



Participation in Community-based Tourism Development of the Ban Pong Manao Community, Lopburi Province

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Abstract

Community-based tourism (CBT) involves a wide range of stakeholders, such as management, community development, tourism businesses, and some forms of cultural places, where tourists meet with the local community to discover different sides of their lifestyle. CBT comes with an inclusive approach. It contains anything that promotes actual community participation and stimulates resulting benefits. Moreover, CBT as a visitor-host relation generates additional economic growth and aims towards conservation and preservation of local communities and their surrounding environments. CBT focuses mainly, but not solely, on community participation. However, this research studies underlying factors that, 1) generally affect participation in the development of sustainable tourism, and 2) the level of villagers' participation of community-based tourism development in Ban Pong Manao, Huai Khunram, Pattananikom, Lopburi. Questionnaires were collected from 200 people from the local community in Ban Pong Manao Tumbol Huai Khunram, Phattananikom, Lopburi. The findings indicate that locals participate in their community on a fairly high level but they lack further support from other organizations to achieve and maintain sustainable tourism. The results of hypotheses testing reveal that on one hand, environmental factors such as the socio-economic environment certainly influence local community participation in sustainable tourism development. On the other hand, local wisdom does not. That goes along with the fact that emotional safety and the necessity of becoming an active community member are also considered important sources of influence, but that the feeling of belonging to such a sustainable environment is not considered of great importance to the local community.

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Introduction

The number of tourists visiting Thailand increases steadily year by year. In 2015, Thailand was ranked number 6 in international tourism receipts, with 44.6 billion US Dollars direct revenue (UNWTO, July 2016) which means tourism generates an important source of income to Thailand and its large tourism industry. As stated above, community-based tourism - or CBT - involves a wide range of stakeholders, such as management, community development, tourism businesses, and some forms of cultural places, where tourists meet with the local community to discover different sides of their lifestyle. CBT comes with an inclusive approach: it contains anything that promotes actual community participation and stimulates resulting benefits. Moreover, CBT as a visitor-host relation generates additional economic growth and aims towards conservation and preservation of local communities and their surrounding environments. CBT focuses mainly, but not solely, on community participation. Many government agencies and conservation organizations successfully implemented CBT as their main strategy, as CBT grants significant benefits and incentives to the involved public. (WWF 2001). Ban Pong Manao, for example, was once a very popular place, especially after the discovery of antiquities. The fame faded quickly due to the lack of proper public transportation, along with its fairly remote location. Today, mainly field-trips organized by schools and universities make their way to Ban Pong Manao. This village recently changed its leadership because the previous operation team did not seek nor listen to any advice from the community and - to add insult to injury - were not made up of locals. The benefits of many projects did not reach the community; they did not follow a decentralized management strategy of sharing and delegating with the local community. The community itself was excluded from any participation. The community still don't know how to develop their community even they don't know what factors which concern tourism they should develop to reach sustainable tourism. Sadly enough, this community still has not made any progress towards sustainable tourism since then (Cherngchai, 2016).

Research Objectives

1. To study factors that affect participation in the development of sustainable tourism in Ban Pong Manao, Huai Khunram, Pattananikom, Lopburi.
2. To study the level of villagers' participation of community-based tourism development in Ban Pong Manao, Huai Khunram, Pattananikom, Lopburi. Lopburi.



Literature Review

Community's participation in sustainable tourism development

According to Jamie, sustainable tourism is the concept of visiting a place as a tourist and trying to make only a positive impact on the environment, society and economy (= socio-economic environment). A key aspect is respect for the people who call the location 'home', the culture and customs of the area, and the inherited traditions. While sustainable tourism is sometimes confused with ecotourism, ecotourism is actually one aspect of sustainable tourism.

According to Naturefriends International (2011), "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable tourism has to meet social, cultural, ecological and economic requirements. Sustainable tourism holds a long-term view, for present and future generations, ethically and socially just and culturally adapted, ecologically viable and economically sensible and productive.

As it cannot be said whether sustainable approaches designed today will really prove to be sustainable within 25 years, "sustainability" has to be taken to mean future-oriented requirement rather than a fixed plan. This means that its contents need to be redefined from time to time and that futurologists have to learn to consider unpredictable factors. So it can be commented critically that real "Sustainable Tourism" is almost impossible; what is possible and highly desirable however is "More Sustainable Tourism" or "Sustainable Tourism Development".

The objective of Sustainable Tourism Development is to implement all areas of Sustainable Development (ecology, economy, social issues and cultural issues) in tourism. Tourism policies unilaterally focusing on the environment cannot claim to be "sustainable". According to Muller (1994) suggested that the objective of environmentally and socially compatible tourism has a lot to do with the frequently quoted . . . strategy of 'qualitative growth'. 'Qualitative growth' can be described as any increase in quality of life (i.e. economic growth and subjective well-being) which can be achieved with less use of non-renewable resources and less stress on the environment and people.

Timothy (1999) mentioned that if locals are to benefit from tourism, they must also be given opportunities to participate in, and gain financially from tourism. Sproule (1995) said that in many developing countries, tourism benefits are concentrated in the hands of a few at the expense of those with existing disadvantages, such as those with small land holdings, low incomes, and poor housing. Moreover, Brandon (1993) summarized that a lack of involvement in tourism means that tourism is much more likely to have negative social and economic impacts. Paul (1987) said that the sustainability of an ecotourism project depends solely on its acceptance and support by local communities. They said that local involvement in all phases

of planning, development and management is the key strategy to ensure sustainability, socially, environmentally and economically.

Cernea (1991) thought that a lack of involvement meant that tourism is much more likely to have negative social and economic impacts. He reported that there are evidences that projects which focus on generating economic benefits without effectively encouraging local participation in the identification, design, implementation, or evaluation of development activities are less likely to provide widespread community benefits. In contrast, Drum (1998) claimed that active local participation in planning processes and in operations management can achieve the conservation and sustainable development goals of ecotourism. In addition, Wearing and Larsen (1996) presented that it can help managers avoid decisions that might cause conflict with the local community, provide a more authentic experience for tourists and can serve to educate the community about the benefits of the project, thereby increasing their support and helping them to attain their minimum basic needs.

Relationship between community participation and environmental factors

According to UNEP, community participation calls for people to participate in planning, implementing and managing their local environment. Community participation means to be part of both local governments and the people to accept same responsibilities and activities in managing their communities. It also means a commitment to bring resources, skills and knowledge for this purpose, and respect for the capabilities and capacities of all partners.

This means that the value of each group's contribution is appreciated. The honest acceptance of community representatives as "partners" in decision-making, helps a successful community participation.

There are five key issues that show the importance of community participation and involvement.

1. Choices and preferences on quality of life and lifestyle are key points of the process of impacting on the environment. These have both short-term and long-term impacts on the local community, but affect also remotely and globally – in terms of resources used. How does this impact Environmental Management processes? These choices and preferences have a direct impact on the local environment, as well as long-term indirect impacts, sometimes far beyond the actual limitations of the community. Adopting quality of life and lifestyle in environmental management ensures that problems are solved at its source, and long-term benefits show up.

2. It is important to maintain subsidiary of environmental decision-making. Local daily decisions need to be made at the local and community levels. Effective community participation creates space where such problems can be discussed and effective actions planned. How does this impact Environmental Management processes? Daily decisions at the



individual and community level help to maintain the scale of decisions, and ensures that participation is built at the local level.

3. Community participation needs clear commitment and involvement of all members of the community in various activities. Bringing the community together to work on a problem that affects their life, particularly in relation to the environment, is the first step of an ongoing process of awareness building and change in behaviors. How does this impact Environmental Management processes? Focusing on different aspects of the local community will help them to intensify involvement from the community. Linking environmental problems, both local and global, to everyday lifestyles is critical in motivating communities.

4. Community participation shares resources and various skills and working strategies from within the community. Within the community is a diversity of resources that are necessary for the beginning of any plan or program. How does this impact Environmental Management processes? Sharing resources and skills enables them to control the local environment. It also enables creative brainstorming that digs deeper into problems and ensures appropriate solutions – maximizing the benefits from a small resource base.

5. Controlling and correcting through monitoring/evaluation can be done by the community itself. Vigilance (carefulness) can be ensured through community involvement, with respect to its own actions and outputs (for example, waste generated), and to external processes and outputs that affect it (for example, pollution from a local factory).

Relationship between community participation and community membership

According to Mikkelsen (2005) participation was viewed as active, passive or interactive. Active participation is open and community members take part actively in all stages of the project. Decision making as well as other vital activities, such as management as well as monitoring and evaluation of the projects, are done by the people. On the other hand, during passive participation, the community maintains a distance and never participates in the activities; they are told what is going to happen or what has happened already. Interactive participation is when people take part in joint analysis as well as the planning process and the members of the target community improve their existing structures as well taking charge of their development process (Roodt, 2001).

Community participation teaches communities how to solve conflict and allows for different perspectives to be heard. In this way, learning is promoted and people will be able to help themselves (Nampila, 2005). Communities will be able to assess their own situation, organize themselves as a powerful group and work creatively towards changing society and building up a new world. These increased capacities of individuals allow communities to mobilize and help themselves to minimize dependence on the state and leads to a bottom-up

approach. Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive community. It is about active participation and growing empowerment (Callaghan, 1997).

Community participation leads to empowerment of the community; empowerment focuses on individuals developing a better understanding of their circumstances and social environment (Davids et al., 2009).

Participation of the community in development projects leads to capacity building which enables the community to be more effective and efficient in the process of identifying, implementing, monitoring and evaluating of developmental projects (Davids et al., 2009). According to De Beer, (1998), by fulfilling their needs, people learn to realize their goals more easily. It is a mechanism that enables local people to determine their own values and priorities and act on their own decisions. Full potential of individuals is realized after they have been made aware; then, depending on their capabilities, they act to achieve their goals (Freire, 1993). People-centered development focuses on development actions, rather than goals itself, and on the progress of their capacity to participate in the development process. Heavily depending on outside resources, such as funding, has resulted in most interventions being not sustainable. A people centered approach enhances self-reliability in communities (Kotze, 1997).

Conceptual Framework

As the conceptual framework is the underlying fundament of any seriously conducted research, the researcher had decided to develop the conceptual framework based on literature review. This conceptual framework consists of environmental factors (social, local wisdom and environment), community membership, including emotional safety, sense of belonging and the necessity of becoming a fully integrated member of the local community; and participation in sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, after designing the conceptual framework, the researcher outlined the hypotheses before conducting this study. (See figure 1)

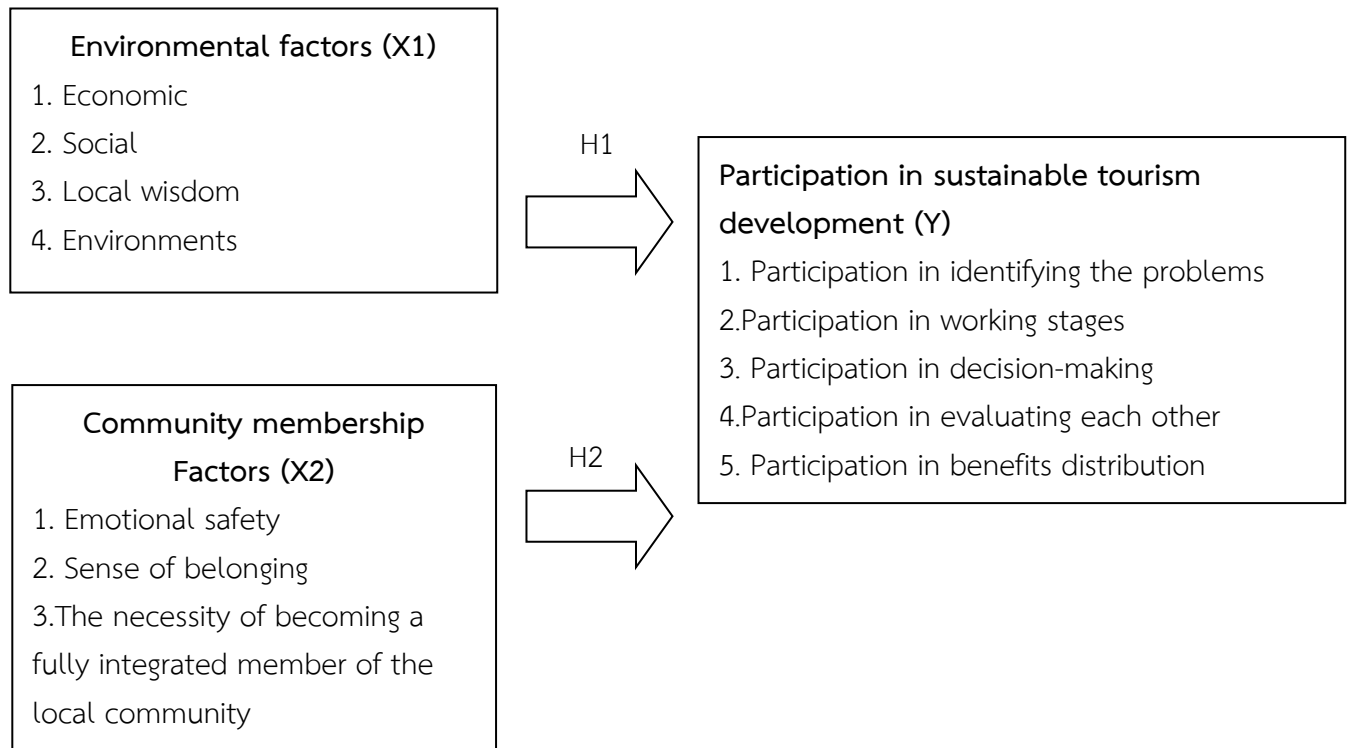


Figure 1 Conceptual framework adapted from Suthatip Khemnoi (2011)

Research Hypotheses

H1: Environmental factors influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development.

H2: Community membership factors influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development.

Research Methodology

For this study, the researcher used a sampling size of 200 participants and applied the ‘Non-Probability Sampling Method’, along with ‘Purposive Sampling’. The area for data collecting was Ban Pong Manao Tumbol Huai Khunram, Phattanakom, Lopburi by Accidental Sampling. The questionnaire consisted of five parts. Part 1 included seven questions about the personal information of the respondents, including gender, age, marital status, level of education, occupation, income and participation in community. Part 2 addressed the respondents’ opinions towards environmental factors. Part 3 highlighted the respondents’ opinions towards community membership. Part 4 focused on the respondents’ opinions towards participation in sustainable tourism. The last part of the questionnaire gave space for any suggestions made by the local community. In order to have the validity, three experts (Dr.

Sombat Thamrongsilpthavorn, Dr. Thinikarn Sangsuwan, Mrs. Natthakan Pruksorranan) in the field of tourism management, and research statistic based on recommendations from the advisory committee to verify the items of questionnaire by using Indexes of Objectives Congruence (IOC) score and the researcher had used all the scored which provided by three experts to calculate, and the results had shown that the average of scores was higher than 0.5, thus, those items had been kept to conduct the research study. The researcher used Cronbach Alpha to validate reliability in order to insure the consistency. After the researcher revised the questionnaires, the researcher conducted a pilot study with 30 respondents in Ban Talechupsorn Tumbol Talechupsorn Meuang Lopburi. The researcher used 'Cronbach Alpha' to validate reliability and to insure consistency. The Coefficient Cronbach Alpha should be equal or greater than 0.7 to ensure the reliability of the research instruments. The result of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of questionnaire from the pilot was 0.851 which mean it was coefficient and consistent enough. The collected questionnaires were coded and analyzed in a statistical program, SPSS. The researcher used descriptive statistic to analyze the demographical frequency of the respondents. Also, the researcher used Pearson Correlation and regression analysis to test the hypothesis.

Results

The results highlight that most participants were male (57%) , younger than 21 years old (43%) , single (67%), graduated from high school (39%), still students (42%), with an income of less than 3,000 baht (53.5%) and strongly participating in their community (57%). Economic factors indeed influenced and formed aspects of relationships towards participation in Ban Pong Manao's sustainable tourism development. It can be stated that if economic factors increase the participation in sustainable tourism development will increase too, and vice-versa. In addition, all five social factors (Participation in identifying the problems, Participation in working stages, Participation in decision-making, Participation in evaluating each other and Participation in benefits) contributed towards a stronger relationship between locals and their participation in sustainable tourism development. The results proved the condition that if social factors increase the participation in sustainable tourism development will increase, and if social factors decrease the participation in sustainable tourism development will decrease as well. Local wisdom follows that trend. The results manifested that all five factors (Participation in identifying the problems, Participation in working stages, Participation in decision-making, Participation in evaluating each other and Participation in benefits) contribute towards sustainable tourism development. The same pattern appeared: If local wisdom factors increase the participation in sustainable tourism development will increase, and if local wisdom factors decrease the participation in sustainable tourism development will also decrease. Environment factors, on the other hand, drew a different picture. On one hand, all four environmental

factors led to that very same conclusion that if environmental factors increase the participation in sustainable tourism development will increase, and if environmental factors decrease the participation in sustainable tourism development will decrease as well. On the other hand, environmental factors did not automatically lead to sharing of benefits, as locals spotted a discrepancy between the amount of participation invested and the share of the outcomes. All remaining factors, such as emotional safety, sense of belonging to a community, and the necessity of becoming a fully integrated member of the local community followed the common scheme: All factors clearly displayed a relationship between villagers and their participation in sustainable tourism development in Ban Pong Manao Huai Khunram, Pattananikom, Lopburi. Generally speaking, if one or all tested factors increase, locals' willingness to participate will also rise, and therefore, if the factors involved decrease, their active participation in sustainable tourism development will decrease as well.

Table 1 The results of Regression Coefficients of environmental factors variables influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development

H1: Environmental factors influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development.

Variables	Regression Coefficients				t-test	Sig.
	Unstandardized		Standardized			
	Coefficients		Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	.703	.194			3.623	.000*
X ₁	.405	.071	.475		5.675	.000*
X ₂	.201	.076	.229		2.642	.009*
X ₃	.040	.067	.045		.595	.553
X ₄	.137	.026	.251		5.221	.000*

* P < .05; R² = 0.557; F = 61.333; p-value = .000

X₁= Economic; X₂ = Social; X₃= Local wisdom; X₄ = Environments

Table 1 illustrates variables of environmental factors and their corresponding variances of participation in sustainable tourism development. The factor of statistical significance was set with 0.05 (F = 61.333; p-value = .000), which led to R² = 0.557. Taking each dependent variable into account, with each resulting significance, we came up with the following numbers: Economic (B=0.405), Social (B=0.201) and Environment (B=0.137). It can be concluded, that those

3 variables influence participation in sustainable tourism development positively, and that local wisdom had no statistical significance - therefore no influence - on participation in sustainable tourism development.

Table 2 The results of Regression Coefficients of community membership factors variables influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development

H2: Community membership influence on local community participation in sustainable tourism development.

Variables	Regression Coefficients			t-test	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.115	.177		6.310	.000*
X ₁	.392	.078	.445	5.050	.000*
X ₂	.037	.070	.048	.526	.600
X ₃	.211	.060	.278	3.488	.001*

* $P < .05$; $R^2 = 0.511$; $F = 68.238$; $p\text{-value} = .000$

X₁= Emotional safety; X₂ = Sense of belonging; X₃= The necessity of becoming a fully integrated member of the local community

Table 2 illustrates variables of community membership factors and their corresponding variances of participation in sustainable tourism development. The factor of statistical significance was set with 0.05 ($F = 68.238$; $p\text{-value} = .000$), which led to $R^2 = 0.511$. Taking each dependent variable into account, with each resulting significance, we came up with the following numbers: Emotional safety ($B=0.392$) and Becoming a fully integrated member of the local community ($B=0.211$). It can be concluded, that those 2 variables indeed have positive influence on participation in sustainable tourism development, but sense of belonging to a community played no role for participation in sustainable tourism development.

Discussion

From the findings, we can assume that the average villager in Ban Pong Manao Huai Khunram, Phattananikom, Lopburi belongs to generation z (age less than 21 years old), is single, graduated from high school, remains a student, generates an income of less than 3,000 baht, and still participates in his own community.



Active participation in that community is on a fairly high level and still remains of greater importance for all people involved. As stated above, active involvement of locals in sustainable tourism development increases or decreases with the intensity of respective factors, such as Economic, Social, and Local wisdom. Environmental factors, on the contrary, aren't received positively by the majority of participants. They simply do not believe that environmental factors can contribute to a better relationship between all stakeholders. One reason might be the ongoing struggles with corruption, bribery, and nepotism in Thailand, along with controversial roles of politicians and police officers in any state-funded project. It is remarkable that almost all participants expressed their desire to maintain and intensify emotional safety, their shared sense of belonging together, and their aim to become fully integrated members of their local community.

It needs to be highlighted that – despite their deep strive for belonging to their community – they also expressed their unwillingness to consider local wisdom as an essential source of influence for their grade of participation in sustainable tourism development. Participants prioritize their very own lifestyle over that of any shared local wisdom. This trend follows frankly the gap between generations. Sustainable tourism development won't see any success at the expense of lifestyle and convenience. Having that said, even though younger participants desire to become fully integrated members of their communities, they recognized that they were lacking a sense of belonging to a particular community. They wish, they aim, they thirst for acceptance, but their young age makes them less capable of the overall goal of sustainable tourism development. They commit themselves and invest a fair amount of time, energy and resources, but they did not share the same vision for their community, and to a much lower degree, for sustainable tourism management.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Sustainable tourism cannot succeed without being focused on a specific community, granting unrestricted and decent participation to locals throughout all stages of tourism planning and development processes. Community-based tourism involves all stakeholders, beginning with the government and various forms of management, tourist industry, and finally (semi-) prominent locations where tourists get to interact with locals and encounter new sides to their lifestyle. Community-based tourism involves participation of the actual community and must come with certain measurable benefits. Those measurable benefits include environmental preservation and conservation, shaping and reshaping of landscapes, intensified tourist – host relations, and result in increased revenue. Most government departments and NGOs utilized community-based tourism as their sole strategy in reaching their aims because it provides long-lasting incentives to local communities.

Based on the finding from the local community in Ban Pong Manao Huai Khunram, Phattananikom, Lopburi we can't deny that economic, social and environments influence on participation in sustainable tourism development because of the successful community-based tourism achieves social development within the community in various ways, including preservation and revitalization of cultural heritage, community strength in tourism management, achieving a self-reliant community, human resources and skills development, and improving quality of life. Improving the conservation of cultural heritages is important not only for preserving its historic significance, but also for its potential to generate income for local residents. Community membership influence on participation in sustainable tourism development because when they work together closely and contribute in tourism management and the benefits of tourism, creating strong relationships and strengthening community trust and unity. Local communities take part in building on their strengths and bringing people together to work on tourism development for the community benefits.

The findings supported the result of Suthatip Khemnoi (2011). She stated that the environment of the community, the environment factors had influence on participation in sustainable management. Social factors were the co-operative in community for developing the environments of community, participate in solve the problems of community, made the communities can get new knowledge, made the community to get well-known by tourist and can make the knowledge exchange within community. Cultural was the activity which made local communities live together and made the life style of community be the same. Environment influenced on participation which can make the local community participate in sustainable tourism development. Also supported Phongsiiri Thepwong (2010) stated that when the environment had the problem it would influence on local community so they would participate to solve the problem and it would become good development for tourism in the area. And supported Termsak Singsoomboon (2014), he mentioned that the success and sustainability of using local wisdom to promote tourism through creative tourism process depends on these factors; having a strong community base, having fertile natural resources, having capable leader who can create faith, having strong cultural base, having participation from local people in the community, having continuous operation and having innovation and creative tourism activities. Accordingly, using local wisdom to promote tourism through creative tourism process in order to create sustainable tourism development is targeted at the community. Equilibrium must be created in terms of economy, society and environment so that the community, with this equilibrium, can develop sustainable tourism. From the result which means this community doesn't have strong cultural base and creative tourism activities so they should develop it. And the findings supported the result of Nopparat Satarat (2010), the results showed active community participation is one of the major factors leading to the success of CBT. Participation in tourism planning and management means that local people feel a sense of



ownership and responsibility for CBT. This sense of ownership also motivates local people to make special efforts to control any negative impacts of tourism, and to ensure that CBT gives real support on community and environment.

Local community in Ban Pong Manao Huai Khunram, Phattananikom, Lopburi should develop their local wisdom according to the finding it's not influence on participation in sustainable tourism development. They should encourage the local community to remain their life style of living like agricultural activities or local handicrafts and educate them to understand that these activities can attract the tourist and can generate the money to community. And they should ask some educational institution to educate to understand the sense of belonging and make them aware that they are the owner of this community and this is the place that their new generation would live here then they will realize to develop this community more or even ask the supporting from many organizations to help them to reach the sustainable tourism goal.

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