

# CONFIDENCE-MODEL FOR TOURISM COOPERATIVE NETWORKS TO FOSTER RESILIENT VALUE CO-CREATION IN THE DESTINATION

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## ABSTRACT

This study proposes and empirically explores the Confidence-Model—a conceptual framework designed to strengthen destination resilience through cooperative tourism networks and value co-creation. Against the backdrop of growing multi-hazard vulnerabilities in regions like Bến Tre, Vietnam, the model integrates five foundational elements of the tourism value chain: water, nutrition, energy, interaction, and knowledge. Through a comprehensive literature review, bibliometric analysis, and expert validation, the study positions destination resilience not as a reactive response but as a proactive, networked capacity to adapt, innovate, and thrive. Expert interviews conducted in Bến Tre revealed strong alignment between the model’s core dimensions and local challenges, especially in decentralized water systems, food security, and knowledge-based tourism. The findings highlight the importance of trust-based stakeholder cooperation, digital infrastructure, and the “leisure sharing economy” as key enablers of resilience. As a strategic planning tool, the Confidence-Model offers practical pathways for redesigning tourism value chains in vulnerable destinations, bridging community-based practices with institutional frameworks. The research contributes to emerging discourses on regenerative tourism and proposes the Confidence-Model as both a governance innovation and a competitive branding asset for climate-impacted destinations in Southeast Asia.

*Keywords:* Destination resilience, value co-creation, tourism cooperation, Confidence-Model, sustainable tourism, Bến Tre.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Bến Tre Province—one of the 13 provinces of Vietnam’s Mekong Delta region—has emerged as a prominent tourism destination thanks to its ecological river landscapes, fruit orchards, traditional craft villages, and distinctive rural cultural heritage. However, the destination has also become increasingly vulnerable to external shocks and internal risks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, saltwater intrusion, abnormal flooding, and pressures from agricultural restructuring [1],[2]. These factors have directly impacted the natural ecosystems that underpin ecotourism and community-based tourism in Bến Tre, while also disrupting value chains and diminishing stakeholders’ confidence in the destination’s resilience capacity.

Under such multi-hazard conditions, building destination resilience cannot rely solely on technical solutions or isolated efforts by local authorities and businesses. Instead, it requires a

systemic, multi-stakeholder collaborative mechanism [3]. The local tourism ecosystem must be reorganized into a cooperative network in which stakeholders not only coordinate service provision but also co-create value, thereby enabling adaptive and sustainable development pathways [4].

The Confidence-Model, proposed by Fontanari and Traskevich [5], offers a comprehensive conceptual framework that emphasizes the role of endogenous cooperative networks in fostering collective resilience at the destination level. The model is built around five foundational elements of the tourism value chain: water, food, energy, social interaction, and knowledge. From this foundation, a resilient value chain is developed that can function effectively even under crisis conditions. A key strength of the Confidence-Model lies in its integration of shared economy principles, cross-sectoral collaboration, and digital governance for destination management.

In the case of B  n Tre—an area striving to diversify its tourism products, enhance visitor experiences, and simultaneously address climate and infrastructure challenges—the Confidence-Model provides a suitable approach for redesigning supply chains, strengthening trust among stakeholders, and increasing post-crisis recovery potential. Its application may contribute significantly to enhancing the destination’s self-reliance and resilience while shaping a new development paradigm that harmonizes economic, social, and environmental objectives.

Despite growing interest in destination resilience, most existing models tend to address either macro-level vulnerabilities or isolated operational challenges, such as supply chain disruptions or crisis communication. However, few frameworks holistically integrate functional autonomy, local cooperative structures, and value co-creation into a unified resilience-building mechanism at the destination level.

The Confidence-Model addresses this theoretical gap by offering a multi-dimensional, stakeholder-driven approach rooted in both resource self-sufficiency and sociocultural collaboration. By aligning with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (e.g., water, nutrition, energy, interaction, knowledge), the model introduces a new paradigm that emphasizes internal service production as a core driver of systemic resilience.

Furthermore, while previous models rarely operationalize these concepts within real-world destination systems, this study contributes to theory by illustrating how resilience-oriented cooperation can be embedded into local tourism networks, with practical design components derived from expert validation and context-specific adaptations.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

The introduction underscores the study's central aim of enhancing destination resilience through a collaborative framework of value co-creation, grounded in the strategic mobilization of local resources. This necessitates the establishment of robust theoretical underpinnings aligned with emerging paradigms, which will inform the subsequent development of a conceptual model. Employing a literature review supported by bibliometric analysis methods, the study synthesizes key constructs at the intersection of resilience, cooperation, and value co-creation within the tourism domain. This integrative approach facilitates a deeper exploration of theoretical pathways for implementing collaborative strategies to strengthen destination resilience.

This study extends the Confidence-Model by demonstrating its context-specific operationalization in a climate-vulnerable riverine delta. New theoretical insights emerge regarding the differentiated capacities of stakeholder groups, the integration of resilience into

experiential tourism narratives, and the hybridization of informal cooperation with formal governance structures—elements that have not been emphasized in the original model.

**2.1. Bibliometric analysis of scholarly research on destination resilience, value co-creation, and cooperation**

An analysis was conducted to examine the interconnections among resilience, cooperation, and networking within the tourism sector. For this purpose, data were extracted using the open-access database Dimensions.ai and analyzed through the bibliometric visualization software VOSviewer on April 15, 2025. The search query included the keywords: "destination resilience", "co-creation", and "cooperation", limited to English-language peer-reviewed journal articles from 2012 to 2025. A total of 449 records were retrieved, of which 287 met inclusion criteria after removing duplicates and non-tourism contexts. The review process adhered to PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines for transparency and replicability

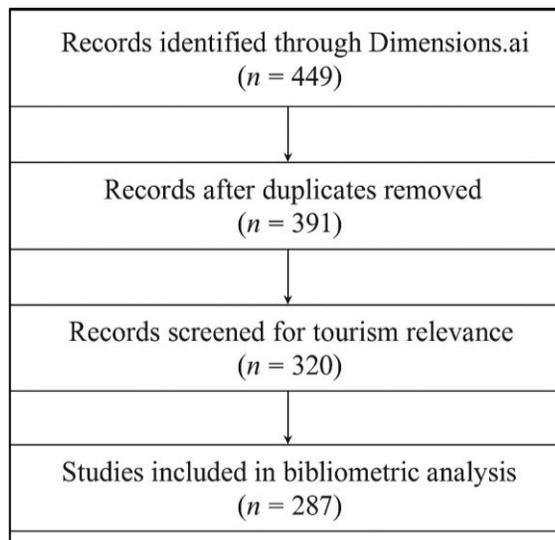


Figure 1. Research process

The bibliometric timeline reveals a progressive growth in academic interest toward the intersection of destination resilience, cooperation, and co-creation over the 13-year period.

- From 2012 to 2016, publication output remained relatively low and sporadic, suggesting that the topic had not yet matured into a distinct research theme.
- Beginning around 2017–2019, there is a gradual increase in publication frequency, likely reflecting the rise of sustainability and resilience discourses in tourism post-global shocks.
- Notably, there is a sharp increase from 2020 onwards, possibly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which spurred scholarly attention on tourism vulnerability, crisis response, and stakeholder collaboration.
- The peak years (2021–2024) show sustained output, indicating that destination resilience has become an established thematic focus within tourism research.
- Although 2025 is still ongoing, preliminary data suggests continued academic engagement.

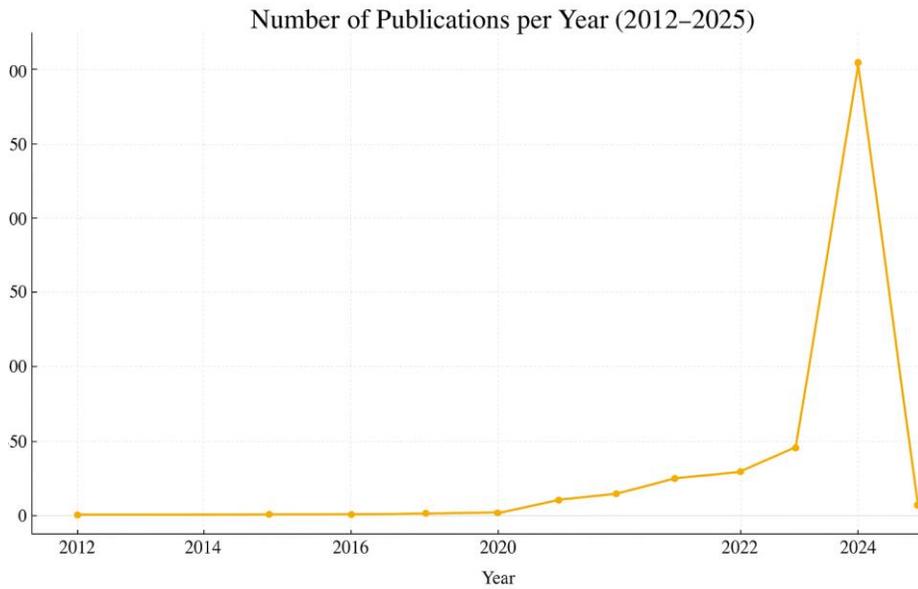


Figure 2. Analysis – Publication Trend (2012–2025).  
(Source: the authors on the basis of <https://www.dimensions.ai>)

This upward trend affirms that the topic has evolved from an emergent issue into a critical subfield in tourism studies, attracting scholars from diverse disciplines and geographic regions.

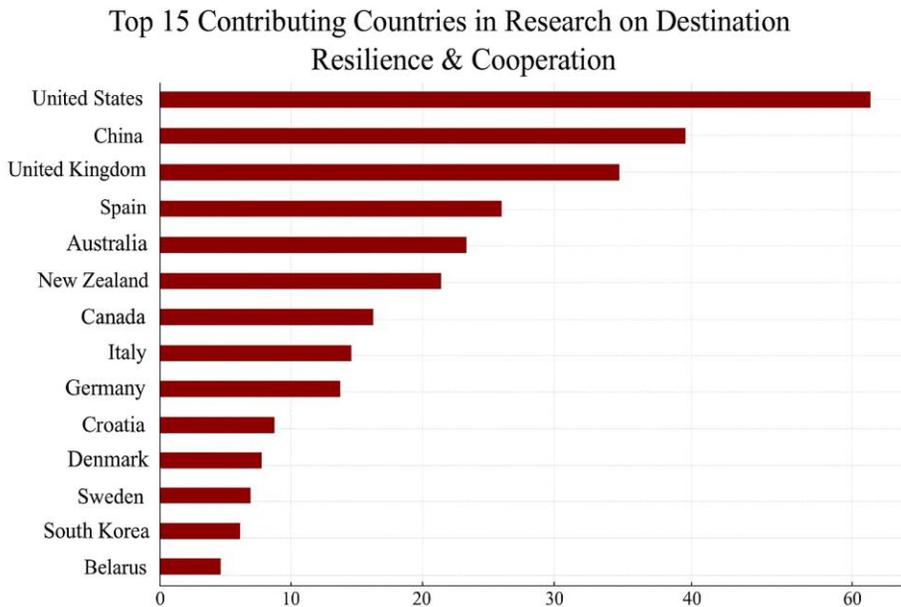


Figure 3. Analysis – Country Contribution to Destination Resilience & Cooperation Research.  
Source: the authors on the basis of <https://www.dimensions.ai>

This geographical breakdown highlights the global academic engagement with the subject of destination resilience and cooperation:

- The United States emerges as the leading contributor, demonstrating its central role in resilience-focused tourism scholarship. This may reflect strong research institutions and funding in sustainability and crisis response.
- United Kingdom, Australia, and Spain follow closely, often acting as academic hubs for sustainability, resilient systems, and tourism innovation in Europe and Oceania.
- Countries like China, Canada, and Italy exhibit growing interest, potentially tied to domestic tourism strategies and post-COVID recovery frameworks.
- The presence of developing nations such as Thailand and South Africa in the top 15 indicates a broadening of research participation, where resilience is seen as both a policy imperative and a practical necessity.
- Notably, the diverse mix of Global North and Global South countries reflects an increasing internationalization of resilience-related discourse.
- This distribution suggests that while leadership is still concentrated in established research economies, resilience and cooperation in tourism is becoming a truly global concern, encouraging south-north collaboration and context-specific innovations.

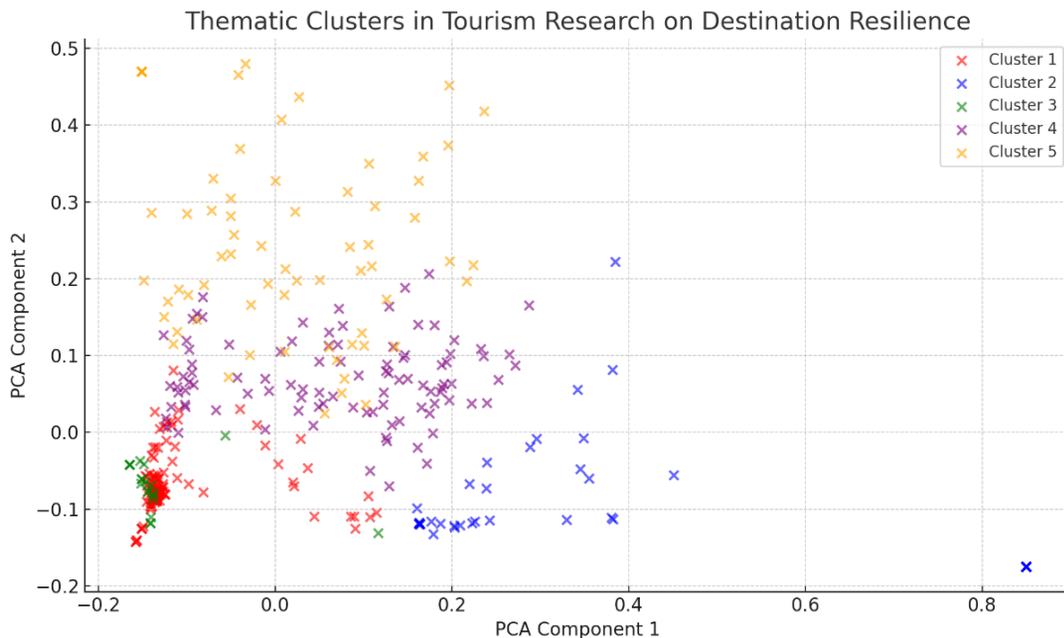


Figure 4. Thematic Clusters in tourism research on Destination resilience.  
 Source: the authors on the basis of <https://www.dimensions.ai>

**Cluster 1 – Governance and Public Systems**

This cluster reflects a research focus on the institutional and administrative structures that underpin destination management. Keywords such as republic, systems, and planning indicate the prominence of studies on policy frameworks, public service delivery, and multi-level governance models, particularly in crisis or post-disaster settings. Research in this area often assesses state capacity, policy coordination, and public-private interactions essential for building resilience.

■ *Cluster 2 – Tourism Flows and Sustainability Transitions*

Comprising terms such as domestic, international, sustainable, and creative, this cluster captures inquiries into changing travel patterns and emerging tourism forms. Studies often examine domestic tourism recovery, dark tourism, and cultural and creative tourism as alternative modes for sustainable development. This cluster aligns with scholarship investigating visitor behavior shifts post-COVID and the adaptation of destinations to evolving market demands.

■ *Cluster 3 – Cultural Analysis and Theoretical Frameworks*

Keywords such as culture, theory, shock, and discriminant suggest a more conceptual and analytical focus. Research in this domain tends to deploy qualitative methodologies and theory-driven inquiry, often exploring cultural resilience, community identity, and the socio-economic dynamics of vulnerable destinations. These works contribute foundational insights to the theorization of resilience and the implications of socio-cultural disruptions.

■ *Cluster 4 – Innovation, Marketing, and Sustainability Strategy*

This cluster is centered around development, management, marketing, and sustainability, indicating a focus on strategic innovation within tourism businesses and destinations. Studies here emphasize resilience-oriented marketing, CSR, and branding strategies in the face of disruption. The cluster also intersects with work on organizational learning and sustainable destination positioning.

■ *Cluster 5 – Smart Destinations and Technological Resilience*

Keywords like smart, resilience, innovation, and value position this cluster at the nexus of technology and destination adaptability. Research within this domain explores the role of digital platforms, smart governance, and data-driven decision-making to enhance destination agility and co-creation of experiences. It overlaps with literature on resilient infrastructure, ICT, and Confidence-based tourism networks.

These clusters reveal an evolving thematic landscape in tourism resilience research, transitioning from traditional governance and management toward more integrated, digital, and community-driven approaches. The growing attention to co-creation, smart systems, and cultural adaptation reflects the field's attempt to reconceptualize resilience beyond mere recovery, emphasizing value co-creation, innovation, and adaptive capacity in multi-hazard environments.

## **2.2. Resilience, value co-creation, and cooperation in times of multi-hazards: Theoretical framework**

The increasing frequency and severity of systemic disruptions—such as global pandemics, climate-induced disasters, and socio-economic instability—have amplified the need for developing resilient tourism destinations. Resilience in tourism is no longer conceptualized merely as the ability to recover from shocks, but as a dynamic, adaptive capacity that enables continuous transformation in response to complex and interlinked vulnerabilities [6], [7]. This expanded notion of resilience underscores the strategic integration of risk reduction, innovation, and sustainability into destination governance.

Value co-creation, a concept rooted in service-dominant logic, offers a critical lens through which resilience in tourism can be operationalized. Rather than treating tourists as passive consumers, value co-creation redefines them as active participants who collaboratively generate experiences alongside local communities and service providers [8], [9]. In this context, resilience is constructed not only through infrastructural upgrades or economic safety nets, but also via social capital, trust, and mutual engagement in experience design. Co-created tourism experiences build adaptive capacities by fostering emotional solidarity, local pride, and a deeper understanding of community vulnerabilities [10].

Central to this adaptive capacity is the establishment of cooperative networks among stakeholders at the destination level. Tourism resilience depends on the strength and flexibility of inter-organizational relationships, which enable the mobilization of shared resources, coordination of emergency responses, and collective learning from crises [11], [12]. These networks may take horizontal, vertical, or lateral forms, encompassing actors within and beyond the tourism value chain. Horizontal networks link businesses at the same stage of the supply chain (e.g., accommodation providers), vertical networks connect upstream and downstream partners (e.g., tour operators and artisans), and lateral networks facilitate cross-sectoral collaborations (e.g., tourism and energy cooperatives) [13].

In times of multi-hazards—where ecological, economic, and health crises interact non-linearly—the ability to build and sustain such cooperative structures becomes a defining factor in a destination's resilience. According to [14], successful cooperation requires three interrelated factors: cooperative belief (trust in collaboration), tacit cooperative know-how (practical experience), and cooperative attitude (commitment to shared objectives). These elements are particularly vital in pre-crisis periods, where investments in social capital and governance frameworks can yield substantial dividends in future adaptive responses.

Tourism destinations in the Global South, including Vietnam's Mekong Delta, exemplify regions where systemic vulnerabilities intersect with rapid tourism growth, making the theoretical constructs of resilience, value co-creation, and cooperation highly relevant. The Confidence-Model developed by Fontanari and Traskevich [5] integrates these constructs into a holistic framework that focuses on five essential domains—water, food, energy, interaction, and knowledge—as pillars of a resilient value chain. Its application in crisis-prone areas suggests a strategic paradigm shift from reactive risk management to proactive and participatory resilience-building.

### **2.3. Design Framework for the Confidence-Model to Foster Resilient Value Co-Creation**

The Confidence-Model introduces a design framework that emphasizes the creation of resilient tourism value chains through cooperative, multi-level partnerships within a destination. The model is grounded in the integration of five internal dimensions of service production—water, nutrition, energy, interaction, and knowledge—as foundational elements for resilience-oriented tourism development [5].

#### *2.3.1. Core Components of the Resilient Value Chain*

The model organizes destination resilience around five endogenous factors:

- **Water:** Establishment of decentralized and autonomous water supply systems via local infrastructure and community-based water treatment initiatives.
- **Nutrition:** Promotion of agro-tourism and localized food systems through collaboration with local farmers and producers to ensure food security and authenticity.

- Energy: Implementation of renewable energy systems at the destination level, forming energy clusters or “resilient energy islands” operated cooperatively.
- Interaction: Development of community-driven leisure infrastructure that facilitates meaningful engagement between residents and visitors.
- Knowledge: Design of educational tourism offerings and resilience training programs to transfer adaptive capacities across stakeholder groups [15].

These components form the basis of a resilience-driven tourism value chain that is embedded in the local socio-economic and ecological context.

### *2.3.2. Cooperative Mechanisms and Value Co-Creation*

Value co-creation is facilitated through horizontal, vertical, and lateral cooperation among stakeholders:

- Horizontal cooperation refers to collaboration among similar actors, such as homestay owners or tour operators, to bundle services and share promotional resources.
- Vertical cooperation is fostered by linking producers, accommodation providers, and travel intermediaries across the tourism supply chain.
- Lateral cooperation promotes cross-sectoral partnerships (e.g., tourism-agriculture, tourism-energy) to foster innovative product development and resilience integration [16].

By emphasizing cooperative belief, tacit cooperative know-how, and cooperative attitude, the model fosters trust-based relationships essential for long-term resilience-building [17].

### *2.3.3. The Role of Local Ecosystems and Digital Platforms*

The Confidence-Model proposes an integrated "leisure sharing economy", wherein residents and local businesses contribute underutilized assets—such as gardens, spaces, skills—to the visitor experience. This approach generates new value without intensive capital investment and promotes social inclusion.

In tandem, the development of a digital communication ecosystem—including centralized websites, interactive maps, QR-linked cultural content, and behaviorally-informed data platforms—supports coordinated marketing, real-time service optimization, and disaster communication [18]. A key innovation of the Confidence-Model lies in positioning the DMO as a resilience orchestrator. The DMO facilitates network governance, coordinates knowledge transfer, and develops strategic partnerships for resilience-informed destination development. The model calls for proactive planning during stable periods to ensure preparedness for future disruptions.

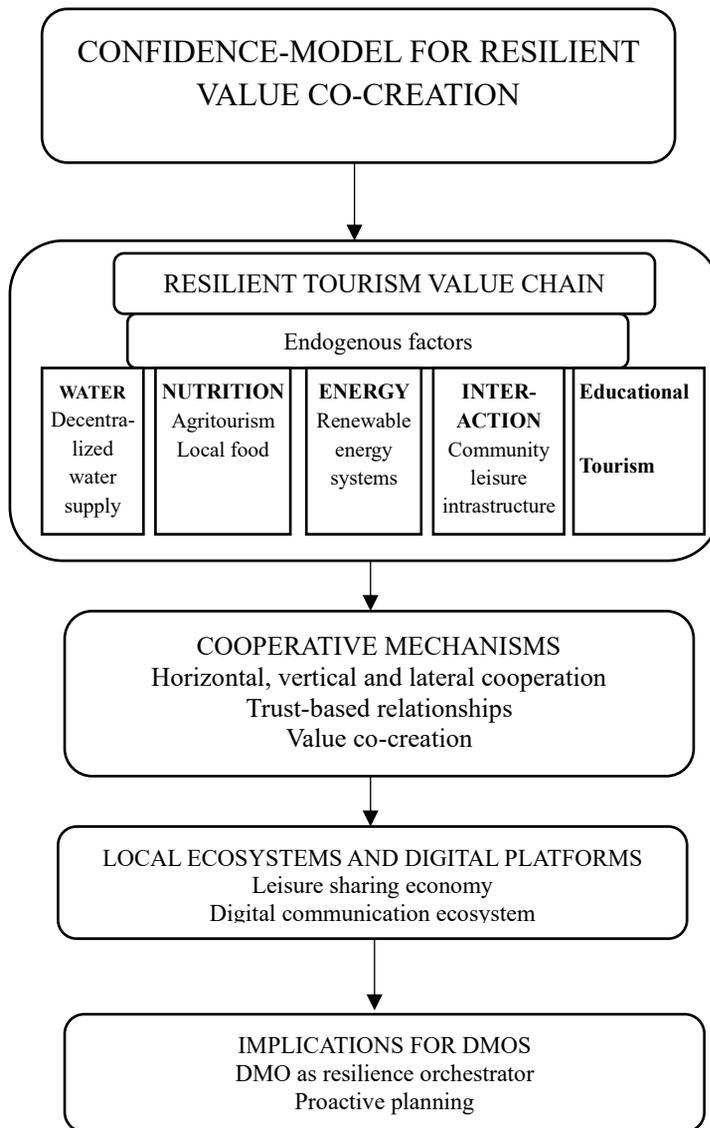


Figure 5. Confidence-Model to Foster Resilient Value Co-Creation

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative, conceptual research design to explore the development of destination resilience through the application of the Confidence-Model. The research focuses on the proactive construction of cooperative tourism networks as a means to enhance the adaptive capacity, sustainability, and competitiveness of vulnerable destinations such as B n Tre province.

The methodological framework includes two primary phases: conceptual development and expert validation. In the conceptual phase, a comprehensive synthesis of theoretical constructs—resilience, value co-creation, and multi-level cooperation—was undertaken through an extensive literature review. This formed the foundation of the Confidence-Model, which integrates resilience destinations. The model conceptualizes resilience not solely as a reactive capacity to absorb shocks, but as a proactive mechanism for strategic adaptation, stakeholder integration, and long-term innovation [5].

To validate the conceptual framework, a series of expert interviews was conducted with tourism professionals, academic scholars, and policy makers specializing in sustainable destination development and tourism resilience. Ten experts were purposively selected to ensure heterogeneity across fields (tourism planning, policy, academia), roles (DMO staff, CBT practitioners), and experience (minimum 5 years). Interviews lasted 45–60 minutes and were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and coded using NVivo. Coding reliability was ensured via inter-coder agreement ( $\kappa = 0.78$ ).

The data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using the problem-centred hermeneutic analysis method [19],[20]. This classical qualitative technique allows the researcher to interpret textual data with sensitivity to thematic variation and contextual specificity. It emphasizes the reflective integration of expert perspectives into theory-building, making it especially suitable for conceptual model validation. The analytical process followed the interpretative approach outlined by Hoffmann et al. [21] in their empirical study on tourism resilience, ensuring methodological consistency and credibility. Key insights from the expert interviews were synthesized to refine the dimensions and practical implications of the Confidence-Model, with a particular focus on its relevance to the destination of B n Tre. The study also incorporated secondary data from the B n Tre Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, General Statistics Office, and national tourism development strategies, which supported triangulation of expert perspectives with current policy frameworks and destination data.

#### **4. APPLYING THE CONFIDENCE-MODEL BT (B N TRE ADAPTATION) TO ENHANCE DESTINATION RESILIENCE**

##### **4.1. Expert findings and interpretive insights**

The findings from B n Tre align closely with each pillar of the analytical framework. For example, under the Water dimension, stakeholders proposed rainwater harvesting as a resilience mechanism, thereby validating the model’s call for decentralized resource autonomy. Similarly, under the Knowledge pillar, respondents advocated for capacity-building through digital tools and local storytelling, which supports the model’s emphasis on shared knowledge for adaptive governance. The qualitative insights from tourism experts, policymakers, and community stakeholders in B n Tre highlight several interpretive dimensions that affirm the adaptability of the Confidence-Model while also revealing localized implementation challenges.

First, interviewees consistently pointed out the gap in structural resilience preparedness at the destination level. While B n Tre has developed several community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives, such as those in C n Phụng and some districts, these remain disconnected from wider resource systems such as decentralized water management, renewable energy networks, or coordinated food supply chains. The absence of formalized horizontal and vertical integration mechanisms among homestay operators, agricultural cooperatives, and local authorities was identified as a core limitation to resilience co-creation.

Second, the concept of cooperative belief—defined in the Confidence-Model as the foundational trust in collaborative potential—was present among grassroots actors but weaker at the institutional level. CBT practitioners in M  C y Nam and Ch  L ch described informal support networks among households (e.g., sharing excess crops or lodging overflow tourists), which reflects a tacit cooperative attitude. However, several experts criticized a “project-based” mindset among provincial institutions that hinders long-term coalition-building. This suggests a misalignment between top-down planning cycles and bottom-up resilience practices, echoing similar findings in international resilience studies [21].

Third, stakeholders demonstrated a growing awareness of experiential innovation as a resilience strategy. Experts proposed integrating “resilience storytelling” into tour design—showcasing traditional flood adaptation techniques, climate-smart agriculture practices, or even solar-powered kitchen demonstrations. These narratives, if scaled through digital platforms and media, could transform resilience from a risk-avoidance strategy into a competitive tourism identity for Bến Tre, in line with the “experience-value” linkage proposed in co-creation theory [5].

Fourth, when asked about the five internal factors (Water, Nutrition, Energy, Interaction, Knowledge), experts ranked Water and Knowledge as the most urgent and most actionable. The increasing salinization of freshwater resources was seen not only as an ecological threat but also as a narrative opportunity for destination differentiation. Meanwhile, the need for capacity-building in digital tourism tools (e.g., QR-linked tours, e-guides, local content creation) was underscored by both public and private respondents.

Fifth, digital resilience ecosystems—particularly the role of the “leisure sharing economy” and social media—were widely acknowledged as underdeveloped but necessary for enhancing destination resilience. Experts advocated for the creation of a localized platform where tourists can connect with local guides, artisans, and producers through real-time interaction, thus operationalizing the interaction and knowledge dimensions of the Confidence-Model.

Overall, the interpretive insights suggest that the Confidence-Model’s strength lies in its ability to contextualize existing fragmented practices and provide a unifying framework for stakeholder alignment. However, its implementation in Bến Tre would require capacity development, policy facilitation, and a stronger intermediary role from DMOs to bridge the gap between informal community cooperation and strategic resilience planning.

#### **4.2. Results: the Confidence-Model BT (Bến Tre adaptation)**

While the Confidence-Model has been applied in European destinations to emphasize cooperative governance and resilience planning, its application in deltaic, climate-sensitive regions such as Vietnam’s Mekong Delta remains largely unexplored. This study addresses this theoretical gap by contextualizing the model within a post-pandemic, hazard-exposed, and decentralized tourism system. Furthermore, the inclusion of digital resilience and informal cooperative networks extends the model’s original scope and introduces new dimensions to resilience discourse.

The qualitative expert interviews conducted in Bến Tre revealed strong support for the conceptual relevance and practical adaptability of the Confidence-Model in enhancing destination resilience. Experts emphasized that Bến Tre’s geographical structure—formed by interwoven river branches and low-lying deltaic terrain—renders it highly vulnerable to compound risks, including saltwater intrusion, climate-induced flooding, and pandemic shocks. These multi-hazard contexts align with the model’s focus on building resilience through endogenous resources and integrated cooperation across stakeholders.

From the five internal value-chain components outlined in the model—Water, Nutrition, Energy, Interaction, and Knowledge—experts particularly affirmed the centrality of water and food systems for Bến Tre’s resilience. Agricultural producers, homestay owners, and tourism officials noted that saltwater intrusion in the Hàm Luông and Cỏ Chiên rivers already threatens the coconut-based agro-tourism economy. Several interviewees proposed cooperative irrigation and rainwater harvesting systems as a localized water resilience solution, in line with the Confidence-Model’s emphasis on decentralized supply autonomy [5].

In terms of nutrition, respondents endorsed the integration of local food supply chains with tourism product design, such as “farm-to-table” culinary tours and cooperative food processing initiatives. This aligns with the Confidence-Model’s approach of transforming nutritional self-sufficiency into authentic, resilient tourism offerings. For instance, CBT operators in Chợ Lách district discussed the potential of “resilience menus” that adapt to seasonal agricultural disruptions while educating tourists on climate-smart food systems.

The domain of energy emerged as an underdeveloped but promising pillar. Although none of the interviewed destinations had established energy cooperatives, stakeholders expressed interest in piloting solar-powered community guesthouses and integrating energy autonomy narratives into the tourism storytelling process [22].

Interaction and knowledge-sharing were viewed as critical components, especially post-COVID-19, when visitor engagement models had to be reimagined. Local guides and educators suggested incorporating disaster education into tours, such as visits to salinized farmlands or workshops on coconut resilience. These initiatives were praised for simultaneously diversifying the tourism product and building community solidarity—two key tenets of the Confidence-Model.

A notable insight from the expert feedback was the differentiated capacity of tourism actors to participate in cooperative resilience. Larger resorts demonstrated higher resource readiness but lacked integration with community networks, whereas small-scale CBT units showed stronger alignment with the model’s collaborative values but faced infrastructural and financial constraints. Therefore, the public-private-community interface was deemed essential for operationalizing the Confidence-Model in BẾN TRE, with the DMO playing a pivotal coordination role.

Experts also stressed the need for a localized “resilience brand” for BẾN TRE tourism, suggesting that implementation of the Confidence-Model could provide the foundation for branding the province as a climate-adaptive and community-driven destination. The model was therefore appraised not only as a framework for resilience-building but also as a strategic marketing asset to differentiate BẾN TRE in the competitive Mekong tourism landscape.

This section presents key insights from expert interviews, structured according to the five pillars of the Confidence-Model: Water, Nutrition, Energy, Interaction, and Knowledge. Each pillar reflects thematic priorities identified through coded expert responses and their implications for adapting the model in the BẾN TRE context.

*Table 2. Insights and implications*

Pillars	Expert insights	Implications for model adaptation
Water	Community-based rainwater harvesting; freshwater storage for dry season; flood adaptation techniques.	Emphasizes hyper-local water autonomy under climate stress, reinforcing the foundational layer of the model.
Nutrition	Promotion of local farm-to-table models; seasonal food tours; agricultural participation for tourists.	Broadens the Nutrition pillar from food sufficiency to participatory gastronomy and food-based tourism.
Energy	Use of solar panels in homestays; shared cold storage systems; cooperative energy-saving initiatives.	Highlights renewable energy as both infrastructure and narrative device for tourism resilience.
Interaction	Informal cooperation networks; guest-host interaction points; co-learning and mutual aid practices.	Reinforces the importance of trust, reciprocity, and social capital in co-creation networks.

Knowledge	Digital storytelling tools; resilience education for locals and tourists; leveraging local ecological knowledge.	Expands the Knowledge pillar to include digital resilience, AR/VR learning, and heritage transmission.
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## 5. DISCUSSION: POLICY AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATION FOR BEN TRE DESTINATION RESILIENCE

The expert validation of the Confidence-Model in B n Tre reveals critical insights into the structural, behavioral, and institutional dimensions required for operationalizing destination resilience in the context of multiple vulnerabilities. These findings offer both strategic and tactical implications for tourism governance and policy-making in the province.

### 5.1. Bridging informal cooperation and institutional strategy

Although grassroots-level collaboration among CBT households is evident, the current absence of a systematized cooperative governance mechanism at the provincial level hampers long-term resilience-building. To address this, the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism (DCST) in B n Tre should institutionalize multistakeholder tourism councils that include representatives from local communities, DMO officers, agricultural cooperatives, and SMEs. These councils would act as knowledge exchange hubs and implementers of the Confidence-Model’s lateral cooperation strategies [5]

### 5.2. Reframing resilience as a competitive identity

Traditional disaster preparedness and adaptation policies often frame resilience as a defensive mechanism. However, the Confidence-Model encourages a proactive reframing where resilience becomes a differentiating factor in destination branding. B n Tre’s narrative on living with land erosion, saltwater intrusion, and agricultural transformation should be integrated into its tourism identity to attract impact-conscious travelers. This aligns with emerging global trends in regenerative tourism and value-driven visitor segmentation [23].

### 5.3. Localized application of the five resilience dimensions

Each of the five internal resilience factors—Water, Nutrition, Energy, Interaction, and Knowledge—offers tangible entry points for stakeholder engagement:

- *Water*: Developing cooperative rainwater harvesting systems and storytelling tours about traditional water management (e.g., Local communities practice traditional water management techniques such as storing rainwater in jars, constructing salinity-control dams, and retaining freshwater in irrigation ditches.).
- *Nutrition*: Strengthening local supply chains via “resilient farm-to-table” culinary routes connecting homestays and eco-farms.
- *Energy*: Piloting shared solar energy projects for tourism households in river islands.
- *Interaction*: Embedding curated guest-host interaction protocols and shared activity zones in the CBT product design.
- *Knowledge*: Launching “resilience education” programs via e-guides and augmented reality apps featuring local wisdom and adaptation narratives.

These applications not only ensure destination resilience but also embed community capacity-building into tourism operations [24].

#### **5.4. The role of digital infrastructure and leisure sharing economy**

The application of the leisure sharing economy remains limited in Bến Tre, though its potential is high. The development of a localized tourism platform—integrating booking, storytelling, and P2P experience exchange—would enable micro-entrepreneurs (e.g., artisans, boat owners, herbalists) to participate directly in tourism value chains. In parallel, upgrading digital infrastructure (e.g., community Wi-Fi, QR-integrated signage, multilingual e-content) is essential for unlocking the knowledge and interaction potentials of the Confidence-Model [25].

#### **5.5. Capacity building and policy support**

Destination resilience requires not only infrastructure and innovation, but also human capital. Provincial tourism training programs must integrate modules on digital literacy, cooperative business models, hospitality in crisis contexts, and localized product innovation. Further, incentives such as tax benefits or small grants for cooperative initiatives could accelerate stakeholder buy-in and long-term model adoption.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This study contributes to the theoretical and applied discourse on destination resilience by examining the contextual relevance and operationalization of the Confidence-Model in Bến Tre province—a vulnerable tourism destination in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta. Informed by a qualitative methodological approach and expert validation, the research affirms that resilience at the destination level cannot be merely reactive to crises but must evolve as a proactive, integrated, and cooperative development paradigm.

The Confidence-Model, with its five internal resilience dimensions—water, nutrition, energy, interaction, and knowledge—offers a comprehensive framework for restructuring tourism value chains in Bến Tre. The model enables local stakeholders to build systemic readiness, diversify economic linkages, and embed community knowledge into tourism product innovation. As findings suggest, the willingness of local actors to cooperate, share risks, and innovate collectively serves as a critical determinant of destination resilience.

In practical terms, the application of the model in Bến Tre requires coordinated actions across multiple domains: institutional anchoring of tourism cooperation mechanisms, development of digital infrastructure, mainstreaming community-driven innovation, and capacity building in resilience literacy. The successful implementation of the model can reposition Bến Tre not only as a resilient destination but also as a model for adaptive tourism governance in Southeast Asia’s vulnerable coastal and riverine regions.

In future research, empirical assessments of community-based co-creation in tourism, coupled with resilience metrics (e.g., economic diversification, visitor return rate, social capital indices), can further refine the Confidence-Model’s operational scope. Additionally, comparative case studies with other climate-vulnerable destinations in Vietnam or the broader ASEAN context will be essential to generalizing the model’s utility and identifying policy transfer pathways.

Practical recommendations:

1. Institutionalize multi-stakeholder tourism councils at district level (e.g., CBT groups, local SMEs, DMO officials).
2. Pilot solar-powered guesthouses and cooperative rainwater harvesting projects.
3. Brand Bến Tre as a climate-adaptive tourism destination with a focus on experiential resilience storytelling.
4. Launch a digital platform for leisure-sharing and micro-entrepreneur engagement (e.g., QR-linked local guide hubs).
5. Integrate resilience, digital literacy, and co-creation modules into provincial tourism training programs.

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## TÓM TẮT

### MÔ HÌNH TIN CẬY CHO MẠNG LƯỚI HỢP TÁC DU LỊCH NHẪM THỨC ĐẨY TẠO GIÁ TRỊ BỀN VỮNG VÀ TĂNG CƯỜNG KHẢ NĂNG PHỤC HỒI TẠI ĐIỂM ĐẾN

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Nghiên cứu này đề xuất và kiểm chứng thực nghiệm Mô hình Tin cậy (Confidence-Model) – một khung lý thuyết nhằm củng cố khả năng phục hồi của điểm đến thông qua các mạng lưới hợp tác du lịch và cơ chế tạo giá trị đồng sáng tạo. Trong bối cảnh các điểm đến như Bến Tre (Việt Nam) đang ngày càng đối mặt với nhiều rủi ro đa thiên tai, mô hình tích hợp năm yếu tố cốt lõi của chuỗi giá trị du lịch: nước, dinh dưỡng, năng lượng, tương tác và tri thức sẽ được áp dụng tại điểm đến. Thông qua tổng quan tài liệu, phân tích thư mục và phỏng vấn chuyên gia, nghiên cứu định vị năng lực chịu đựng của điểm đến không chỉ là phản ứng thụ động trước rủi ro mà là khả năng thích ứng, đổi mới và phát triển dựa trên cấu trúc mạng lưới hợp tác. Kết quả khảo sát chuyên gia tại tỉnh Bến Tre cho thấy sự tương thích cao giữa các trụ cột của mô hình và các thách thức địa phương, đặc biệt là về hệ thống cấp nước, an ninh lương thực và phát triển du lịch dựa trên tri thức. Kết quả nghiên cứu nhấn mạnh vai trò của hợp tác dựa trên lòng tin giữa các bên liên quan, hạ tầng số và “nền kinh tế chia sẻ trong lĩnh vực du lịch” như là những yếu tố thúc đẩy chính cho khả năng phục hồi. Với vai trò là công cụ hoạch định chiến lược, Mô hình Tin cậy mở ra các hướng tiếp cận thực tiễn trong việc tái cấu trúc chuỗi giá trị du lịch tại các điểm đến dễ bị tổn thương, kết nối giữa thực tiễn cộng đồng và khung thể chế. Nghiên cứu đóng góp cho diễn ngôn học thuật về du lịch tái tạo (regenerative tourism), đồng thời đề xuất Mô hình Tin cậy như một đổi mới trong quản trị và là tài sản chiến lược trong định vị thương hiệu cạnh tranh cho các điểm đến chịu ảnh hưởng của biến đổi khí hậu tại khu vực Đông Nam Á.

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