, private enterprises, and community

stakeholders.

6.3. Future Implications

The results have significant implications to policy makers, tourism planners and the researchers who are interested in sustainable tourism development. To the policymakers, the research will have empirical results to back up the integrated approaches of cultural and coastal tourism in accordance with the Green Tourism Vision 2030 of Vietnam (Diem et al., 2021). As a practitioner, findings provide some insights on the value of product differentiation, digital transformation, and environment stewardship in order to retain the competitiveness of the regions (Jugănaru et al., 2025). Theoretically, the study increases the body of knowledge as it takes into

account the concepts of cultural and resort tourism under one model of sustainability, which can be applied in other seaside heritage sites (Bui et al., 2022). The upcoming research must adopt a mixed-method or longitudinal research design for studying the changing tourist behavior and satisfaction besides the socio-cultural effects at community scale. This kind of research would improve an understanding of the interaction between sustainability, innovation and destination quality in the fast-developing tourism industry in Vietnam. This is consistent with Bui & Phi (2022) and Diem et al. (2021), in which their sustainable tourism frameworks focus on the integration of cultural tourism and coastal tourism in the Green Tourism Vision 2030 of Vietnam.

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