
TRANSFORM FAMILY BUSINESS WITH HANDICRAFT HERITAGE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF THE COMMUNITIES AT UBON RATCHATHANI

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Abstract

Since agriculture has become the biggest industry² in the economic system of Ubon Ratchathani province. At the same time most farmers have often faced many problems and limitations in their life in the several difficult aspects. Therefore, one of important things to improve the highly competitive economic in the province should conserve their intelligences like the handicraft which is full of cultural valuable and identity of the region and cultural. Such intelligence represents the natural resources and the unique cultural heritage. The handicraft can replace income from tourism for people in the province, moreover it can also integrates with the family business which can be said that is one of the main businesses in Ubon Ratchathani . In addition, promoting the local traditional craftsmanship of the family businesses develop and strengthen the local identity of the artifacts. A result of the development will not only support the tourism in specific target, but also promote one of local identity in Thailand.

Keywords: Family business, Cultural Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Handcraft, Cultural Heritage Tourism

Introduction

The ASEAN community is recognized the potential of tourism that is an important mechanism for developing and evaluating in the region. Since a wide range of the industry sectors is considered within the community and the region because of its variety of cultural identity and rich of natural resources. In part of Thailand, the tourism is a major income, both in terms of economic growth, and employment. Refer to the 11st National Economic and Social Development Plan that focus on increasing the revenue from tourism in the way of supporting the local knowledge and intelligences and combining local identity and economic development . The traditional handicraft has been in the area for long time, and it is one of local source revenue in the area and the regional income and also a source of local tourism in Ubon Ratchathani Thailand. The handicraft is fully valuable of cultural heritage which has become the local economic resources from tourism of communities in the province. Developing the local handicraft will increase a chance of local business, not only people in the communities will be getting more quality of life, but also developing country.

Ubon Ratchathani is a province in northeastern part of Thailand where is the fifth largest province in Thailand. Its structure of economy is based on agriculture because most people are agriculturists. In addition, Ubon Ratchathani is a famous province of Thai handicraft that has been registered as Thai intellectual culture of the nation al Thai craftsmanship in 2013 from Department of Cultural Promotion for Ban Pa Ao Brassware

Community and Ban Sai Mun Gong Making Community (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2013). The handicraft is an invaluable culture in Ubon Ratchathani which it shows people the way of life and also expressed to advance of people in the past (www.dailynews.co.th, 2556). However, the percentage of agriculturists in the province is 52.76% (Ubon Ratchathani Provincial Administration Organization, 2013), the most agriculturists often face with problems and limitations about their living in many aspects such as resource of land, irrigation and unseasonable rainfall. These conditions affect to slow down the growth ratio of agricultural productions, unemployed in dry season; consequently, these families lack incomes and perhaps produce social problems in many aspects.

Statement of the Problem

Tourism industry is an important activity causes the circulation of money in ASEAN Member States economic system including Thailand that connected with many of main industrial sector. It provides businesses on production of goods and services, plays important roles for earning income and occupation of people and utilizes tourism resources for maximize profit. The business development and income distribution of people in community, therefore, it's necessary to think over the enhancement of cultural tourism cost on local communal identity and integrate existing cost of social and culture of potential handicraft community with the identity of local wisdom transferred from past generations as main cost of development. This integration, in accordance with guidelines of national and provincial economic system of development, emphasizes on promotion incomes from tourism affecting actual benefits on developing of people's quality of life in local community and social and leads to the creation of economic values both in present and the future.

Objective of the Study

The study is to find guidelines for promoting the system of a family business in Ubon Ratchathani province of the cultural heritage of handicraft which relate to tourism.

Scope of the Study

The studied area is in 5 communities are:

1. Candle Casting Community, Wat Burapha, Mueang District
2. Ancient Brassware Casting Community, Ban Pa Ao, Mueang District
3. Gong Making Community, Ban Sai Mun, Phiban Mangsahan District
4. Wickerwork Community, Ban Nadee, Kheuang Nai District
5. Weaving Community, Ban Bon, Samrong District

Content: Studying and searching data from books, articles, literature review and related documents according with the concept of cultural heritage of handicraft and tourism, and the family business.

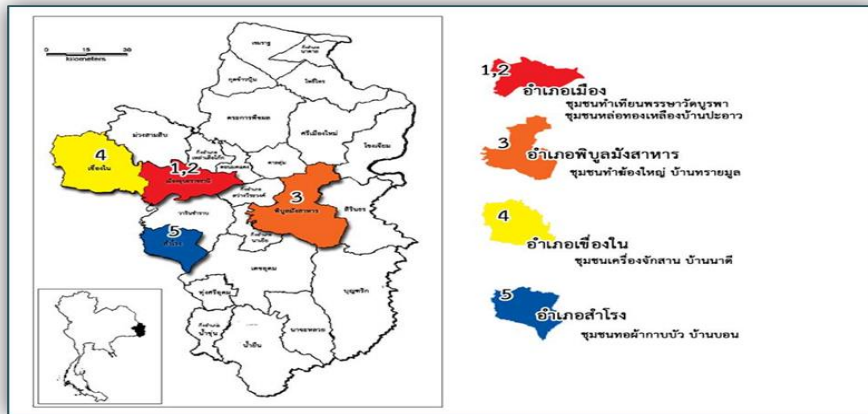


Figure 1: the map shows the locations of the studied areas

Conceptual Framework

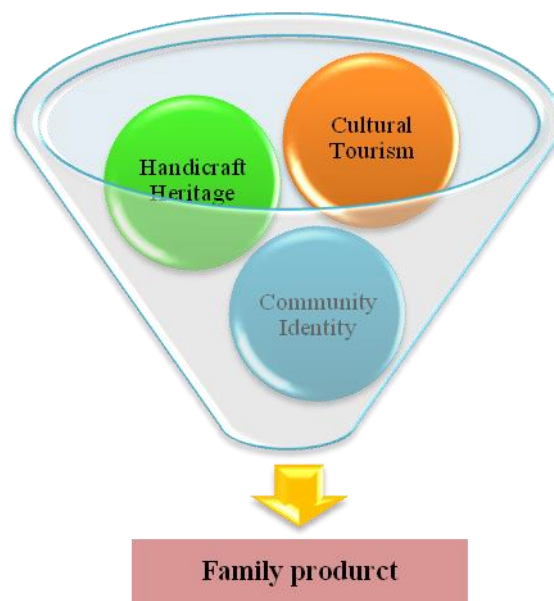


Figure 2: Concept of the study framework

Literature Review

Definition and Concept of Family Business

Family business is regarded as a basic pattern of business worldwide both in North America, Europe and especially Asia. In fact, this business is a micro economic foundation to create values in the economy of nearly all countries around the world (Beckhard and Dyer, 1986) and there are family businesses up to 80% in

Thailand (Bureau of Industrial Business Development, Department of Industrial Promotion, 2001; The Stock Exchange of Thailand, 2007).

Family business means a business which its most of shares are hold by a family that may be related by blood or by marriage and have sufficient vote to control business administration. They also have their plan to hand on the business to the second generation and further generations (Westhead and Cowling, 1997). This is similar to Ward (1988) who stated that the family business means business transferred from one generation to another generation for giving the firm's administration and control to any person or member(s) of the family who control that business (Barnes and Hershon, 1976:106).

Moreover, Thai scholars also define the meaning of family business as: the family business is a model of business to meet the demand on financial security of their family by using the "business" as a tool to promote members of family for their good living, good jobs and earning income (Nawaphol Viriyakulkit *et al*, 2009). That is to say that the business family means any business that mostly possessed by a family or occupy that firm's administration and control by more than 2 members of such family to directly involve with such business's administration, or in other words the family members who own such business will always participate in setting of that organization's goal, objective and strategy (Sanchai Tiawprasertkul, 2007). This agrees with the concept of Ampol Nawawongsatien (2010) suggested that the meaning of business family is a border that shows the business's ownership of the biggest family related by blood or by marriage and one or more members of the firm's executive are assigned by such family. There is a plan to hand on the business to the second or further generations, enough vote to control that business, setting policy and decision making on significant matters of such business.

In conclusion, family business is the business which some member of a family is a powerful person in its administration. The business is controlled by some member of that family including involved with setting of policies, objectives and significant matters as well as transferring power to next generation.

Components of Family Business

Ward (2005 cite Danai Thianphut, Dr., 2006) said that family business has 4 components:

1. **Family** who controls the business since the founders' generation.
2. **Business or Management** that is important and necessary for continuous changes or family business development.
3. **Individuality** or characteristics of family's leader who control the business.
4. **Ownership** this will be affected to strategy, culture, success and management.

Gersick, Lansberg, Davis and McCollum (1997:46) described in *Generation to Generation* that the systems theory is a theory used for describing that the business family is consisted of related components as family, management and ownership to organize a system.

In brief, the major components of family business has various components related to some parts as; ownership, business, family and management

affecting learning and transferring to the next generation.

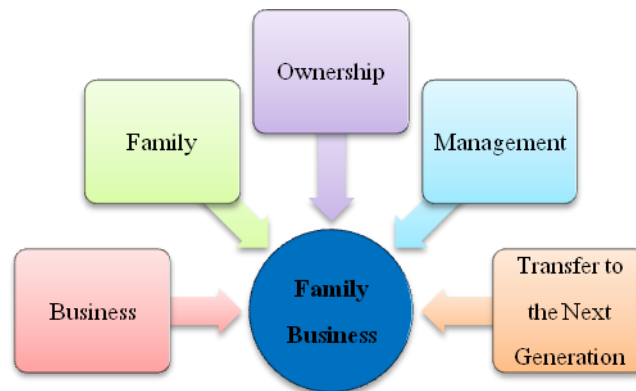


Figure 3: Components of Family Business

Cultural Heritage Tourism

The definition of **cultural heritage** has wide meaning and relationship between nature and human (UNESCO, 2011) because cultural heritage does not mean only tangible things such as ancient monuments and buildings or parks (Tangible Cultural Heritage) (Marilena Vecco, 2010) but also intangible things as skill, knowledge, ability of person and group of people as well as expressions of way of life, beliefs, traditions and etc. called “Intangible Cultural Heritage” (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2010). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO in 2003 divided the intangible cultural heritage into 5 types (UNESCO, 2003:(Article 2.1)):

1. Oral traditions and expressions including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
2. Performing arts.
3. Social practices, rituals and festive events.
4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.
5. Traditional craftsmanship.

Moreover, in the General Chapter, Article 2 of UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003 also stated that “Intangible Cultural Heritage” means practices, representation, and expression of knowledge, skills, instruments, materials, inventions and cultural areas resulted from those matters that community and in some case individuals accept them as a part of their cultural heritage.

From above study, it can state that the tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage affects each other because intangible culture in form of belief (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2009) including folkways that provided with their surrounding environments for long times. These often express and communicate in form of objects and inventions made by human that makes us be visible or touchable (Protection and Promotion of Cultural Heritage Bill B.E. 2556, 2013).

Hence, that is to say the Cultural Heritage Tourism means travelling for entertainment and studying knowledge in surrounding environments including things created by human as results of existing social life in ecosystem (Feilden and Jokilehto, 1993). This indicates the practice and expression of significant skills, knowledge, ability, performance arts, languages, traditions, festive events with unique cultures of each local

area. (Office of the National Culture Commission, 2009). These are creative developed, continually accumulated and applied to daily life between human and nature (The World Heritage Convention, 1972) as interaction of local people and nature as well as history in accordance with the environment and social of each group.

Handicrafts

Handicraft means creative works manually invented by human based on knowledge body, local wisdom and skill of craftsman that has been inherited from their ancestors for long times. Products of handicraft in the study areas in Ubon Ratchathani always express to the local culture, tradition and belief in the study areas. Moreover, raw materials were used for their products and can be found in their communities. Therefore, all handicrafts show their pattern of idea, skill and competency of people who create such handicrafts with different shapes and styles of each community. These come from cultural differences and tradition of those communities as well as value and belief that influences on the identity of handicrafts in each area. Mostly, the objective of handicraft creation is different depended on each craftsman.

Handicrafts are often manually produced by craftsmen with different styles and various materials of each community; it depends on forms of culture and inherited wisdom of their origins. Differences of culture in each community are caused by the environments of geography, economy, social, folklore, belief and religion. Expressions shown in handicraft arts of each cultural group can have its own original called as “Identity” (Panida Somprjob, 2011). This is interested as the representative or symbol of communities reflect cultural value of the community whose own handicraft arts inherited from their ancestors.

Therefore, handicraft is always placed importance of such invention on its functional value. If that thing has aesthetic value, art expression and temperamental expression, we would call it as “Handicraft Art”. In other words, if that handicraft is in form of abstract with structure pattern and material and also has its values caused by local characteristics, we would call it as “Local Handicraft Art”. Local handicraft is like as the reflector of differences of people in such native land as wisdom, knowledge body and skill inherited from generation to generation of local communities of the country.

Significance of Cultural Heritage Tourism in handicraft for Family Business

Tourism industry is regarded as the main industry for developing worldwide economic system. According to the forecast of World Travel & Tourism Council: WTTC in 2009 said that world travelling and tourism will increase and amount of tourist would raise up to 1.4 billion people around the world in 2020 (WTTC, 2009). This increased numbers of tourist makes many countries turn to pay attention to actually develop economic system tourism, focus on tourism for learning enhancement and study new knowledge for being deeply impressed by local wisdom, custom, tradition and culture (Chanadda Petchprayoon and Manop Chudin, 2009) as well as livelihood of community as tourism for learning more intangible cultural resources (Richards, 2010: 78-90). In many developing countries, they also more emphasize on the cultural tourism community, for instance, in Ethiopia there were up to 250,000 tourists in 2007 spending their money on purchasing of local handicraft products more than US\$ 50 during the times they were staying in tourism locations. This made people in those communities earn more income and overcome the poverty.

Moreover, Mozambique in Africa tourists spend their money for purchasing local handicraft at least US\$ 20, while in Kenya and Tanzania tourists spend their money at average US\$ 79 per head (IFC, 2006) for

handicrafts expressing culture of people in that community. It's not different with tourism economics in Luang Prabang, Laos that earns income from tourists who spend their money for purchasing local handicrafts up to US\$ 33 per head (Ashley, 2006).

Vietnam is another country that has its high potential in handicraft industry. We can see that population of Vietnam has its occupation in aspect of handicraft for 10 million people or one third of population. There are 1,500 handicraft villages and can selling handicraft products up to US\$ 3 billions (www.asiaseed.org, n.d.).

As a result of Thailand has the most economic system in form of the family business, the family business is regarded as a basic form of small-size economic system that drives businesses at national level. Value added economy is, therefore, needed to utilize the difference and dominance of strong cultural cost in local as a main part for leading to benefits in tourism and bringing about income for families. The utilizing of knowledge body, ways of life, arts, culture and wisdom of local handicraft, that has original identity as the selling point of products and services on local cultural products, should be placed on the first priority such as Pottery Community of Ban Dan Kwian, Chok Chai District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province can earn huge income for Nakhon Ratchasima Province more than 200 million Bahts per year and this is regarded as the main income of business sector and economic system in Nakhon Ratchasima Province (www.cm.nesdb.go.th, 2003). Results of utilizing local wisdom, with identity and high skill of craftsmen, make handicrafts have their changes of designing, molding and sculpturing products for meeting the demand of current market and cause the pottery business of Ban Dan Kwian Sub-district be well known both in domestic and foreign countries. In addition, there is an applying identity of natural resources available in community such as at Ban Yang Kham, Yang Kham Sub-district, Nong Ruea District, Khon Kaen Province. "Pai Tawan" wood, a type of bamboo with its identity of golden color, was used by changing in structure and styles of packaging, production and local wisdom inherited from their ancestors and adding with some adjustments for meeting usage that is in line with fashion as well increasing various appearances for multipurpose use makes handicrafts of the community be increasingly popular (www.thairath.co.th, 2013).

Conclusion

Under the current national development policy based on increasing income from tourism by supporting the development of valuable handicraft arts for creating identity of local cultural products, it should be considered that using of social and cultural cost as the strength of products to improve and integrate with existing resources and wisdom in producing products for tourism in accordance with the cultural heritage in good handicrafts of the country. It is accounted as a smart guide to develop local products by using existing resources, invaluable culture and natural cost that has their own identity for creating the selling point of products and services as an instrument to show the history and origin of local in Ubon Ratchathani. These induced tourists to learn such different cultural ways, whereas these changes or developments must give priority to the system of family business as a main economic system of the country in small level (scale) with its potential to promote local people for having their awareness in the resources of cultural capital in their own invaluable handicrafts as the owner of production's thought and wisdom. When the system of family business as a small-size economic system has already well-developed, it will be effected to economic security in larger scale as in national level. Finally, benefits of cultural heritage tourism in handicraft will not only affect to change income for family in form of measurable benefit, but also affect to national development as well as effects to cultural

heritage in those invaluable handicrafts to be reserved and inherited as the continued representative of local intelligence.

Future Work Guidelines for Transforming Family Business from Cultural Heritage Tourism in handicraft

Ubon Ratchathani Province has its reputation in cultural heritage on the craftsmanship of invaluable Thai handicrafts as an expression of the origin and history of Ubon Ratchathani Province. This indicates the identity of history, arts, archeology and culture of the province. Applying of local wisdom on unique handicrafts for transforming community products and developing in parallel with market demand, therefore, may be a guideline to properly promote family business from cultural heritage tourism in handicraft. Furthermore, the guidelines for transforming family business from cultural heritage tourism in handicraft are involved with all sectors related to tourism development that have to more participate in development processes as follows:

1. The government sector should have a policy for supporting producers in communities by providing them with trainings of skill development in handicraft of their communities.
2. Promoting of systematic management with efficiency and standard.
3. Promoting of using more local resources for enabling community to utilize existing resources for maximized profits.
4. Entrepreneurs should study trends on demand of current tourism market affecting communities.
5. Developing with modern styles, adding complex of production process and inserting more local cultural identity should be provided for counterfeit protection.
6. Field trips should be provided for communities that have development on their local products from tourism connected to their communities for more learning and experiences.

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