

Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Culture - Political Foundation for the Strategy of Cultural Tourism Development in Vietnam

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Abstract

President Ho Chi Minh was honored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a world cultural figure; a great leader and national liberation hero of Vietnam. For the Vietnamese state and people, Ho Chi Minh's thought is a valuable asset and the foundation for the nation's political direction. In the field of culture, Ho Chi Minh's thought clearly demonstrates the content of developing an advanced Vietnamese culture, rich in national identity, creating momentum for the country's economic and social development, including cultural tourism – one of Vietnam's advantages in developing the tourism economy. This study analyzes the content of Ho Chi Minh's thought on culture as the political basis for implementing the strategy of developing cultural tourism; and its application in cultural management to promote the development of cultural tourism in Vietnam. Based on the established theoretical framework, the author surveyed the opinions of 390 managers from 130 cultural and tourism organizations in several localities in Vietnam, including Hai Phong City (Northern), Da Nang City (Central), and Can Tho City (Southern). Based on the objective analysis and evaluation of the survey results, the author draws research conclusions and discusses policy issues aimed at achieving sustainable cultural and cultural tourism development in Vietnam.

Keywords: *Ho Chi Minh's thought, Cultural tourism, Vietnam.*

Introduction

Vietnam's history spans over 1000 years of independence under numerous feudal dynasties, continuously from 1009 to 1945, and a democratic political system from 1945 to the present. This rich history has produced many national heroes and cultural figures, including President Ho Chi Minh. He is honored as the greatest thinker and cultural figure of modern Vietnam and is also recognized as a world cultural icon.

From an international legal perspective, in 1987 UNESCO recognized Ho Chi Minh as a national liberation hero and an outstanding cultural figure of Vietnam. From a political and legal perspective in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh is the leader of the Vietnamese nation, the president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam); Ho Chi Minh's thought forms the foundation of Vietnam's current political line, holding great value and importance for the development and enhancement of Vietnam's position in Asia and the world. In the cultural field, Ho Chi Minh had a profound influence on the development of national culture and world culture.

The affirmation and recognition from both the international community and Vietnam serve as both a legal and political basis for asserting Ho Chi Minh's role in the development of the Vietnamese nation and the world. Therefore, studying Ho Chi Minh's thought is a topic that attracts the attention of many leaders and researchers in Vietnam, and is also the reason for the author's interest in this research.

Literature Review

UNESCO Resolution 24C/1865 of 1987 honors Ho Chi Minh as a national liberation hero and outstanding cultural figure of Vietnam (GSO, 2023). This is international recognition of Ho Chi Minh's outstanding contributions to the Vietnamese nation and to progressive humanity worldwide. In the field of culture, Ho Chi Minh's thought emphasizes the role of culture, stating that culture is the driving force and the goal of development. Ho Chi Minh valued culture and placed it on par with politics, economics, and society; and considered politics, economics, society, and culture as pillars of national development: "In the task of

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national reconstruction, there are four issues that must all be given equal attention and importance: politics, economics, society, and culture" (HM, 1997). He stressed that raising the cultural level of the people would help promote economic recovery and democratic development; Raising the cultural level of the people is also essential for building a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, and prosperous country (NPP, 2011). These views and contents show that Ho Chi Minh highly valued cultural development and considered it a driving force for the economic, political, and social development of the country.

In cultural studies, many Vietnamese researchers offer further insightful explanations of this issue. According to Duc, P.D. (2022) and Nguyet, D.T.M. (2022), culture belongs to the superstructure; therefore, it must be based on the construction and development of the social infrastructure in order to build and have the necessary conditions for cultural development. UNESCO's recognition also shows that culture in Ho Chi Minh's thought is the crystallization of Eastern and Western cultural values, the crystallization of traditional and modern cultural values, and the cultural values of the Vietnamese nation and the international community. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's thought on culture is the political basis, providing guidance for the construction and implementation of development strategies and the enhancement of the stature of Vietnamese culture. And, GSO (2023) assesses Ho Chi Minh's thought as the basis and foundation for building a development path for an advanced Vietnamese culture, rich in national identity, with basic orientations including building a system of cultural values and human standards associated with preserving and developing the Vietnamese family value system... This content also shows similarity with the close and harmonious connection between traditional and modern values for development; building a clean and healthy cultural environment, improving the conditions for people to enjoy culture; protecting and promoting good and sustainable values in the cultural traditions of ethnic groups to achieve Vietnam's development goals; selectively absorbing the essence of human culture suitable to Vietnam's reality, gradually bringing Vietnamese culture to the world.

Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on culture encompass many aspects, discussed and explained in detail and with depth. The fundamental and important content addressed is the development of culturally-minded individuals; cultural development promotes economic, political, and social development. The first issue is the development of culturally-minded individuals, which involves developing the cultural subject element to achieve the goal of preserving and promoting the cultural values of the nation and community. The second issue is the development of culture to promote economic, political, and social development, affirming the fundamental spiritual role of culture and its role as a driving force for economic, political, and social development. In the specific aspects of economic, political, and social development, the development of cultural tourism in Vietnam is also inseparable from the political line, which is to develop cultural tourism based on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on culture. In other words, Ho Chi Minh's thought on culture is the political basis for implementing the strategy of developing cultural tourism.

Many recent studies emphasize that the essence of cultural tourism is the exploitation of cultural values, creating tourism products aimed at satisfying the needs of tourists, bringing economic, political, and social benefits, and contributing to the preservation of national, ethnic, and community culture. Anh, T.T. (2014) and Bon, N.V. (2020) affirm the form of tourism development based on cultural values when addressing the issue of cultural tourism development. Hang, C.T. (2021), explaining from an economic development approach, affirmed that developing cultural tourism is a way to enrich cultural values, while also adding new cultural values to the national cultural heritage. This approach demonstrates rationality because, in developing cultural tourism, the consumption of cultural tourism products takes place and creates economic and other cultural values from cultural exchange between tourists, tourism service organizations, and local people.

Overall, the studies above interpret the content of cultural tourism development according to key aspects that reflect a form of tourism development based on cultural values. Accordingly, local authorities rely on the cultural values (cultural human resources, cultural heritage, indigenous culture, etc.) of the nation and community to promote local economic, political, and social development: Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, develop culturally-minded individuals, enhance people's understanding of ethnic and community cultural values, and achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism; Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, and achieve

the goal of developing cultural tourism, increasing people's income and promoting socio-economic development; Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, and achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism in conjunction with the preservation of heritage, ethnic and community culture, and socio-economic development.

With the approach described above, researchers emphasize the subjective element – human resources – and the goal of developing cultural human resources; and the element of cultural values, which are exploited to become cultural products, thereby developing cultural tourism products aimed at economic and social development. Many recent studies identify these two elements (Human Resources and Cultural Products) as both the goal and content of cultural tourism development, directly influencing cultural tourism development. The author supports this viewpoint and conducts research with the hypothesis that: *Human resources (H1) and Cultural products (H2) are the main contents and factors directly influencing the Development of cultural tourism.*

- Firstly, human resources are the subjective element and are identified as special social capital, namely human knowledge, community culture, and national culture (Duc, L.Q., 2012). Ho Chi Minh valued the development of culturally enriched individuals and emphasized qualities, ethics, knowledge, skills, and aspirations for advancement so that each individual could be a subject of social development, with dedication and contributing their abilities and talents to the country and nation. Thien, N.N. (2021) and Duc, P.D. (2022) explain human resources in similar aspects and affirm that they are crystallized in each person, forming each person's culture - traditional culture combined with modern culture, forming cultural human resources for national development in the trend of integration and civilization. The issue of human resources is analyzed broadly with the implication of developing culturally-minded individuals, with each citizen becoming a cultural workforce and a resource for local tourism development: Local people are active participants, possessing the qualities and ethics to preserve and promote the cultural values of their community and ethnic group in order to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development; Local people are active participants, possessing knowledge and understanding of community and ethnic culture, preserving and promoting the cultural values of their community and ethnic group in order to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development; Local people are active participants, with dedication and aspirations to become cultural human resources to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development.

- Secondly, cultural products are the cultural values of the nation and local communities. This resource includes historical relics, natural heritage, customs, art, etc., of the local community. When exploited, this resource becomes a cultural product serving the spiritual life and cultural enjoyment needs of people and communities, and becomes an important resource for tourism development, becoming a force impacting the economic and social development of the country. Hang, C.T. (2021) and Thien, N.N. (2021) analyzed and interpreted this issue from the perspective of evaluating the role of exploiting cultural values, stating that the cultural products of the nation and community, when exploited, preserved, and promoted appropriately, will become a great resource to promote economic and social development and contribute to the functions of education, aesthetics, and the continuation and development of history. Anh, T.T. (2014) and Bon, N.V. (2020) analyzes the significance of exploiting cultural values and emphasizes the requirements placed on localities in developing cultural products, which is to combine exploitation and preservation, promoting the cultural values of the nation and community: Local authorities regularly educate and propagate awareness of preserving and promoting cultural values among the people; institutionalize cultural values to recognize and sustainably exploit cultural values. In general, these studies provide a general analysis of cultural products with content implications: Local authorities promote and educate the public about the cultural values of their communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism; Local authorities institutionalize cultural values, recognize and sustainably exploit the cultural values of communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism; Local authorities preserve and promote the cultural values of communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism.

Thus, human resources and cultural values of the community and nation are preserved and exploited to promote their value, becoming important resources for tourism development and contributing to local growth. This is because cultural resources – cultural products – the more people use them, the more value

they create and the more value they increase. Based on Ho Chi Minh's thought on culture and the overall research content, the author has developed a theoretical framework and model for the development of cultural tourism and the influence of human resources and cultural products on cultural tourism development (Table 1, Figure 1).

Table 1. Theoretical Framework

Research content	Related research	Developing research scales
1. Human resources (HUR)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special social capital: Human knowledge, community culture, and national identity. - Qualities, ethics, knowledge, skills, and aspirations enable each individual to be a subject of social development. - Developing culturally-minded individuals means each citizen becomes a cultural workforce and a resource for local tourism development. 	Duc, L.Q. (2012); Thien, N.N. (2021); Duc, P.D. (2022).	1. HUR1. Local people are active participants, possessing the qualities and ethics to preserve and promote the cultural values of their community and ethnic group in order to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development. 2. HUR2. Local people are active participants, possessing knowledge and understanding of community and ethnic culture, preserving and promoting the cultural values of their community and ethnic group in order to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development. 3. HUR3. Local people are active participants, with dedication and aspirations to become cultural human resources to achieve the goal of cultural tourism development.
2. Cultural products (CUP)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cultural values of the nation and local communities are exploited and transformed into cultural products. - Serving the spiritual life and cultural enjoyment needs of individuals and communities, it becomes an important resource for tourism development and a driving force impacting the country's economic and social development. 	Anh, T.T. (2014); Bon, N.V. (2020); Hang, C.T. (2021); Thien, N.N. (2021).	4. CUP1. Local authorities promote and educate the public about the cultural values of their communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism. 5. CUP2. Local authorities institutionalize cultural values, recognize and sustainably exploit the cultural values of communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism. 6. CUP3. Local authorities preserve and promote the cultural values of communities and ethnic groups to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism.
3. Developing cultural tourism (DCT)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing tourism based on cultural values (cultural human resources, cultural heritage, indigenous culture, etc.). - Satisfying the needs of tourists; promoting local economic, political, and social development. 	Anh, T.T. (2014); Bon, N.V. (2020); Hang, C.T. (2021); Duc, P.D. (2022); Nguyet, D.T.M. (2022).	7. DCT1. Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, develop culturally-minded individuals, enhance people's understanding of ethnic and community cultural values, and achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism. 8. DCT2. Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, and achieve the goal of developing cultural

Research content	Related research	Developing research scales
		tourism, increasing people's income and promoting socio-economic development. 9. DCT3. Localities exploit the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, and achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism in conjunction with the preservation of heritage, ethnic and community culture, and socio-economic development.

Source: Compiled by the author through the review

Research Model

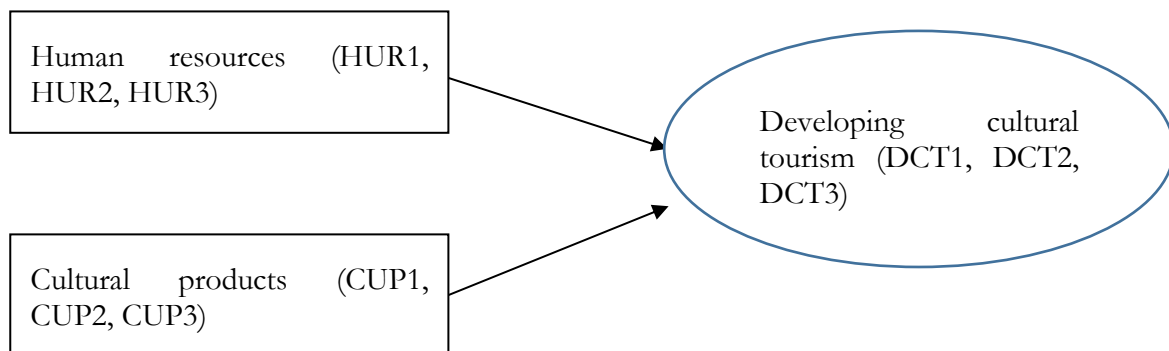


Figure 1. Research Model

The theoretical framework and model constructed include two independent variables: "Human resources" (HUR) and "Cultural product" (CUP), and one dependent variable: "Developing cultural tourism" (DCT). The scales consist of nine observed variables, designed by the author as a survey questionnaire with nine corresponding questions and measured using a 5-point Likert scale: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 - Neutral; 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly agree.

Research Methods

This study uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods involve collecting and analyzing secondary data to build a theoretical framework and model. Quantitative methods involve collecting and analyzing primary data through surveys of 390 managers from 130 cultural and tourism organizations in several Vietnamese localities, including Hai Phong City (Northern), Da Nang City (Central), and Can Tho City (Southern).

The author conducted exploratory factor analysis and correlation analysis to test the model and hypotheses in order to draw empirical conclusions about tourism development in Vietnam. According to Hair, J.F. et al. (2009), the minimum sample size required for exploratory factor analysis and correlation analysis for the 3-scale model and 9 observed variables of this study is $N = 9 \times 5 = 45$. In practice, the author conducted a formal survey with a sample size of $N = 390$ managers from 130 cultural and tourism organizations, ensuring reliability in conducting empirical research. The survey was conducted with the consent of the respondents after preliminary interviews; the survey results yielded 390/390 valid responses, achieving a 100% valid response rate.

Research Results and Discussion

Based on survey data with a sample size of $N = 390$ managers from 130 cultural and tourism organizations, the author conducted reliability testing of the scales and observed variables in the theoretical model. According to Hair, J.F. et al. (2009), the scale ensures reliability when it reaches a Cronbach's alpha value > 0.6 ; the observed variable has reliability when it reaches a Corrected Item-Total Correlation value > 0.3 . The statistical and testing results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Statistical Results and Testing Results of the Scales

Scales	Observed variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach' Alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
1. Human resources (HUR)	HUR1	390	1	5	4.22	.621	.742	HUR1 = .632
	HUR2	390	1	5	4.19	.615		HUR2 = .624
	HUR3	390	1	5	4.15	.599		HUR3 = .574
2. Cultural products (CUP)	CUP1	390	1	5	3.99	.654	.693	CUP1 = .557
	CUP2	390	1	5	3.97	.646		CUP2 = .585
	CUP3	390	1	5	4.03	.711		CUP3 = .594
3. Developing cultural tourism (DCT)	DCT1	390	1	5	4.08	.622	.714	DCT1 = .558
	DCT2	390	1	5	4.13	.614		DCT2 = .603
	DCT3	390	1	5	4.07	.668		DCT3 = .589
Valid N (listwise)		390						

Source: Author's survey results

Table 2 data shows that the observed variables of the scale "Human resources" (HUR), "Cultural product" (CUP), and "Developing cultural tourism" (DCT) are all rated at a mean level of $\text{Mean} \geq 3.97$, $\text{Mean} \leq 4.22$, which is statistically significant according to the Likert scale (1-5) as determined. This indicates that cultural and tourism managers assess localities as having advantages for developing cultural tourism. Accordingly, the government exploits the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, develops culturally-minded people, enhances people's understanding of ethnic and community cultural values; implements the goal of developing cultural tourism associated with the preservation of heritage, ethnic and community culture; increases people's income and promotes socio-economic development.

Specifically, the human resources factor was rated highly, while the cultural product factor of localities was rated low. The observed variables of the "Cultural product" (CUP) scale had the lowest average values: $\text{Mean (CUP1)} = 3.99$, $\text{Mean (CUP2)} = 3.97$, $\text{Mean (CUP3)} = 4.03$. This indicates that the dissemination, education, and institutionalization of cultural values in many localities are still not given adequate attention, which has a certain impact on the development of cultural tourism and the preservation of national cultural identity, as well as economic and social development: The work of educating and disseminating information to raise people's understanding of the cultural values of the community and nation to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism has not been effectively implemented; The institutionalization of cultural values has not been effectively implemented to recognize and sustainably exploit the cultural values of communities and ethnic groups in order to achieve the goal of developing cultural tourism.

The author's survey results contribute to reflecting the practical development of cultural tourism in Vietnam, consistent with the observations and assessments of some recent studies. According to the assessment of Hang, C.T. (2021) and Duc, P.D. (2022), Vietnam has advantages in developing cultural tourism; Vietnamese cultural products are diverse in content and form, meeting the increasingly high and profound needs of all strata of the population; however, they have not yet made a strong impression on the international public, nor have they created a spectacular breakthrough in the development of cultural products.

With the reliability of the scales and observed variables meeting the standards, the author has a basis to conduct exploratory factor analysis to test the initial theoretical model. Exploratory factor analysis with Varimax rotation was performed to preliminarily assess the unidimensionality, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the scales, providing further basis for drawing research conclusions about the suitability of the proposed theoretical model. The results of the exploratory factor analysis are shown in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3. Total Variance Explained

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.742
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4399.881
	df	36
	Sig.	.000

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	1	3.576	39.730	39.730	3.576	39.730	39.730	3.146	34.961
2	2.963	32.923	72.653	2.963	32.923	72.653	2.913	32.362	67.323
3	1.056	11.739	84.392	1.056	11.739	84.392	1.536	17.069	84.392
4	.483	5.371	89.763						
5	.431	4.792	94.556						
6	.157	1.739	96.295						
7	.140	1.554	97.849						
8	.104	1.155	99.004						
9	.090	.996	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Author's survey results

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix ^a				
Scales	Observed variables	Component		
		1	2	3
1. Human resources (HUR)	HUR1	.831		
	HUR2	.797		
	HUR3	.815		
2. Cultural products (CUP)	CUP1		.789	
	CUP2		.812	
	CUP3		.795	
3. Developing cultural tourism (DCT)	DCT1			.798
	DCT2			.824
	DCT3			.808

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Source: Author's survey results

In quantitative research, according to Hair, J.F. et al. (2009), exploratory factor analysis was performed appropriately on the dataset through the following values: $0.5 \leq \text{KMO} \leq 1$; Bartlett's test had an observed significance level $\text{Sig.} < 0.05$; Eigenvalue ≥ 1 ; Total Variance Explained $\geq 50\%$; Factor Loading ≥ 0.5 . Data in Tables 3 and 4 show that:

- The $\text{KMO} = 0.742 > 0.5$ confirms that exploratory factor analysis is appropriate for the dataset; the Bartlett test has an observed significance level of $\text{Sig.} = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that the observed variables are linearly correlated with the representative factor. The Total Variance Explained with Cumulative % = $84.392\% > 50\%$ (Table 3) shows that 84.392% of the variation in the representative factors is explained by the observed variables; all observed variables have Factor Loading > 0.5 (Table 4), indicating that the observed variables are statistically significant. The initial theoretical model is consistent with the survey research.

- The observed variables were extracted into 3 factors corresponding to the 3 original factors with Eigenvalues > 1 (Table 3), further confirming the suitability of the original theoretical model. The original theoretical model was retained, consisting of: 2 independent variables "Human resources" (HUR), "Cultural product" (CUP) and 1 dependent variable Developing cultural tourism (DCT), with a total of 9 observed variables of good statistical significance. Correlation analysis can be performed to examine the relationship between the scales in the model. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in Table 5, which forms the basis for the author's research conclusions.

Table 5. Correlation Analysis Results of the Scales

Correlations		HUR	CUP	DCT
Human resources (HUR)	Pearson Correlation	1	.383**	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	390	390	390
Cultural products (CUP)	Pearson Correlation	.383**	1	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	390	390	390
Developing cultural tourism (DCT)	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.445**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	390	390	390

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's survey results

Table 5 data shows that the correlation coefficients of the scales reached a value of $0 < r < 1$, indicating a positive correlation between the two independent scales/variables "Human resources" (HUR), "Cultural product" (CUP) and the one dependent scale/variable "Developing cultural tourism" (DCT); hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted; the theoretical framework and the initial theoretical model are confirmed to be suitable for the survey dataset.

Based on the r values [r (HUR) = .538 and r (CUP) = .445], it can be confirmed that the correlation between the independent and dependent variables, in decreasing order, is: "Human resources" (HUR), "Cultural product" (CUP). The empirical research conclusion on the development of cultural tourism in Vietnam is affirmed in this study, which is:

- Firstly, localities have advantages for developing cultural tourism. The government can leverage the cultural values of ethnic groups and indigenous communities, develop culturally-minded individuals, and enhance people's understanding of ethnic and community cultural values. This will lead to the goal of developing cultural tourism in conjunction with the preservation of heritage, ethnic culture, and community values; increasing people's income; and promoting socio-economic development.

- Secondly, human resources and cultural products are two crucial resources for developing cultural tourism, directly impacting the development of cultural tourism in localities. Localities have advantages in human resources; cultural products are gradually meeting the increasingly high and profound needs of all segments of the population; however, cultural products lack diversity in content and form, have not made a strong impression on the international public, and have not created a spectacular breakthrough in the development of cultural products.

Based on the conclusions of this study, the author discusses solutions to promote the development of cultural tourism in Vietnam. Accordingly, localities, based on the cultural characteristics of their communities and indigenous cultures, need to develop and implement strategies for the diverse and unique development of cultural products to serve as a foundation and driving force for the development of cultural tourism. In addition, localities need to develop and implement strategies for high-quality cultural tourism products that meet market demands and satisfy the diverse cultural enjoyment needs of people.

The content of the above solution can be explained from the practical perspective of Vietnam's current development: high and stable economic growth; a population of over 100 million people; improved material and spiritual living standards; and consequently, a growing demand for diverse and high-quality cultural experiences. This is significant for achieving the strategic goal of cultural development; prioritizing the development of diverse and unique cultural products, and creating conditions to promote cultural tourism.

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