Tourism Planning of Rattan and Bamboo Villages in the Red River Delta, Applied to Thu Sy Craft Village, Hung Yen Province

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Abstract. Most of rural areas in the Red River Delta is home of traditional craft villages that have been established for hundreds of years with abundant cultural and historical values representing the culture of Viet Nam. Of which, traditional craft culture and other cultural heritages such as architecture, temples, landscapes, culinary culture, performing arts, festivals, etc. are precious values. They are valuable potentials for rural economy development in the increasingly rapid urbanization. By conducting field surveys of typical rattan and bamboo villages and analyzing documents, this discussion paper aims to assess the tourism development of traditional craft villages and their development potentials, then propose suitable structural models for tourism planning of rattan and bamboo weaving villages in the Red River Delta. The research results are applied in Thu Sy rattan and bamboo weaving village, Hung Yen province, Viet Nam.

1. Introduction
Traditional craft village is the signature of different cultural communities in each country. Approach to develop these traditional craft villages varies from country to country. Special attention has been paid to craft tourism recently in a number of countries as an active solution to address socio-economic issues that arised during the rural industrialization and contribute to the poverty reduction and hunger elimination effort (C. Denpaiboon and K. Amatasawatdee, 2012). Craft village development will create jobs in the rural area and improve local employment situation. Thus it generates fundamental changes for the sustainable rural socio-economic development.

Aiming at efficient natural resource usage, restructuring of the village’s products to meet tourism demands and taking full advantage of the villager’s dynamic and creativity, craft tourism policy supports of the authorities has paved out the sustainable and efficient development of craft villages. Craft tourism not only promotes socio-economic development but also helps to preseve traditional production activities and craft village’s cultural values for each nation (S. Fanchette. N. Stedman, 2009).

The Red River Delta rural areas are the cradle of traditional villages that have been developing for hundreds of years with diversified cultural and historical values, representing Vietnamese culture. Of which, traditional bamboo and rattan weaving and other cultural heritages such as architecture,
temples, landscapes, culinary culture, performing arts, festivals, etc. are precious values. They are valuable potentials for rural economy development in the urbanization and industrialization of the nation.

Despite their abundant potentials, tourism development to exploit the advantages of these villages has not been a successful story due to various reasons such as polluted environment, lack of exhibition space to introduce local products to tourists or souvenir products, etc. In addition, traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages have not efficiently exploited their heritages for tourism development and promotion of traditional cultural values, preservation or restoration of the lost craft activities.

2. Overview of the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the Red River Delta

In 2016, there were approximately 5,000 craft villages nationwide, of which 1,700 were certified as traditional craft villages, according to statistical data. Traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages account for a major part of the craft villages in Red River Delta and have significant potentials for tourism development. The recently restored and developed bamboo and rattan weaving villages such as Phu Vinh, Thu Sy, Chuong, etc. are appealing destinations since the visitors can understand more about Vietnamese culture, enjoy hand-on experience and access to signature products while learning about the craft activities. Certain villages have taken initial cooperation steps to attract visitors, including the Phu Vinh traditional bamboo and rattan weaving village in Ha Noi.

3. Research methodology

The article utilized two main research methods:

- Literature review of documents, books, Internet sources, and collection of inputs in scientific seminars on relevant issues. Regarding the issues related to the research topic, the author analyzed the data and perspectives collected from research articles to validate the overall evaluations provided in the article.

- Observation and field surveys: the author surveyed highly representative villages such as Phu Vinh, Thu Sy, Chuong. The survey results were then summarized by the author to produce comparative analysis and the research findings were presented in highly generalized charts and tables.

4. Current status of tourism activities

4.1. Tourism activities related to traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages

Visits to the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages have not been paid due attention. They are spontaneous and conducted by individuals or groups.

Visitors are mainly coming to Phu Vinh bamboo and rattan weaving village, Chuong conical hat village, etc. Crafting activities are demonstrated at specific locations such as religious relics or home-based production facilities. Therefore tourism activities are not beneficial to the community.

Tourism activities are mainly conducted between production households and tourist groups or experts wishing to learn about traditional craft values and products of the villages.

Elements affecting tourism activities in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages:

- Enterprises should be encouraged to develop infrastructure, tourism products and human resource for the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages;
- A system connecting the enterprises and production households should be put in place to strengthen the linkage between product development and the enterprise’s brand name;
- Infrastructure system should be upgraded and synchronized to facilitate tourism development in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages;
- Tourism products should be developed in line with strict restoration of heritages and natural landscapes;
- Participatory approach should be mainstreamed in all stages, from tourist guide, service provision to management of tourism activities. Enterprises should gradually transfer the complete management of tourism activities to local communities which are represented by a
local authority or community-based organization.

- Community awareness should be raised on environment protection in traditional villages.

Tourism issues in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages:

- The craft village values which found the basis for tourism development have been significantly undermined in urbanization process. This leads to the failure in meeting demands of tourism infrastructure system.
- Environmental pollution and overloaded infrastructure also create their negative imprints on tourism landscapes and activities.
- Tourism activities in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages are mostly spontaneous, with no development plan formulated for each village. Tourism products are poor, duplicate, not professional and fail to attract visitors.

4.2. Current status of tourism management

4.2.1. Tourism business models available in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages

The tourism business models can be categorized into two groups according to the survey on current status of tourism management in three villages. Details as below:

Group 1: Managed by enterprises (village/ farm/ ecological garden tour, fishing pond, hand-on production experience, etc.): Model in Phu Vinh village

Group 2: Managed by households: Model in the surveyed villages of Chuong, Thu Sy, etc. The families in these villages develop their homes into tourist sites. Ms. Ta Thu Huong’s family has cooperated with travel agencies to bring visitors to Chuong village and offer them the conical hat production experience in the last decade in addition to production and trading of conical hats.

4.2.2. Participation of tourism enterprises

Tourism enterprises have not expanded their operations to most of the craft villages, according to interviews and surveys. This is due to various reasons but mainly because craft villages have not met the infrastructure requirements for tourism activities.

4.2.3. Role of local authorities in managing tourism activities

The survey highlights the critical role of local authorities in managing tourism activities. However, they has not formulated specific tourism development plans though tourism has been included in the commune’s development orientation.

Provincial/ city authorities develop and issue viewpoints, strategies and policies at macro level; overall objectives, long-term tourism development programs and plans; develop and complete the legal framework on tourism; and formulate and implement plans. However, legal documents on tourism activities in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages are both insufficient and inconsistent with regulations in other sectors (such as construction and land-related regulations).

District/Commune-level authorities are responsible for implementing policies, master plan, plan and regulations on state management of tourism activities in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages. Below are the survey findings:

- Local authorities have not efficiently managed the tourism agencies;
- Local authorities have not efficiently managed tourist groups and tourists’ activities;
- Local authorities have not actively managed tourism routes and sites; Most of destinations are developed in the cooperation between tourism enterprises and local residents.

5. Identification of key tourism potentials for traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages

5.1. Historical values

The craft work establishment in the village as well as production profile are part of the history of a region or a nation. A number of villages in the Red River Delta has conducted their craft activities for
hundreds of years. The study on the work’s formulation and development enriches our knowledge on the development of the village, region or nation.

5.2. Value of the craft products
An fine-art and unique product reflects the creativity, skills, high aesthetic level of the craftsman and can be compared with other products at the regional, national or international levels.

Every village has its own products. Similar products produced by different villages have different features since they are made by the creativity of the local people. This is the signature value of craft villages in light of tourism development because fine-art products attract more tourists. In addition, it provide the village with the opportunity to promote its craft products to the international market.

5.3. Symbolic value of the craft culture
Craft culture reflects the diligence of the farmers. There are many folk songs, proverbs and legends about craft activities. Many production perspectives and philosophies show us the concept about living of local people. Traditional products are often hand made, rarely made by machines. They reflect the diligence and skills of the people in the Red River Delta.

A number of products have been considered the symbols of Vietnamese culture such as conical hat (Chuong village), fish trap bicycle (Thu Sy village).

The fish trap reminds us of the agricultural culture of Viet Nam with peaceful rural landscape and summer noons fishing with friends.

![Figure 1. Thu Sy village’s fish traps represent agricultural culture of Viet Nam.](image1)

![Figure 2. Conical hat of Chuong village symbolizes for Vietnamese people.](image2)

Folk games such as playing drum, zip line, cooking rice, climbing tree, hitting balls, wooden horse, human chess, swinging bridge, puppetry, etc. are also unique tourism resources of traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages.

5.4. Material value
Bamboo and rattan weaving products distinguish themselves by the materials. It is the materials that make the product’s shape, color and impress the viewers. In addition, the selected materials reflect the values of the nation and the village as well as the liberation of Vietnamese people. They help to introduce Vietnamese people and culture to the world.

For example, bamboo represents the Vietnamese farmers and workers; it symbolizes for the couple’s love and is used to make toys for children; elderly people often relax under its shadows; bamboo is one of the Vietnamese weapons and is an outstanding comrade in the nation’s liberations, etc. The undefeated and determined bamboo can be found in many Vietnamese poems.
5.5. **Landscape value**

Production activities are often conducted in the living areas of the craft village. Therefore tourists will feel the unique cultural landscape of the village when they visit.

| No. | Traditional landscape potentials for tourism development |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Overall landscape, tile roofs, bamboo trees, rice fields |
| 2   | Water stations, temple’s ponds and wells                |
| 3   | Houses with traditional living activities               |
| 4   | Lanes                                                   |

5.6. **Traditional customs and social relationships**

This section refers to the practice of job ancestral worship, know-how transfer regulations, professional groups, festivals, family relationship. The visitor’s knowledge on the craft village as well as the region will be improved when they learn about the traditional craft production activities.

Village’s festival is the most important religious and collative event of the year. It attracts and receives village’s members who live and work in other parts of the country. However, this event has not successfully attracted tourists and tourism services since information dissemination, reception, service provision, etc. have not been organized.

5.7. **Traditional music value**

Village residents often sing Ca tru. Ca tru clubs of craft villages often perform in competitions held at district and provincial levels in the Red River Delta.

5.8. **Appealing souvenirs and consumption products for domestic and international tourists**

Souvenirs or local consumption goods are indispensable tourism products of each sightseeing. This is the strength of craft villages and they have rich potentials to develop souvenirs and decoration products from their production activities.

6. **Planning for tourism development in the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages of Red River Delta**

6.1. **Planning viewpoint**

It is urgent to conduct tourism development planning for the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the Red River Delta. The writers would suggest the following key viewpoints to ensure sustainable environment of the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages.

- Tourism activities should be an integral part of the space of the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages.
- The tourism development plan for traditional bamboo and rattan villages should harmonize the exploitation of current tourism potentials and the village’s value preservation.
- The planning should base on the village’s tourism product system.

6.2. **Planning principles**

The following five principles should be followed to ensure sustainable tourism development in bamboo and rattan weaving villages.

- Restoration and preservation of current values of traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages as well as villages at losing value risk;
- Development of new tourism products for the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages;
- Establishment of enable space for promoting values of the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages.
weaving villages;
- Promotion of the technical infrastructure system for tourism development and environmental pollution reduction in the village;
- Promotion of public participation in tourism development activities.

6.3. Proposed development models for traditional bamboo and rattan villages in the Red River Delta

Theoretical and practical analysis finds that tourism potentials are varied between different traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages. Therefore, the writers would propose three development models for traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages according to their tourism potentials as below:

Table 2. Proposed development models for traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages.

| Feature                      | Traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages | Traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages - Tourism activities | Traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages - Tourism |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Development model            | Restore and preserve traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages: Adjust village structure. Restore, preserve and rehabilitate cultural and religious facilities. Develop a set of tourism products and activities to take full advantages of tourism potentials of cultural and religious facilities in these villages. Supplement new and selective architectural facilities to support and promote tourism activities. New facilities must be aligned with and not distorting the village’s structure and values. | This model integrates two different tasks, namely (i) restoration, preservation of the values of traditional craft village and (ii) development of tourism products. It involves the following steps: Develop sets of tourism products. Integrate the restoration and preservation of craft village’s values into the developed tourism products and remove improper tourism products/ Include new architectural facilities into the developed tourism products. Attention should be paid to the control of tourism products in this model to ensure they do not alter the original cultural values of the craft village. | This model refers to the tourism-based development process where tourism products orient spatial structure of the traditional craft village. A number of countries such as South Korea, China, Malaysia, etc. have applied new traditional craft village and cultural village model to attract visitors in the context that the spontaneous development of such villages does not favor tourism development. It involves the following steps: Develop sets of tourism products; Establish space for tourism activities in craft villages in line with the developed sets of tourism products; Set up tourism services. |
| Scope of Application         | Applicable in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages where cultural values of combined housing-and-production areas are maintained. Mainly applied for cultural tourism products, sight-seeing and | Applicable in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages where cultural heritage value systems no longer exist; however combined housing-and-production areas are still evident. The number of traditional production households | Applicable in traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages where cultural values of combined housing-and-production areas are no longer visible. This model is mainly applied for special tourism products of the bamboo and rattan |
agricultural ecological tours. The number of traditional production households must account for more than 30% of the households in the village.

Advantages and disadvantages:

+ This solution is highly feasible with reasonable investment cost. It is particularly suitable to the socio-economic conditions of craft villages in the Red River Delta. This model takes full advantage of the village’s values in terms of heritage and craft production. It promotes public participation in tourism development activities.

+ Advantages: This model promotes the development of tourism products and activities during the construction and adjustment of the traditional craft villages. It brings about dual benefits of both exploiting the heritage values and developing new tourism products.

+ Disadvantages: Tourism activities might change the original values of the traditional craft village in case of inefficient control.

+ Advantages: New and unique tourism system is formulated. This model promotes the development and introduction of new tourism products. The introduction of innovative tourism products is critical to promote the potential values of traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the current context.

+ Advantages: This model requires huge construction cost. It might ruin the village structure in case of inefficient control. Public participation in tourism development is limited.
6.4. Establishing spatial structure for traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the Red River Delta

- The following tourism resources should be restored, preserved and rehabilitated. Lost architectural facilities such as village temple, pagoda, ancestor worship temple, job ancestor worship temple should be strictly restored and preserved. It is proposed to include into the list of protected facilities the housing-and-production areas that successfully maintain traditional architecture and production model.
- Develop tourism sites: As for traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages of which the values are maintained quite well, the tour should follow the road and waterways. Tourism sites should be relics or heritages, combined housing and production areas and the special landscape of the village.
- Tourism service area: Service areas such as exhibition, souvenir shops, restaurants, etc. should be included in the village’s access areas.
- Auxiliary area: Parking area, wastewater treatment ponds and public latrines should be established.

6.5. Model applied in Thu Sy traditional bamboo and rattan weaving village

![Figure 4. Tourism development orientation for Thu Sy village.](image)

6.5.1. Preservation of the village’s tradition cultural and historical relics
Temple, pagoda, family ancestor worship temple, etc. should be identified for protection. They can be developed into sight seeings to facilitate visitors’ learning about the village’s history and culture.

6.5.2. Development of tourism activities related to traditional weaving village
Rehabilitated combined housing and production areas: Learning about the production line at household level, weaving methods and procedures related to different kinds of processed bamboos. Visitors can experiment certain simple weaving tasks, such as weaving or preparing the weaving materials, etc.
Public facilities should be constructed to facilitate tourism activities.
Centralized production areas should be created.
Bamboo, neohouzeaua or material forests should be developed. These materials are currently not available in craft villages and purchased from elsewhere. It is proposed that an area of approximately 5,000 m² to 1 hectare should be reserved for bamboo, neohouzeaua or material forests. This area will create landscaping and facilitate the introduction of materials to visitors. Tourists shall see papyrus
field when they visit craft villages that produce goods from papyrus plants.

**Figure 5.** Preservation of temple area in Thu Sy village.

**Figure 6.** Illustration of the combined housing and production area.

**Figure 7.** Tourist’s experiment of the production activity.
6.5.3. Eco-agricultural based tourism development

In addition to harvested products, Thu Sy villagers will enjoy the remarkable income generated by tourism activities from their daily production activities such as plough, furrow, fertilizing, seeding, planting vegetables, etc. It is expected that the “One-day Thu Sy farmer” tour will attract tourists, particularly foreign tourists, to visit and try the hand-on experience with the local people if it is introduced.

Visitors will enjoy the special time in Thu Sy village with many restaurants, diversified traditional dishes made from shrimps and fishes caught by the village’s trapping products, bungalows in vegetable gardens, homestays and enthusiastic guides. In addition to agricultural and weaving activities, tourists will have the opportunities to discover the village’s landscape with peaceful rice fields and river.
Figure 10. Illustration of bamboo dishes.

7. Conclusion
It is urgent to study about traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the Red River Delta to found scientific basis for practical application. The article has outlined tourism issues of the three traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages in the Red River Delta following document review and field surveys.

Principles to establish an enable tourism environment has been presented in this article which highlight the restoration, preservation of the village values and development of new tourism products.

The article proposes spatial models for the traditional bamboo and rattan weaving villages with details on solutions, scope, advantages, disadvantages and spatial structure for three types of villages.

Then it applies the spatial model to Thu Sy traditional bamboo and rattan weaving village. The proposed solutions are having low cost, suitable with the local socio-economic conditions and can be converted to construction investment projects. Notably, these solutions promote public participation in tourism development activities.

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