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SOCIOLOGY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

The participation of community leaders for sustainable tourism development: A case study in Phipun District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand

Daycho Khaenamkhaew^{1*}, Pongpasit Onjun¹, Jittima Damrongwattana¹ and Boonying Prathum¹

Abstract: Participation and promotion of sustainable tourism within the community can increase its competitiveness in the tourism industry in the future. Therefore, this study aims to examine the participation of community leaders in promoting sustainable tourism development. There were 16 target groups for qualitative research, including community leaders, folk scholars, senior citizens, and government officials. The data were collected through various sources, such as academic articles, research reports, agency documents, local news, participant and non-participant observations, in-depth interviews, participatory action, and evaluations. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, which revealed the following insights. (1) The participation of the community in the study, along with problem analysis, cause analysis, and solution selection, facilitated the process and development of the framework to address the community's needs. (2) Participating in the analysis of plans and their implementation organized a learning process for the participants, where they searched for facts by recording and conducting community learning, starting with simple activities and expanding into a network of various professional groups. (3) Sharing mutual benefits and participation in evaluations was the final stage of the learning process. The study resulted in the creation of a new framework called the CNHCEA model, consisting of cultural capital, natural capital, human capital co-practice implementation of sufficiency economy philosophy, expansion of networks, and problems and successes analysis.

Subjects: Community Planning and Planning Techniques; Sociology; Urban Tourism

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Daycho khaenamkhaew conceptualised the central research idea, carried out the research, wrote, revised the article and approved the article submission. (Specializing in Sociology, Community Development and Social Development).

Pongpasit onjun designed the research, supervised research progress. (Specializing in community development and social development).

Jittima damrongwattana conceptualised the central research idea and provided the theoretical framework (Specializing in home economics and community development).

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Keywords: Participation; leaders; community leaders; leaders development; sustainable; tourism

1. Introduction

Community participation in development and the results of that participation are reflected in the achievement of the goal, which is to enhance the development of the people, expand their knowledge base, and improve the efficiency of their work processes (Khaenamkhaew et al., 2021), and develop the organization into a “Learning and Participation.” The effective management of diversity and a heightened appreciation for its importance are key factors in creating sustainable and smart societies (Karaatmaca et al., 2020). This would serve as a hub for promoting knowledge exchange and preserving cultural values and lifestyles in the community, turning it into a learning society. The community’s knowledge, obtained from local scholars, must be analyzed, criticized, and properly selected to effectively solve community problems. This aim is not only to utilize existing knowledge but also to create new knowledge and instill it within the community and society as a whole. This can be achieved by adhering to the principles of the villagers’ participation process and opening a forum for mutual discussion and exchange of thoughts and ideas (Boonwanno et al., 2020; Chukamneid, 2018; Wongrod, 2014). Additionally, villagers must participate and contribute to resolving the major problems that affect economic, social, and environmental development (Nikolovska & Jovanova, 2017). By encouraging active participation and sharing of experiences, villagers can acquire new knowledge and apply it to improve their community (Puangngam, 2010). The concept is to inculcate the belief that community problems are not the sole responsibility of one leader but rather belong to everyone in the community (Puangngam, 2010).

However, participation requires knowledge management. Knowledge management can be accomplished by collecting information from villagers through interaction and having a conversation on various topics, such as family matters, career, weather, and politics. These topics should be firmly established in the local culture and thought process. These interactions can be initiated through various events and activities in the community, including public places, such as pavilions, temples, roadsides, merit-making markets, sporting events, and coffee gatherings (Krongbhumin, 2021; Lertgraiand & Nillakan, 2016; Wiset & Thammachalai, 2017). This information gradually becomes comprehensible and emerges as new planning techniques (OK Nation Block, 2007) to improve community planning and address the shortage of skilled and professional staff. However, it is imperative to promote education on these topics to nurture the growth of the community’s members. It is a process of growth for community members themselves, along with finding additional information to ensure full-scale mutual participation (OK Nation Block, 2007; Ustymenko et al., 2019).

This study focused on the Phipun District in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, located 109 kilometers from the city of Nakhon Si Thammarat in the south of Thailand. The area boasts of remarkable history, including a devastating natural disaster that occurred in 1988 and caused significant physical and structural damage (Matusin et al., 2020). Despite various community development initiatives over the years, the quality of life of the people in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province remains a major concern. The average quality of life in this area has not improved (The Community Development of District Phipun, 2017). Natural disasters and severe forest fires have caused considerable losses in recent times, causing residents to relocate to different locations and create new settlements. Consequently, there is a lack of leadership development standards to assist community tourism and tourism planning issues (Ngernthaworn, 2011).

Currently, tourism based on natural resources and culture is emphasized, highlighting cultural resources for the tourists, which help preserve and promote the learning of history. The community leaders have improved some landscapes and established tourist attractions, bringing in income for the community (Khaenamkhaew et al., 2018). There are important tourist attractions in the area,

such as the Nan Nok Nang Aen Waterfall, Nan Fa Mo Waterfall, Ancient Naram Temple, Natural Hot Spring, Memorial Park, Nan Saen Ha Waterfall, Wang Rad Waterfall, Nan Seven Layer Waterfall, Nan Pu Waterfall, and National Park of the Tapi tree (Phipun Subdistrict Administrative Organization, 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to develop the Phipun District to enhance its revenue through tourism promotion. This is achievable as Phipun District has not only natural capital and cultural capital but also potential human resources, which can serve as the foundation for community-based tourism. However, these resources have not been utilized to their full potential for development (Khaenamkhaew et al., 2017).

In particular, the dimensions of “Human Capital” within intellectual capital and relational capital showed a strong positive correlation with the learning process (Ramli & Rasdi, 2021). In the realm of administration, leaders are considered the most crucial factor. Leaders are responsible for fostering motivation and intellectual interaction and must possess the ability to mobilize resources effectively to achieve their goals and bring progress (Sricharumedhiyan & Vaddhano, 2018). Community leaders are essential to developing tourism as they inspire the community to be self-reliant and find solutions that lead to improved tourism services. The management of existing resources, which is linked to tourism strategies, is crucial in creating regulations and inspiring the next generation to preserve local and cultural traditions. Space management is also linked with resource management as a means of advancing the overall development of community tourism (The Community Organizations Development Institute [CODI] in Thailand, 2017). Community leaders, with their expertise, determination, and participation, hold the key to managing tourism successfully (Loetyingyot, 2017). Sustainable development of community-based tourism management emphasizes the importance of creating awareness and learning opportunities to promote the transfer of knowledge and increase participation in sustainable community-based tourism development. A strong social system within the community, which allows for the integration of tourism with overall community development, is particularly valuable. The potential of community leaders plays a major role in shaping the future of sustainable tourism (Tancharoen, 2017). To achieve this, it is important to establish a “Community Building Culture” or “Belonging Culture” that promotes cultural diversity and blends traditional culture with modern development, leading to the preparation and implementation of balanced and sustainable care (Mammadova & Ivars, 2018; Suwetwattanakul, 2017). By turning a community into a popular travel destination, its economy can be boosted. Additionally, the community can serve as a source of products and services to support tourists, creating an exchange between the community and tourists (Khonkumkard, 2018). For example, art and design can be used to develop the knowledge and creative skills of people and tourists. These skills can then be combined with the expertise of the community members to develop new tie-dye patterns and new processed goods (Sathaporn et al., 2021). Encouraging the community to understand the importance of conservation work and preserving natural resources is crucial in promoting sustainable living. Therefore, this concept is necessary for supporting and promoting living conditions. Moreover, tourist destinations are deeply connected to their unique culture and traditions, which are intertwined rich local natural environment through a participatory approach with appropriate tourism planning. Encouraging the use of community-based methods to promote community development is also essential (Khonkumkard, 2018). Although tourism brings many positive impacts on the environment and local society, it is not always easy to develop a sustainable tourism framework that balances these benefits (Salman et al., 2021). However, tourism has the potential to provide livelihood opportunities, stimulate economic growth and development, and generate employment opportunities for the local community (Bano et al., 2019).

This case study of Phipun District in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province in Thailand focuses on the participation of community leaders in promoting sustainable tourism development. The main research question is “How can the participation of community leaders be fostered for sustainable tourism development?” This study aims to use participation to address the needs of community leaders and tourists. This involves (1) participation in the study of the community, problem analysis, cause analysis, and solution selection; (2) participation in plan analysis and the implementation of the plan; and (3) participation in sharing mutual benefits and evaluation. The

ultimate goal is to enhance the sustainability of the community, thereby increasing its competitiveness in the tourism market and ensuring long-term effectiveness.

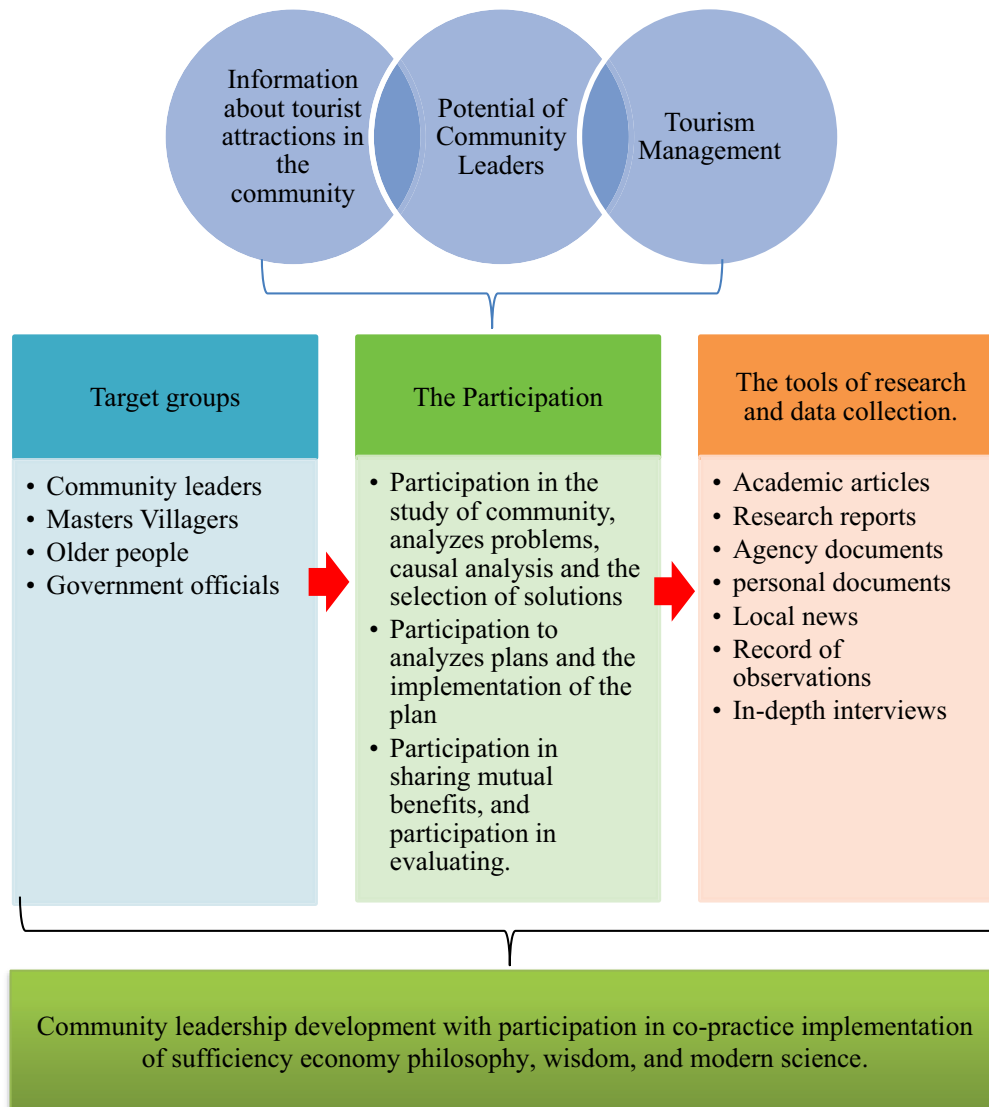
2. Literature review

The concept of community leadership has been defined in various ways. According to Hollander (1970), a community leader is a person who possesses a strong personality, regardless of whether they have formal appointments, and can guide and influence a group toward a common goal. O'Leary (2000) explained that a community leader should also have charisma and the ability to make good decisions, as well as the ability to encourage others to work toward their goals. Community leaders who are devoted to the community and earn respect from their members are seen as effective leaders. Developing community leaders' abilities, including personality, knowledge, skill, leadership roles, and determination, along with a mind of self-sufficiency, can help them to live happier life (Loetyingyot, 2017). In conclusion, a community leader must possess the power of persuasion and the ability to effectively guide their followers toward success.

Participation encompasses several aspects, including finding problems and their causes, being involved in the planning and implementation of the project, receiving the benefits of such initiatives, and evaluating their outcomes. Such involvement can foster the growth and preservation of community knowledge for long-term sustainability (Michel & Marquardt, 1996; Muhamad, 2022). Public participation in local government is essential for the development of communities, both locally and nationally. In particular, local government organizations strive to ensure that the public can be involved as much as possible. This participation helps support public policy, enables monitoring and evaluation of policies, and provides feedback to adjust policies in the future (Intaprom, 2014). Community leaders participate in sustainable tourism development, with a focus on their participation in decision-making, implementation, sharing mutual benefits, and operation monitoring. Their opinions on sustainable tourism emphasize its continuity, quality, and balance. By taking part in these activities, community leaders play a vital role in ensuring the successful implementation of sustainable tourism development (Treekun et al., 2015).

In addition, currently, the concept of sustainable tourism development involves a collaborative approach between internal and external groups, along with coordinated networks and integration through exchange programs. This approach increases the availability of cultural learning resources and promotes community participation. Looking to the future, communities have the power to determine directions, assess the impacts, respond to changes, and plan for the integration of tourism through self-management. Additionally, through participant processes, communities can raise awareness about conservation and revitalization efforts, using tourism as a powerful tool (Boonwanno et al., 2020). The promotion of tourism in the community is centered around highlighting the unique identity of the community and attracting for tourists to visit. This requires the active involvement of the community leaders in identifying and fostering their strengths. The goal is to attract both domestic and international tourists and support the government policy to stimulate the local economy. To achieve this, the community leaders must be involved in the preparation process, creating interest and promoting the development of tourism products that meet high standards and quality. The goal of this project is to tap into the charm, wisdom, culture, and creativity of the village and community to create a source of income that can be shared among its members. This project is to uncover the potential of the community through increased participation and economic development. By generating income within the community, it aims to foster a strong sense of community identity and pride. Additionally, to search for community identity, there is a need for its continuation and conservation within each region. Furthermore, the community culture promotes a sense of unity and love among its members, creating an opportunity for learning and involvement in the development of the local community. Therefore, the active participation of individuals plays a major role in promoting tourism (Tasa et al., 2021).

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.



However, this research employed the concepts and theories of participation by Michel and Marquardt (1996) and Muhamad (2022) as a conceptual framework, as shown in a diagram in Figure 1.

3. Methods

It necessitated a qualitative study and aimed to gather data from specific targeted groups, including community leaders, experts, villagers, senior citizens, and government officials. A total of 16 people, with the majority being community leaders, were selected for this study. However, to complete data collection from field research, the researcher gathered data until the point of saturation, after which the data collection was stopped (Lertgrai et al., 2021). The researcher employed various tools of research and data collection, including document research, which involved analyzing information from academic articles, research reports, agency documents, personal accounts, local news, and observation records. Additionally, participatory observation was carried out by engaging in activities with the participants, rather than observing from the sidelines.

The researcher also used in-depth interviews with the targeted groups. These interviews were structured in three parts: **(1)** questions to gather basic information such as the participant's nickname, age, occupation, and position in the community, **(2)** questions related to the participation of community leaders in promoting sustainable tourism development, including participation in the study of the community, problem analysis, cause analysis, solution selection, plan analysis, plan implementation, mutual benefits sharing, and evaluation (Michel & Marquardt, 1996; Muhamad, 2022), and **(3)** problem-solving questions and suggestions. The quality of these tools was checked by seeking professional advice to ensure their effectiveness.

The process involved collecting preliminary data through an interview questionnaire. The targeted group, consisting of 16 individuals was interviewed on Saturday and Sunday (holidays). The accommodation of the targeted group was used as a place of interview, and each section lasted 30 to 40 min. It also involved requesting permission to use an audio recorder during the interview and using a mobile phone camera to capture images, along with any relevant information, illustrations, and audio recordings. The researcher emphasized the importance of maintaining the confidentiality and assured participants that if they did not wish to share any information, it will not be recorded. The transcripts of the interview were conducted in a participatory manner. The aim was to create a collaborative relationship with the community leaders, promote the understanding of the research objectives, and jointly identify key outcomes with the targeted group. On Saturday and Sunday (holidays), the Phipun building used a 7–8 h period to develop the capacities of community leaders in sustainability through hands-on practice and knowledge management activities. This was a deliberate effort, irrespective of the outcome of the effort

The researcher used a triangle approach to evaluate the data from a qualitative perspective, considering the factors of time, place, and person. If any of these factors, such as the data provider's time, location, or identity changes, will the information remain consistent? (Buasonte, 2011; Ferry & Joungrakul, 2021). In this process, the researcher posed questions, and each targeted group member was asked to affirm the authenticity of the information obtained at various times. If the responses remained consistent, they demonstrated active participation and effective knowledge management with the community leaders. However, if there were significant variations, the interview was repeated to ensure accuracy. If the data match is deemed accurate, it can either come from the same group or a different group of participants. The researcher conducted a further investigation of the data to determine its accuracy after a match was made (Phonngam et al., 2018). The researcher employed various qualitative data analysis methods, including data classification or grouping, event comparison, component analysis, inductive analysis, and recorded data analysis (Lincharearn, 2012).

The results of the data analysis were compiled, with all pseudonym names transcribed to highlight key points and the conclusion reached through descriptive analysis (Phonphoththanamat, 2022; Tanoamchard et al., 2020).

4. Results

The researcher employed Michel and Marquardt's (1996) and Muhamad's (2022) concepts and theories of participation in the following three-step process: (1) participation in the study of community, problem analysis, cause analysis, and solution selection, (2) participation in plan analysis and implementation of the plan, and (3) participation in sharing mutual benefits and evaluation. The results of the study showed that:

The participation of the community leaders in analyzing problems, conducting cause analysis, and selecting solutions were crucial in gaining a deeper understanding of the community's challenges. The analysis of the results helped in defining the framework. During this time, Phipun District in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province was undergoing significant transformation. This change was brought about by various factors, such as the storm in 1962 and the heavy flood on 22 November 1988, causing significant damages to many of the agricultural areas in Phipun

District, as noted by an interviewee: “Storm and heavy flooding has inflicted damages in 1962 and on 22 November 1988” (key informant, on 17 May 2018). However, after these events, the government of Phipun District Nakhon Si Thammarat Province implemented policies aimed at restoring the agricultural sector and increasing income. To achieve this goal, the cultivation of monoculture crops such as rubber was promoted as a strategic plan. Despite this, the implementation of this strategic plan was inconsistent due to the continued use of traditional farming methods by individuals in the district. The agricultural lands in the area were previously dense forests, where orchards or fruit trees were planted together. However, with the widespread plantation of rubber crops, a lot of production space was consumed, making it difficult for other crops to coexist. Additionally, the production of rubber crops required a significant amount of land, measured in rai. As a result, other horticultural plants, medicinal plants, and native plant species or plants in the garden were neglected, causing a loss of biodiversity in that area. This new belief that rubber plantations were the only way to achieve high income was misguided as the price of rubber tapping was 8–10 baht per kilogram. The community could not survive as the income from rubber tapping was not enough to cover their daily expenses. Thus, the community was forced to rely on the market system instead of the household production system, leading to economic instability and confusion, as noted by an interviewee: “An economic downturn, the price of rubber tapping was 8–10 baht per kilogram, that were not enough to spend in the household” (key informant, on 19 May 2018). However, the inconsistent implementation of the strategic plan, the conflicting thoughts and beliefs within the community, and the decline in cooperation networks contributed to the challenges faced by the community.

The participation of during the plan analysis and implementation of the plan, the focus was on creating a learning process that was organized and provided learners with basic information and materials in a supportive atmosphere. This was done to ensure that the learners felt valued and considered important. This creates an “impression” in the learning process from the beginning. Knowledge management involves preserving and practicing the collective wisdom and experience gained within a community. It starts with simple activities that address the requirements of the community, and it involves seeking guidance from older and more experienced members, referred to as “Folk Scholars.” This acquired knowledge can then be incorporated as a supplementary occupation and eventually result in the formation of a professional group or community organization, as noted by an interviewee: “Applied as an additional career and then form the group into a professional group, for example, the tie-dyed cloth group has applied the tie-dyed fabric pattern to tell the story of life” (key informant, on 19 May 2018), which is an essential component of the learning process. The expression of needs and lifestyle of the wise and the transfer of knowledge with a community inevitably lead to the creation of a “Learning Community.” This is because it corresponds to the community’s needs. The research conducted on villagers revealed that they were looking for a main and an additional occupation to solve their financial problems. The community members found that the rubber problem was one of many other problems they faced, including the destruction of their natural resources, as noted by an interviewee: “Problems lie in the fact that that the community cannot keep accumulate resources inherent to posterity.” (key informant, on 20 May 2018), which were not being addressed. This situation necessitated a discussion to determine the ways to improve the villagers’ standard of living, create awareness about their way of life, resolve their problems, and teamwork with the community. This resulted in the formation of various community organizations or professional groups to make Phipun District a model for addressing the destruction of natural resources. The crisis caused by the destruction of natural resources is being viewed as an opportunity to restore and manage these valuable resources. By becoming more aware and spreading this knowledge to a wider audience, community leaders are taking action to address the issue. Moreover, community leaders have been regularly organizing forums to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences between networks in both formal and informal settings. There is a management system in place that will enable the learning process between villagers, visitors, and tourists. This includes the learning rules and various practices related to culture, traditions, natural resources, and the environment. It is crucial because if community leaders can engage in the tourism management process, they will

not only benefit but also generate income for the community. This approach will promote the transfer of knowledge and empowers community leaders to lead change and work together to analyze their village and determine the direction to success. By gathering new information, community leaders will be able to learn and grow, and the reality of each village can be used as an opportunity for collective learning among a group of community leaders. This will enable the collection of information and the search for knowledge through tourism, sponsored by people in the community, as noted by an interviewee: “Community-based tourism readiness, such as Local career and development activities as a learning center of tourism” (key informant, on 17 May 2018). Thus, it has become a potential development approach that can promote the community’s potential as a tourist destination by capitalizing on its natural resources, cultural heritage, effective community management, and continuous learning.

Participation in sharing mutual benefits and participation in the evaluation is the final assessment step. It aimed to analyze the successes or obstacles and to identify areas for improvement in the knowledge management processes. Moreover, it was about effectively implementing the “Life and Community plan” by establishing clear procedures, devising a well-thought-out method, determining costs, and assigning responsibilities. Furthermore, it focuses on scheduling training development programs for entrepreneurs in the community enterprise under a sufficiency economy, as noted by an interviewee: “It focuses on applying the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy in the life of the people in the community” (key informant, on 20 May 2018). This involves the preparation of the “Community Master Plan”, along with the “National Economic and Social Development Plan.” The activities within a community are primarily centered on economic, social, and cultural activities, as noted by an interviewee: “The Community Master Plan are related to economic activities such as mixed agriculture, farm mix, livestock, rice, chemical-free vegetables, Social and cultural activities include cloth-making, and boons art” (key informant, on 19 May 2018). After gathering information about social conditions and studying production methods in the community, each development plan was adjusted to address new issues. The involvement of community leaders and villagers in the villager organization is crucial. This takes many forms, such as organizing a meeting to discuss and resolve the issue, as noted by an interviewee: “A meeting, exchange opinions finding a common conclusion and inspections” (key informant, on 20 May 2018). Additionally, regular vigilance and inspections must be transparent in their approach.

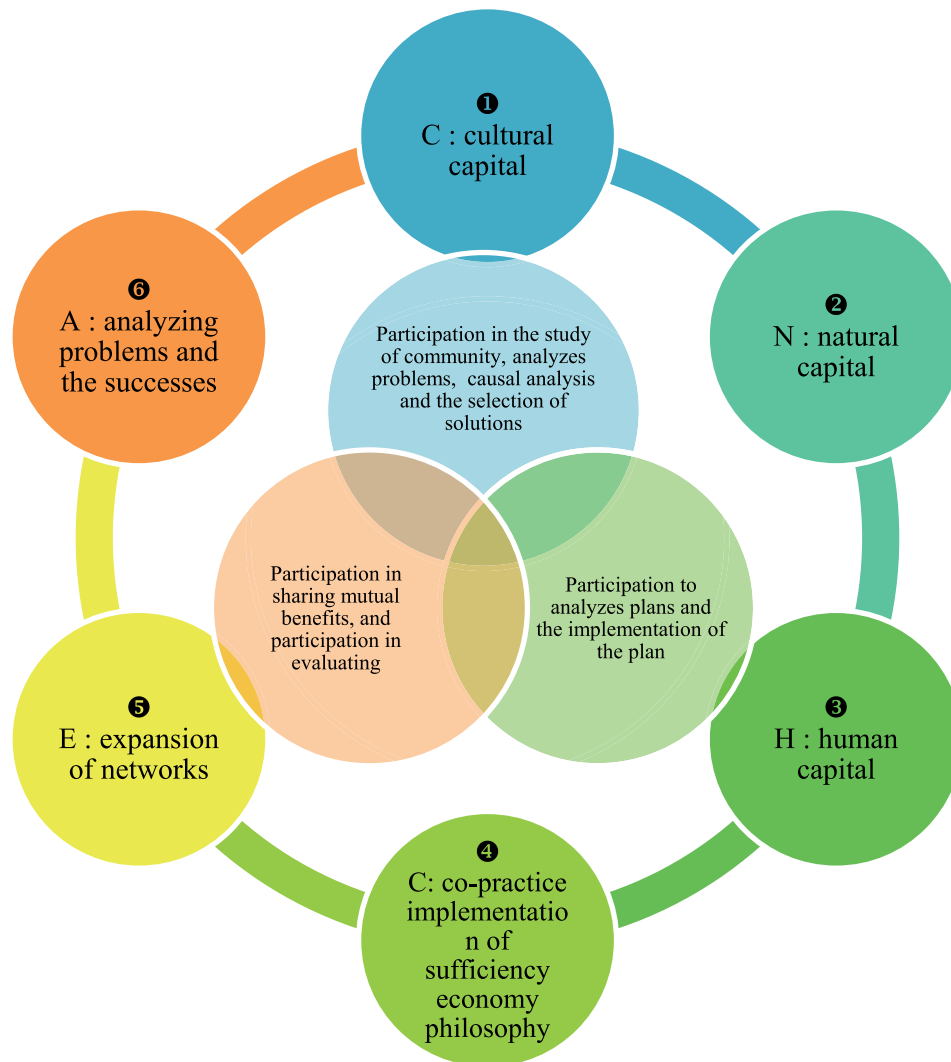
5. Discussion and conclusion

The process of participation can be divided into three steps. They are (1) participation in the study of the community, problem analysis, cause analysis, and solution selection; (2) participation in plan analysis and the implementation of the plan; and (3) participation in sharing mutual benefits and evaluation. According to Michel and Marquardt (1996) and Muhamad (2022), the transfer of knowledge through participation and knowledge management is derived from practical experiences, work, reflection, attitudes, and analysis. This exchange of knowledge leads to the creation of a systematic body of knowledge. Building sustainable participation that promotes human development is a key challenge facing modern societies. This includes organizing sustainable participation with a focus on promoting creative learning, building understanding through sustainable learning, and encouraging collective actions sustainability (Harre et al., 2021). The community of practice has adopted a more community-centric approach. This involves envisioning a successful future through the pursuit of creative knowledge or forming a successful team learning system and then creating knowledge. The first step is to create an atmosphere that encourages innovations through the integration of ideas and feedback to validate them (Dowrick, 2007). This involves offering learning opportunities for participation and highlighting the importance of mutual support relationships. Subsequently, collecting and seeking knowledge to identify connections and systematically store the acquired knowledge, either in a systematic manner or across disciplines, leads to knowledge transfer (Goodkind, 2006). Increased attention in participation have brought about significant transfer in knowledge transfer, as well as educational practices aimed at promoting it. The ongoing debate has also led to the utilization of specific skills and ways

of thinking to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome (Nokesmalach & Richey, 2015). Effective knowledge management is crucial for achieving the goal of developing knowledgeable individuals and transforming workplaces into a “Learning Organization” as well as developing society into a “Knowledge Society” (Juntaket, 2018; Lertgrai et al., 2017; Pimchangthong & Suthisanonth, 2015). The application of knowledge in the community obtained from local experts involves analyzing, evaluating, and selecting the most appropriate information. It also comprises finding solutions to community problems through the collaborative participation process of the villagers (Puangngam, 2010). Villagers and community organizations are currently engaging in “Community Building” to enhance the capacity of communities to manage and foster community change. Moreover, this promotes the concept among villagers that the problems that arise within the community are everyone’s problem, not just the responsibility of a single leader (Chaskin et al., 2006). Communities organizers aim to address community problems and enhance the leadership skills of all villagers. This involves continuing support for community leaders to foster growth and improvement in communities. It encourages villagers to participate and share their experiences. To acquire new knowledge and apply it in the community, participation and knowledge management process focuses on creative learning and conveys the concept of integrating understanding into action, and promotes sustainable shared learning (Ayon & Lee, 2009).

In the community’s educational advancement, information must be shared with all individuals to enable them to gain knowledge on their desired topics and continuously progress and expand their achievements. According to Khaenamkhaew et al. (2020), community leaders must gather to reflect on and learn from new experiences and modern science. To achieve this, it is crucial to align the steps with the learning process. Having a deep understanding will allow individuals to gather information and effectively communicate it to every family. The learning will progress when the information is used to determine the direction of action and have mutual understanding, resulting in cooperation. However, some stories may be incomplete or have limitations, and a lack of coordination among various departments can result in conflicting objectives. Consistent with Alfaro et al. (2020), the development policies from different departments, especially on social issues, are plagued by complexity and conflicts. They also found that the government’s development policies sometimes do not align with the needs and concerns of the community. To address this, practical and effective strategies must be put in place to combine modern knowledge and traditional wisdom to produce positive results. The process of “Learning assessment and summary” provides individuals with a better understanding of the issues at hand. The likelihood of having current or previous experience and knowledge indicates that many villagers in the community could benefit from participating, learning, experiencing, and expanding their knowledge based on traditional ways of life, culture, and economy (Palmer et al., 2021). This is consistent with Ngernthaworn’s (2011) study, which discovered that a combination of modern development and a sufficient economic approach could lead to long-term benefits. This approach fosters creativity and social capital management within the community, thereby strengthening the community under a shared mission. The development of a unique community plan serves as a natural mechanism that starts with increased community awareness. According to Khutwaecho et al. (2018), developing a master plan for community-based tourism management can greatly benefit the development and promotion of community-based tourism potential. This plan covers management at different levels, from the micro to the regional, and involves a collaborative and inclusive way of communicating ideas and learning together, such as through shared experiences related to plant cultivation, soil treatment, water resource conservation, and ecological wildlife conservation. Community leaders can play a vital role in promoting abundant natural resources and contribute to the learning and conservation of historical and natural resources through cooperation with the community. This can lead to the formation of a strong community organization (Damrongwattana et al., 2018). Addressing complex environmental, economic, and social or cultural problems becomes more achievable when partnerships with local people are established through a community-centered approach (Timko et al., 2015). A well-organized community will have a clear distribution of work roles, with tasks divided among community committees and a well-function management system that extends

Figure 2. Participation of community leaders in sustainable tourism development.



throughout the community. This attracts tourists who are interested in the community's lifestyle (Khaykhaw et al., 2021). That community-based tourism provides opportunities for both tourists and community volunteers to become connected, enabling everyone to effectively welcome tourists through various means (Onchan et al., 2018).

This study has implications and significance for the participation of community leaders in sustainable tourism development. The learning activities that are carried out can lead to improvements by applying the sufficiency economy philosophy with modern science and traditional wisdom, cultural capital, natural capital, and human capital or community leaders for sustainable tourism in the future. The CNHCEA model can be used for the participation process, as shown in a diagram in Figure 2.

The participation of community leaders is crucial for sustainable tourism development. Their involvement in analyzing problems, cause analysis, and solution selection is a facilitative process. Students can analyze the framework and contribute to finding solutions to the community's needs. Participation in the analysis of plans and the implementation of these plans is an organized learning process for learners, who gather information and facts through community learning activities. Starting with simple tasks, the collection and searching for knowledge help to develop

community leaders. This sets the direction to identify new things and engage in collective learning to transfer and utilize knowledge. By fulfilling their duties as a “Household resource manager,” one contributes to household consumption, privatization, sales distribution, and the establishment of community organizations or various professional groups. This leads to the creation of a network and the opportunity to participate in sharing mutual benefits, ultimately culminating in an evaluation, which serves as the final step in the learning process. This approach to participation involves conducting simple and compliant activities to uncover the truth. The objective is to gather knowledge, develop community leaders, and collaborate in determining the direction of knowledge transfer and use of the CNHCEA model. The CNHCEA model encompasses cultural capital (C), natural capital (N), human capital to benefit the development (H), co-practice implementation of sufficiency economy philosophy, modern science, and wisdom (C), expansion of networks (E), and analyzing problems and the successes (A).

In addition, the researcher’s suggestion based on the research is to utilize the CNHCEA model as a benchmark and compare it with other communities. Relevant agencies can use it as a starting point to promote community participation in the development of tourism. The researcher also suggested further research on ways to understand the community context, guidelines for career creation and income generation from tourism within the community, and developing tourism routes as well as grooming new generations for continuous participation.

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