

Factors Driving Participation of the Community in Sustainability Community-Based Tourism Management: The Case Study of Thung Thasae Community, Thung Krabue Subdistrict, Trang Province, Thailand[†]

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Abstract

This study aims to examine factors affecting the participation of people in the community to drive community-based tourism sustainably and to provide guidelines for improving the participation of people in the community. Thung Thasae Community is chosen as the case study. Thung Thasae Community is in Thung Krabue Subdistrict, Trang Province, Thailand and provides a traditional folkway for people who live along the Palian river basin. However, community-based tourism became significant as a secondary economy to the community. However, there are a few people in the community who participate in driving tourism for the community. The referenced factors presented in this study include environmental factors, social factors, and economic factors.

The results have been drawn based on a questionnaire of 200 people in the Thung Thasae Community. It found that the majority factor of people in the community participation was the economic factor. People in the community expected the community's business improvement from taking part in community-based tourism. Similarly, social factors also were an important factor that dramatically influenced by friends and relatives. Therefore, to drive the participation of people in the community, information about the benefits received and garbage management plan from community-based tourism should be informed to the community people to create social influence pursuing people participating in the community-based tourism management.

Keywords: Community participation, Community-based tourism, Sustainable tourism

Introduction

Tourism creates significant benefits to the country in the Thai economy, society, culture, and natural environment. Tourism industry consists of many types of businesses. The benefits that fall into the country create many careers and economic circulation. Tourism Industry is a source of income in foreign currency that helps to stabilize the balance of payments. It also stimulates the use of the community's resources widely that the local residents have collected and made into local handicrafts as souvenirs for tourists (Vannathanom, 2009). National Tourism Development Plan 2017 - 2021 was established with the purpose of this plan is to develop, maintain and upgrade Thai tourism based on stability, prosperity and sustainability. It concerns on the distribution of tourism development in secondary tourism cities and local community areas, the development of tourism products and services and tourist attractions in accordance with Thai identity and way of life, the development of tourism as a source of income and distribute income, as well as, promoting the sustainability of natural resources and the environment by conserving and restoring tourist attractions at risk of degradation (National Tourism Policy Board, 2017). Referring to the plan, it focuses on community-based tourism (CBT). CBT became a tourism trend and was supported by the government. To create community-based tourism, it is not difficult to maintain the work

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in the community. CBT requires community-managed participation resulting in the distribution of duties, responsibility and income for members (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2018).

Thung Tasae Community is in Thung Krabue subdistrict, Trang province. Small coastal fishing and rubber tree plantation are the main occupations of people in the community as its location here is along Palian river basin, flanked by fertile mangrove forests with various aquatic animals and abundant natural resources (Forest Biodiversity Division, 2022). Tourist attractions in the community that were promoted by the local people, the government and private sectors consisted of Num Tok Num Kem (Tide's Dam Saline), Had Hoi Pa (Pa Clams Beach), Thung Tasae Community Forest, and Khlong Dan Chang (Dan Chang Canals) (Thung Krabue Subdistrict Municipality, 2022). Tourism became a secondary economy which created revenue to the community. Government and private sectors came to develop infrastructure to support the growth of tourism in the community (Thung Krabue Subdistrict Municipality, 2021). However, to maintain the community's potential is a problem. The tourist attractions and infrastructure are lack of looking after that are causing decadence in the area. Currently, to look after tourist attractions and infrastructure is mainly responded to by Thung Krabue Subdistrict Municipality, and it seems to not be enough without support from the community people. Therefore, this research aims to find out factors that make people in the community willing to participate in community tourism to create sustainable tourism in the area and can be used as guidelines for developing the participation of people in the community to the relevant sectors.

Research objective

- 1) To analyze the factors affecting the participation of community people.
- 2) To analyze the relationship between demographics and the factors affecting the participation.
- 3) To suggest guidelines for improving the participation of the community people.

Literature review

Sustainable community-based tourism

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a tool of local resources management by local residents to determine the direction of development and generate benefits from tourism to the local people in the community. CBT is a representative of sustainable tourism development allowing the community participating in operating community tourism to encourage local economy (Lo & Janta, 2020).

The principles of community-based tourism are as a tool of community development including 1) Owned by the community itself. 2) Directions setting and decisions making are taken part by the community people. 3) Promoted the community self-esteem. 4) Improved quality of the community people life. 5) Implemented environmental sustainability. 6) Maintained the identity and local culture. 7) Created learning between people in different culture. 8) Respected different cultures and human dignity. 9) Created equitable revenue to the local people. 10) Distributed income to the public benefit of the community (Thailand CBT Network Coordination Center, 2012).

In order to develop the sustainable community-based tourism, Dodds et al. (2018) suggests 6 key elements to achieve community-based tourism including "1) Participatory planning and capacity building. 2) Collaboration and partnerships facilitating links to market. 4) Establishment of environmental/community goals. 5) Assistance from enablers (government, funding institutions, and private sector.) 6) Focus on generating supplemental income for long-term community sustainability." Community-based tourism is determined as an important standard of sustainable tourism as long as it is operated by the community by considering environmental sustainability to provide fair returns to the community (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Brohman, 1996; Cole, 2006).

Community participation in community-based tourism

The community participation is explained toward the cooperation between the community people and the local government in setting up the development policies and plans. The participation can be completely implemented if the community's decisions are included in the planning procedure (Prabhakaran et al., 2014). According to 6nine key elements to achieve community-based tourism (Dodds

et al., 2018), the participation of community people is the first element to develop sustainable community-based tourism. The community economy and quality of life will be improved if the community people are taking part in community-based tourism management (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017). Similarly, the study of (Cohen & Uphoff, 1977) informed that there were 4 dimensions of participation identity to create the community development including decision making, implementation, benefits, and evaluation.

Factors influencing community participation

Factors that influence people to participate in the community activities have been presented in several studies. The study of (Phuangphaka, 2016) mentioned that factors that drive people to participate are including 1) environmental factors in term of economy, society, politic, and safety. 2) influencing people. 3) participating benefit. 4) Internal factors such as personal expectation, responsiveness, courteousness etc. Economic factors, social factors, Environment factors, and Culture factors also were revealed in the study of (Chaibin et al., 2020). It was found that Culture factors were significant factors influencing people participation followed by social factors, environment factors, and economic factors (Chaibin et al., 2020). In addition, the study of (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012) implemented the important factors affected on community participation including environmental destruction factor, social and cultural effects factor, economic effects factor, and water and coast pollution factor. The result showed that economic factors and social and cultural factors are the most influential factors (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012). Referring to the studies, the factors that are related to the people's participation consists of environmental factors, social factors, and economical factors.

Methodology

Population, sampling group and sampling method

The population used for this research were people who were residents in Thung Thasae Community, Thung Krabue Subdistrict, Trang Province. The population used for calculating the sampling number was the total number of people in the community who aged between 20 - 60 years old which is 320 people in the year 2022 (Thung Krabue Subdistrict Municipality, 2021). Sampling numbers were calculated using the (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) formula over 95 % confidence level. Therefore, the total number of required samplings was 175 people.

Research instruments and data analysis

The questionnaire was designed to collect quantitative data through distribution to residents who live in Thung Thasae Community, Thung Krabue Subdistrict, Trang Province. The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections which included personal profiles, general information as well as economic factors, social and cultural factors, and environment factors. To measure the level of respondents' economic factors, social and cultural factors, and environment factors., the questions were delivered in a close-ended format using the Likert Theory rating-scale (Likert, 1967), with a 5-level option.

The researcher distributed over 180 questionnaires by using the quota sampling technique, the researcher classified the sampling should be done randomly amongst the people staying in the community at that time. The 175 qualified questionnaires were rechecked and verified, the numbers computed and the data recorded for the statistical analysis. The SPSS program was then used for the data to be recorded and the statistical results evaluated. Descriptive statistics explained the frequency, percentage, mean, and SD value of the collected data. Inference statistics was implemented by using T-test and One-way ANOVA at the significant level 0.05. Gabriel's Post Hoc test (Gabriel's Pairwise Comparisons Test) was performed to compare pairs of different mean values at the significant level 0.05.

Results and discussion

The personal demography of the respondents showed a slight difference in the number of respondents between female and male (Female: 103 or 57.2 %, Male 77 or 42.8 %). The age majority of

respondents is 41 - 50 years old (53 or 29.4 %) followed by 31 - 40 years old (48 or 26.7 %) and over 51 years old (47 or 26.1 %). Most of the respondents had received a diploma's degree (70 or 38.9 %), high school's degree (59 or 32.8 %) and bachelor's degree (51 or 28.3 %) with an average income between 5,000 - 10,000 baht per month (70 or 38.9), between 10,000 - 15,000 baht per month (66 or 36.7) and lower than 5,000 baht per month (21 or 11.7 %).

The results of respondents' economic factors presented that most of the respondents had significantly positive responses on the economic factors. They appreciated participating if it would help to improve the local business (4.13, S.D. 0.95), however, the cost of living should not be increased (4.00, S.D. 1.00). Moreover, if it could provide job opportunities to the community (3.97, S.D. 1.02) and if it helped to increase household income (3.97, S.D. 1.02), they were willing to participate in it. Surprisingly, the respondents seemed to be less interested in the revenue return themselves (3.3, S.D. 0.97) in contrast with the community's benefits.

The results of respondents' social factors presented that most of the respondents had moderately positive responses on the social factors. They were likely to participate if their friends or relatives participated (3.66, S.D. 0.95) as well as if their friends or relatives recommended them to participate (3.63, S.D. 0.98). With a slight difference, if the participation could provide their reputation (3.57, S.D. 0.96) or if they were invited by the local government (3.57, S.D. 0.96), they would participate in it. however, if the reason for it is good for the community (3.27, S.D. 0.93), they seemed to be less interested compared to others.

The results of respondents' environment factors informed that most of the respondents had slightly positive responses in overall on the environment factors. They were willing to participate if the tourists would not be a cause of garbage increasing in the tourist attractions (3.96, S.D. 0.87). In addition, if it would not harm the ecosystem (3.20, S.D. 0.87), if it did not destroy agricultural fields (3.20, S.D. 0.98), and if it did not increase pollution in the area (3.13, S.D. 0.84). The respondents provided the lowest score on the opinion of tourists crowding in the community (2.6, S.D. 0.79).

To find the difference between the community people's gender with economic factor, social factor, and environment factor, an independent sample T-test was conducted to compare the factors between males and females. The results present no differences in scores of economic factors for male (3.87, S.D. 0.65) and female (3.86, S.D. 0.88), ($t = 0.053$, $p = 0.791$); social factors for male (3.62, S.D. 0.61) and female (3.47, S.D. 0.78), ($t = -1.43$, $p = 0.231$); environment factors for male (3.33, S.D. 0.46) and female (3.14, S.D. 0.65), ($t = 0.580$, $p = 0.573$). These results suggest that the factors do not have a different effect on the different gender.

A one-way analysis of variances (ANOVA) was applied for establishing differences in the community people's ages. The respondents were divided into 4 groups, and an examination of the ANOVA results indicate that the community people's age comprises statistically significant differences across economic factor variables ($F = 3.04$, $p = 0.019$) and social factor variables ($F = 9.87$, $p = 0.00$). To test whether there were any significant differences between ages and the factors, Post Hoc comparisons using Gabriel's Pairwise Comparison Test were carried out. The results according to the variable of economic factor and social factor revealed that the mean score for respondents who were in the age of 41 - 50 years old differed significantly from respondents who were in other age levels.

The difference in the community people's education showed that there were significant differences across all variables. These variables include economic factors ($F = 2.37$, $p = 0.022$), social factors ($F = 5.63$, $p = 0.004$), and environment ($F = 10.5$, $p = 0.000$). The results according to the variable of economic factor revealed that the mean score for respondents who were in Undergraduate education level (mean = 4.11, S.D. = 0.16) differed significantly from respondents who were in Diploma levels (mean = 3.71, S.D. = 0.79). Similarly, the variable of social factor showed a result that the mean score for respondents who were in Undergraduate education level differed significantly from respondents who were in Diploma education level and the High school education level. On the other hand, the variable of environment factor showed a result that the mean score for respondents who were Diploma education level differed significantly from respondents who were in Undergraduate education level and High school education level.

The differences in the community people's income were uncovered by the use of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results on the aspect of economic factor, social factor, and environment factor were no statistically significant differences in each variable of the community people's income. These variables include economic factors, social factors, and environment factors.

Conclusions

In summing up, the economic factor is the majority factor that affects the community's participation. The main issue in the economic factor that influences to the community people is local business development by not raising the cost of living. Furthermore, it will enhance the community people to participate in the community-based tourism is to create more jobs in the community which will increase more household income. The social factor is also significant. Friends and relatives are the most powerful influencing the community people participate. If there are friends and relatives who take part in the community-based tourism or if the community people's friends or relative recommend them to take part in, this will increase a chance that they will participate too. With the respect of the community people, the local government is one of the key influence people to participate. If taking part in the community-based tourism, the community people can gain the reputation in the community, it will not be difficult to invite them participating. In term of environment factor, garbage that come after tourists visiting is the main concern, if the community-based tourism cause of garbage problem in the community, the community people will not participate in. As well as the community ecosystem and the community's agricultural fields, the community people emphasize on the community environment, if the tourism will interrupt or harm the environment, they will not agree to participate.

The community's ages and education are significantly affected by economic factors and social factors. Economic factor is significant to pursue the community people in participating in community-based tourism. To succeed in inviting people, both government and private sectors should focus on providing information on how tourism can improve the community business which relates to increasing household income to the community. To empower the invitation mission, friends and relatives are important, if one of friends or relatives are participating, it is possible that other people in the community will come as well. However, the invitation messages that are sent to the community people should be differentiated by people's age and education. The environment in the community also should be concerned, to invite people to participate in the community-based tourism, and a garbage management policy should be implemented

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