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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Management for Developing and Enhancing Nora Culture for Creative Tourism: A Case Study of Thakhae Community, Thailand

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study investigates the factors influencing the management to develop and enhance Nora culture to become a creative tourism destination, as Nora is an intangible cultural heritage of humanity. The study employed two methods of data collection. The first involved qualitative data; 20 respondents with a relationship with the Thakhae community were interviewed. Thematic analysis was applied to examine the responses. The second method utilized quantitative research, surveying 140 persons with a relationship with the community. A semi-structured survey questionnaire was administered, and the data were analyzed using SPSS. The qualitative findings identified various barriers to developing Nora culture, such as inadequate facilities. Moreover, ninety percent of respondents indicated that while the community believes in Nora culture, individuals need more time to contribute to its development due to their job commitments. Additionally, there needs to be more trust that investing time in developing Nora will yield returns. Eighty per cent of respondents expressed the view that the government should provide support in training, supervision, monitoring, and funding to aid in developing and enhancing Nora culture for creative tourism. Quantitative findings confirm that sub-themes fall under the main themes from qualitative discovery.

INTRODUCTION

Creative tourism offers an immersive and enriching experience, enabling tourists to engage in participatory activities that foster their creative potential. This form of tourism allows for a deep understanding of local communities' history, arts, culture, and unique lifestyles. The interaction with local people is not merely an exchange of services but a meaningful cultural exchange that enriches the tourists and the host community. As Marujo et al. (2021) pointed out, creative tourism transcends mere economic transactions, highlighting the intrinsic community values and the preservation of local culture.

Furthermore, the global marketplace increasingly values unique cultural experiences. Embracing and showcasing local culture in tourism not only

strengthens community identity but also provides a competitive edge in the international tourism industry (Gato et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020). A prime example is the Thakhae community in Thailand, which has distinguished itself through its rich historical tapestry, particularly its renowned "Nora" dance drama. This traditional art form, recognized by the Intergovernmental Committee for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage: ICS-ICH (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, 2023), embodies the community's heritage. The "Nora Rong Khru" dance, a captivating fusion of artistic expression and faith, is a cornerstone of the community's identity and a crucial medium for the intergenerational transfer of cultural knowledge. This cultural asset attracts tourists and boosts local income, as Ketkaew and Nopudomphan (2021) and Khaenamkhaew et al. (2023) noted.

Despite these advantages, challenges remain in elevating Nora culture as a centrepiece of creative tourism. This study aims to address these challenges and explore potential avenues for development.

This research, titled "Management for developing and enhancing Nora culture for creative tourism: A case study of Thakhae community, Thailand," holds substantial theoretical significance in creative tourism and cultural preservation. It ventures beyond the conventional understanding of tourism as an economic activity, delving into the intricate interplay between cultural heritage, community engagement, and sustainable tourism management. The study's focus on the Nora culture, a vital element of Thailand's intangible cultural heritage, aligns with the growing scholarly discourse emphasizing the preservation of local cultures in the face of globalization (Gato et al., 2022; Marujo et al., 2021). This research contributes to the expanding body of literature on creative tourism, a concept that has gained traction for its emphasis on immersive and participatory experiences (Richards, 2019). By exploring the Nora culture's integration into the tourism sector, the study offers insights into how creative tourism can be a vehicle for cultural preservation and community empowerment. The research bridges the gap between cultural conservation and tourism management. While the literature has extensively documented the benefits of tourism in promoting cultural Heritage (Wang et al., 2020), there is a lack of studies focusing on the management strategies that can effectively harness these benefits. This study, therefore, provides a critical analysis of the management approaches necessary for sustaining and enhancing the Nora culture within the tourism framework. By examining the Thakhae community's approach to integrating Nora culture into tourism, the study offers a model for sustainable tourism development. It provides a framework for other communities with unique cultural assets to develop tourism in a way that not only boosts economic prospects but also safeguards cultural heritage and fosters community pride.

The complexity of transforming a community into a tourism hotspot is evident from past research. Haller (2023) and Ilkhanizadeh et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of enhancing facilities to support tourism. Singgalen et al. (2019) argue for greater community involvement, while Liu et al. (2020) highlight the critical role of government support in fostering tourism development. While these factors have been extensively studied in various contexts, there is a notable gap in research specifically focused on developing Nora culture in the realm of creative tourism within Thailand, particularly in the Thakhae community. The Nora dance drama, a vital aspect of the Thakhae community's cultural heritage, faces the risk of diminishing relevance in the face of modernization and global cultural influences (Nilson and Thorell, 2018). This research explores how this rich cultural tradition can be preserved, promoted, and integrated into the creative tourism framework, ensuring its survival and continued relevance. The development of creative tourism centred around Nora culture has the potential to contribute to the local economy significantly. The community can generate sustainable income streams by attracting tourists interested in immersive cultural experiences (Petrova, 2022). This research aims to identify strategies that balance economic development with preserving cultural integrity and sustainability. Engaging the local community in developing and managing creative tourism activities can lead to empowerment (Purworini et al., 2023). This research explores ways the community can actively participate and benefit from tourism, thereby improving their livelihoods and sense of ownership over their cultural heritage. There

is a growing global trend towards experiential and cultural tourism. This research is needed to position the Thakhae community and its Nora culture as a unique destination that caters to these evolving tourist preferences, thereby ensuring competitiveness in the global tourism market. Existing literature and studies have yet to extensively explore the potential of Nora culture in the context of creative tourism in Thailand (Arumugam et al., 2023). This research aims to fill this gap by providing empirical data and insights that can inform academic understanding and practical strategies for developing Nora culture as a tourism attraction. The findings of this research could provide valuable insights for policymakers and tourism planners. It can help create policies and strategies that support the sustainable development of creative tourism while ensuring the conservation of intangible cultural heritage. Understanding the elements that make Nora culture appealing to tourists and how to present it effectively can significantly enhance the visitor experience. This research identifies these elements and proposes ways to integrate them into creative tourism offerings. By promoting Nora culture within the tourism sector, there is an opportunity for cultural exchange on a global scale. This research can provide insights into how such exchanges can be facilitated, promoting mutual understanding and respect among different cultures.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:
- Gather in-depth information about developing Nora culture for creative tourism in the Thakhae community.
- Explore the perspectives and experiences of community leaders, representatives, entrepreneur network members, and relevant agencies regarding Nora culture and creative tourism.
- Understand how Nora cultural preservation is carried out in the community.
- Identify the roles and contributions of individuals and entities in caring for tourists visiting Nora culture.
- Examine the challenges faced in developing Nora culture for creative tourism.
- Assess the government support to the Thakhae community for creative tourism development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism, as a form of recreation during leisure time, involves the act of travelling from one location to another, often transitioning from one's place of residence to a tourist destination, thereby seeking a change of environment (Sharpley, 2020; Viglia and Dolnicar, 2020). Tourism revolves around activities requiring individuals to temporarily move away from their usual residence for purposes other than monetary gain (Streimikiene et al., 2021). It encompasses voluntary and satisfying travel experiences such as leisure trips, cultural exchanges, educational pursuits, family visits, and more, excluding professional or income-generating endeavours (Olya and Taheri, 2022; Viglia and Dolnicar, 2020).

Furthermore, tourism management pertains to the skilful administration of tourism operations within a specific environment, guided by principles, theories, and concepts to attain predefined objectives efficiently (Chi et al., 2019; Dewi et al., 2017; Olya and Taheri, 2022; Wei et al., 2021).

Cultural tourism, a unique facet of travel, explores history and culture by emphasizing intellectual enrichment, creativity, and respectful engagement with various aspects of culture, heritage, and local lifestyles (Trdina and Turnšek, 2020; Vergori and Arima, 2020; Rijal, 2016). It involves travellers seeking distinctive experiences that revolve around the local populace's way of life and cultural traditions (Debeş, 2020; Marasco, 2020). Cultural tourism is an intentional and motivated endeavour driven by the desire to immerse oneself in a culture distinct from one's own (McKercher, 2020; Ponsignon and Derbaix, 2020).

Central to cultural tourism is recognizing the significance and value of history, religion, traditions, and ancient practices handed down through generations. This includes exploration of ancient sites, relics, communities, lifestyles, spiritual beliefs, languages, traditional medicines, and local cuisine, among other elements (Eide and Mossberg, 2019; Ruhanen and Whitford, 2021). Moreover, cultural tourism necessitates mutual respect for the cultures encountered during travel, establishing a symbiotic relationship between the visiting tourists and the local communities (Lak et al., 2020; Ruhanen and Whitford,

2021). It harnesses local culture as a valuable resource for its operations while simultaneously contributing to the economic growth and social development of the communities involved, notably through employment opportunities (Tien et al., 2021). One of the distinctive characteristics of cultural tourism is its emphasis on historical preservation (Eide and Mossberg, 2019; Lee and Xue, 2020). It strives to ensure that local communities partake in and benefit from tourism's economic, social, and environmental aspects while minimizing any negative impact on the environment and its resources (Duxbury et al., 2022; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2022).

Nora, a traditional dance drama deeply rooted in Thai culture, holds significant cultural importance, with a history dating back to at least the 19th century. The evolution of Nora has transformed it into a legendary art form. The term "Nora" derives from colloquial usage, simplifying the syllables of the Southern dialect. Nora encompasses a range of activities, including singing, dancing, storytelling, and occasionally, performances rooted in ritualistic beliefs such as Nora Rong Khru or the Ghost-Flogging dance, which involves stepping on a snowball. Although concrete historical evidence is lacking, it is believed that Nora has existed alongside the emergence of the southern region. The Nora dance is traditionally performed as a tribute to deities and ancestors and continues to be practised today. Presently, Nora Rong Khru remains a vibrant tradition, predominantly found in the southern provinces of Thailand, including Nakhon Si Thammarat, Trang, Phatthalung, and Songkhla (Kamlangkuea and Yussayotha, 2023; Ketkaew and Nopudomphan, 2021).

Creative tourism has emerged as a novel alternative to travel (Gato et al., 2022; Tanveer et al., 2018). This form of tourism enables travellers to explore and unleash their creative potential by engaging in experiential learning activities tailored to the unique characteristics of their chosen destination (Duxbury and Richards, 2019; Duxbury et al., 2020; Galvagno and Giaccone, 2019). Creative tourism represents a contemporary trend in tourism, promoting meaningful interactions and conversations (Carvalho et al., 2023; Jam et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2020). Leveraging local resources and facilities generates income and benefits shared among all stakeholders, thereby creating value within the tourism ecosystem (Suhartanto et al., 2020). This form of tourism often takes the form of structured activities that involve learning and experiences tied to the community, facilitating participation and interaction between tourists and residents from diverse cultures (Blapp and Mitas, 2020; Bertella and Rinaldi, 2020; Richards, 2019).

The study by Khaenamkhaew et al. (2023) revealed that community participation, problem analysis, cause analysis, and solution selection facilitated the development of a framework to address community needs. Participation in the study of plans and their implementation organized a learning process for participants, leading to community learning and expanding professional networks. Sharing mutual benefits and involvement in evaluations marked the final stage of the learning process. The study created a new framework called the CNHCEA model, which includes components such as cultural capital, natural capital, human capital, the co-practice implementation of the sufficiency economy philosophy, the expansion of networks, and the analysis of problems and successes.

A study by Promnil (2022) revealed that Community-Based Tourism (CBT) follows a Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC), and destinations go through various stages, resulting in changes in social, environmental, and economic aspects. CBT initiatives should be prepared to adapt to these changes at each stage. This paper focuses on adapting the creative tourism concept to develop cultural tourism villages during stagnation. During the stagnation stage, creative tourism activities should be rooted in local culture and possess unique and auspicious characteristics, aesthetic appeal, functional purposes, and simplicity. Experiential learning is a valuable method for developing local creators during the stagnation stage of cultural tourism villages.

The study by Doyle and Kelliherr (2023) focuses on co-creating experiential value between tourists and tour guides at Huntingdon Castle, Ireland. The research emphasizes storytelling as a critical engagement platform and a strategic resource for enhancing value in the tourism experience. The study explores how storytelling propels the value of the co-creation journey and significantly shapes the tourist's overall

experience. Findings highlight the importance of storytelling as a means of value co-creation, examining how the performance of stories influences tourists' pleasure and perceived value. The research considers the influence of the environment or the historic site as a factor affecting the co-creation process and the overall experience for tourists. The study captures insights from tour guides and tourists, providing a comprehensive view of how co-creation occurs and how both parties feel and think during the experience. This research takes a practical operational view of the co-creation process, going beyond the guide's perspective and emphasizing the importance of co-creating lived experiences within the context of story-enhanced tourism.

According to a study by Shamto (2023), many consumers are becoming weary of encountering similar or serial reproductions of culture in different tourist destinations. This has led to a search for alternatives to conventional cultural tourism experiences. The rise of skilled consumption is observed, emphasizing the importance of tourists actively participating in and contributing to their travel experiences. Identity formation is crucial in (post)modern society, and tourists seek experiences that contribute to their personal identity and cultural capital. Creativity emerges as an alternative to traditional cultural tourism. Creative spaces, spectacles, and tourism experiences respond to the demand for unique and authentic cultural encounters. The research examines the development of creative tourism from both the supply and demand perspectives, emphasizing the need for creativity in creating new tourism products. The challenge of serial reproduction of culture in different destinations is acknowledged, and the paper discusses how creativity can address this challenge by offering fresh and original experiences. The research provides examples of creative tourism projects, contrasting them with traditional models of cultural tourism. These examples illustrate the innovative approaches to providing tourists with unique and meaningful cultural experiences.

A study by Lee-Anant et al. (2023) found that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the stability and trustworthiness of Thailand's tourism industry, which is a crucial economic generator for the country. The show business industry, a component of Thai tourism, plays a vital role in attracting both quality multinational tourists and indirectly establishing 'soft power' through its performances. The data analysis yielded 10 significant strategies aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the show business industry in Thailand. These strategies are designed to leverage Thailand's cultural strengths and capitalize on its readiness to serve as a cultural exporter. These findings underscore the potential for Thailand's show business industry to recover from the pandemic's impacts and thrive as a cultural export and creative economy driver in the 'New Normal' era.

RESEARCH METHODS

Population
The population of interest in this study includes individuals and entities relevant to developing Nora culture for creative tourism in the Thakhae community, Pattalung province, in the southern part of Thailand. This population comprises community leaders, representatives, entrepreneur network members, and other relevant agencies involved in tourism development.

Sample
The sample for this study was selected using purposive sampling, which means that participants were intentionally chosen based on their relevance to the research objectives. The qualitative sample consisted of 20 personally interviewed respondents, while the quantitative sample included 140 respondents who completed questionnaires.

Data collection
The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Qualitative data was gathered through personal interviews with 20 relevant respondents, while quantitative data was collected through questionnaires administered to 140 respondents. The interviews and questionnaires were designed to address the research objectives and were conducted in the Thakhae community in Thailand.

Data analysis
The qualitative data obtained from personal interviews underwent Thematic Analysis (TA). Thematic analysis is a flexible approach to identifying, evaluating, and reporting themes within collected data. The analysis focused on themes and sub-

themes related to the perspectives and experiences of the respondents in the Thakhae community. The analytical process involved coding key concepts and themes derived directly from the data. The researchers used an inductive method, allowing themes to emerge from the data rather than imposing preconceived ideas.

Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using statistical techniques appropriate for Likert scale data. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores and percentages, were likely employed to summarize the responses and identify trends or patterns in the data. However, specific statistical procedures should have been mentioned in the provided text. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that identifies, analyses, and reports patterns or themes within a dataset. It is a flexible and systematic approach used to explore and understand qualitative data's rich and complex content, such as interviews, focus groups, or textual documents. Thematic analysis allows researchers to uncover recurring ideas, concepts, or patterns of meaning in the data, providing valuable insights into the research topic.

Here is a step-by-step guide to conducting thematic analysis:

Data familiarization: Researchers begin by becoming familiar with the qualitative data through repeated readings or listening to audio recordings. This step helps gain an overall understanding of the data's content and context.

Initial coding: Researchers create initial codes by identifying and labelling meaningful data segments. Codes are often short phrases or keywords that capture the essence of the data. During this phase, codes are applied to relevant sections of the data.

Generating themes: Codes are grouped based on similarities and patterns, forming preliminary themes. Researchers identify connections between codes and develop potential themes that reflect the underlying concepts in the data.

Reviewing themes: Researchers review and refine the identified themes to ensure they accurately represent the data. Themes should be distinct, coherent, and relevant to the research objectives.

Defining and naming themes: Each theme is clearly defined and given a descriptive name that reflects its content. Researchers write detailed descriptions for each theme to provide context and meaning.

Data extraction: Relevant data excerpts or quotes that support each theme are extracted and compiled. These excerpts serve as evidence to illustrate and support the identified themes.

Checking for patterns: Researchers analyze the relationships between themes and explore how they relate to the research questions or objectives. They also examine any variations or sub-themes within the main themes.

Writing the narrative: The final step involves writing a coherent and comprehensive narrative or report that presents the themes supported by quotes or data excerpts. The narrative should provide an in-depth exploration of each theme and its implications for the research.

Data validation: Researchers may engage in member checking or peer debriefing to validate the findings with participants or colleagues, enhancing the trustworthiness of the analysis.

Interpretation and conclusion: Researchers interpret the meaning and significance of the themes in the research context. They conclude and discuss the implications of the findings for the broader research objectives or theoretical framework.

Analysis software

The empirical data collected through survey questionnaires were analyzed using the Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Factor loadings and reliability

The study assessed the mean, standard deviation, factor loading, and reliability of 140 responses. The factor loading for facilities ranged from 0.778 to 0.872, with a cronbach's alpha value of 0.805. For the participation of people in the community, factor loadings ranged from 0.852 to 0.884, with a cronbach's alpha value of 0.834. The factor loading for government support ranged from 0.813 to 0.865, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.787. All factor loadings exceeded the standard of 0.5, indicating their reliability, and cronbach's alpha values were above 0.7, demonstrating content reliability.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic profile of interview respondents

No.	Gender	Educational Level	Relationships in the Community
1	Man	Higher Secondary	Community Leaders
2	Woman	Bachelor's Degree	Community Leaders
3	Woman	Higher Secondary	Community Leaders
4	Man	Bachelor's Degree	Community Representatives
5	Woman	Higher Secondary	Community Representatives
6	Woman	Diploma	Community Representatives
7	Man	Diploma	Community Representatives
8	Man	Bachelor's Degree	Experts from the Office of Tourism and Sports Promotion
9	Woman	Postgraduate Degree	Experts from the Office of Tourism and Sports Promotion
10	Woman	Bachelor's Degree	Experts from the Office of Tourism and Sports Promotion
11	Man	Diploma	Local Employees
12	Man	Diploma	Local Employees
13	Man	Higher Secondary	Local Employees
14	Woman	Bachelor's Degree	Entrepreneur Network
15	Woman	Bachelor's Degree	Entrepreneur Network
16	Man	Higher Secondary	Entrepreneur Network
17	Man	Higher Secondary	Other Agencies
18	Woman	Bachelor's Degree	Other Agencies
19	Woman	Higher Secondary	Other Agencies
20	Man	Diploma	Other Agencies

The results of this study, which aimed to manage, develop, and enhance Nora culture for creative tourism in the Thakhae community in Thailand, are summarized as follows:

Qualitative findings

Respondents' profiles

The study included a diverse group of respondents, with an equal distribution of men and women (50% each). Educational backgrounds varied, with 35% having a higher secondary education, 5% holding a diploma, 35% having a bachelor's degree, and 1% holding a postgraduate degree. Respondents represented various community roles, including community leaders (15%), community representatives (20%), experts from the Office of Tourism and Sports Promotion (15%), local employees (15%), entrepreneur network members (15%), and representatives from other agencies (20%).

Insufficiency of facilities

Ninety per cent of respondents identified the insufficiency of facilities as a significant hindrance to developing Nora culture for creative tourism. They highlighted the need for accommodation, transportation services, and restaurants in the Thakhae community as challenges tourists face.

This aligns with prior research indicating that the availability of facilities is crucial for developing a tourism attraction.

Community participation

While many people in the Thakhae community believe in Nora culture, ninety percent of respondents mentioned having limited time to contribute to its development due to their livelihood commitments. Some expressed scepticism about earning from helping the community develop Nora culture for creative tourism. Suggestions were made to incorporate cultural preservation education at the family and school levels, emphasizing the importance of community participation in tourism development.

Government support

Eighty percent of respondents reported that the government provided training and monitoring for tourist treatment and Nora culture development within the community. Some respondents suggested the government should allocate additional funding to support these initiatives. This aligns with findings from other studies highlighting the government's role in guiding rural tourism development.

Quantitative findings

These findings suggest that the Thakhae community needs more facilities for tourists, limited community

participation due to livelihood commitments, and government support in developing Nora culture for creative tourism. The study provides valuable insights into the factors affecting the management and enhancement of Nora culture in the context of creative tourism.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation, factor loading and reliability of themes and sub-themes of respondents

Themes	Sub-Themes	Mean (n = 140)	*S.D.*	Factor Loading	Cronbach Alpha Value
Facilities	Thakhae communication provided clean and safe accommodations to the tourists.	3.35	2.23	0.778	0.805
	There is transportation to go in and out of Thakhae communication quickly.			0.872	
	There are local restaurants at Thakhae Communication that provide good tasting and are inexpensive to tourists.			0.812	
Participation of People in the Community	People in the community perceive the importance of helping to preserve Nora culture .	3.97	2.07	0.852	0.834
	People in the community being good hosts in welcoming tourists to learn Nora culture.			0.884	
Government Support	Government agencies always support organizing training and new knowledge related to creative tourism.	4.54	2.49	0.865	0.787
	Government agencies continuously send representatives to monitor and supervise Nora culture development at Thakhae community.			0.813	
	The community receives financial support from the government to continue its activities to develop Nora Thakhae to be a creative tourist destination.			0.832	

The table provides an overview of each theme's themes, sub-themes, mean scores, Standard Deviations (S.D.), factor loadings, and cronbach alpha values. These statistics are derived from a survey conducted with 140 respondents.

Facilities theme

Thakhae communication provided clean and safe accommodation to the tourists: The mean score for this sub-theme is 3.35, with a standard deviation of 2.23. The factor loading is 0.778, indicating a moderate association with the Facilities theme. The cronbach alpha value for this theme is 0.805, suggesting good internal consistency.

There is transportation to go in and out of Thakhae communication quickly: The mean score for this sub-theme is not provided, but it has a high factor loading of 0.872, indicating a strong association with the Facilities theme. There are local restaurants at Thakhae Communication that provide good taste and are inexpensive to tourists. The mean score for this sub-theme is not provided, but it has a substantial factor loading of 0.812, indicating a significant association with the Facilities theme.

Participation of people in the community theme

People in the community perceive the importance and help to preserve Nora culture: The mean score for this sub-theme is 3.97, with a standard deviation of 2.07. The factor loading is 0.852, indicating a moderate to strong association with the Participation of People in the community theme. The cronbach alpha value for this theme is 0.834, suggesting good internal consistency.

People in the community are good hosts in welcoming tourists to learn Nora culture. The mean score for this sub-theme is not provided. Still, it has a high factor loading of 0.884, indicating a strong association with the Participation of People in the community theme.

Government support theme

Government agencies always support organizing training and new knowledge related to creative tourism. The mean score for this sub-theme is 4.54, with a standard deviation of 2.49. The factor loading is 0.865, indicating a strong association with the government support theme. The cronbach alpha value for this theme is 0.787, suggesting good internal consistency.

Government agencies continuously send representatives to monitor and supervise Nora cultural development in the Thakhae community. The mean score for this sub-theme is not provided, but it has a substantial factor loading of 0.813, indicating a significant association with the government support theme.

The community receives financial support from the government to continue its activities to develop Nora Thakhae into a creative tourist destination. The mean score for this sub-theme is not provided, but it has a substantial factor loading of 0.832, indicating a significant association with the government support theme.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this comprehensive study employing both qualitative and quantitative methods reveal several critical insights into developing and enhancing Nora culture, particularly the Nora drama dance, for creative tourism in the Thakhae community, Thailand. These findings are supported by justifications here based on the data collected. The qualitative interviews highlighted a consensus among community members about the need for more adequate tourist facilities, such as accommodations, transportation services, and local restaurants. This deficiency poses significant challenges to developing Nora culture for creative tourism. The justification for this finding lies in the direct impact these facilities have on the tourist experience. Adequate infrastructure is crucial for attracting and accommodating tourists, which supports cultural tourism initiatives' economic viability. Despite recognizing the importance of Nora culture, especially the dance performances, community members need help actively participating in its development. These challenges are primarily due to time constraints and scepticism about the economic benefits.

The justification here is rooted in the need for community involvement in cultural preservation. Active participation ensures authenticity and helps pass down cultural practices but requires time investment and confidence in economic returns. The study acknowledges the significant role of government support in providing training, knowledge, and monitoring for the development of creative tourism. However, it also suggests additional financial support to promote Nora culture , including its drama dance. The justification for enhancing government support is based on the premise that cultural tourism development often requires initial investment and expertise that local communities may need more. Government involvement can provide necessary resources and create a supportive cultural preservation and tourism development environment. The quantitative survey results corroborate the qualitative findings, emphasizing the need to improve facilities, increase community participation, and enhance government support. The justification for these findings comes from the survey's broader representation of community opinions, lending statistical weight to the qualitative insights. This comprehensive data collection strengthens the argument for targeted interventions in infrastructure, community engagement, and government policy to enhance the potential of Nora culture for creative tourism in Thakhae.

The findings of this comprehensive study, which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, shed light on critical aspects of developing and enhancing Nora culture for creative tourism in the Thakhae community, Thailand. Comparatively, Khaenamkhaew et al. (2023) study focused on community participation and problem analysis, culminating in the CNHCEA model to address community needs, emphasizing cultural, natural, and human capital and the sufficiency economy philosophy. Khaenamkhaew et al. (2023) focus on community participation aligns with the present study's findings regarding the necessity of engaging community members in developing and enhancing Nora culture. The CNHCEA model's emphasis on involving community members in addressing local needs echoes present findings on the challenges faced by the Thakhae community due to limited

participation in Nora culture development. Promnil (2022) research centred on adapting creative tourism to cultural villages during stagnation stages, highlighting the importance of local culture, unique experiences, and experiential learning, which may include performances like the Nora drama dance. Promnil's emphasis on the significance of local culture in creative tourism aligns with the present study's focus on Nora culture and its vital role in creative tourism in the Thakhae community. Both studies recognize the value of unique cultural elements in attracting tourists and enhancing the tourism experience. The focus on unique experiences and experiential learning, such as performances like the Nora drama dance, is consistent with the present research's findings.

Doyle and Kelliher (2023) study explored storytelling's role in co-creating experiential value at Huntingdon Castle, emphasizing its significance in shaping the tourist experience, which could also apply to the immersive experience of Noradrama dance performances. Both studies underscore the importance of unique cultural elements in enhancing the tourist experience. Doyle and Kelliher focus on storytelling at Huntingdon Castle, while the present study centres on the Nora drama dance. The common thread is using distinctive cultural practices to enrich the visitor experience. At the same time, while Doyle and Kelliher's study focuses on storytelling, present research emphasizes dance performance. This contrast highlights the diverse forms of cultural expression that can be utilized in creative tourism, expanding how cultural heritage can be presented and experienced. Shamto (2023) study addressed the shift towards creative tourism as an alternative to conventional cultural tourism, emphasizing the demand for unique, authentic, and creative experiences, including dance performances like Noradrama. Shamto (2023) research supports and potentially broadens the implications of the present findings. The emphasis on unique, authentic, and creative experiences, including cultural performances like the Nora drama, aligns with the present study's focus on enhancing Nora culture for creative tourism. Additionally, Shamto's insights into the evolving dynamics of tourist demands and preferences could offer valuable guidance for further developing and

marketing Nora culture as a critical component of creative tourism in the Thakhae community. Lee-Anant et al. (2023) study highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Thailand's tourism industry, outlining strategies to enhance the competitiveness of the show business industry for cultural export and creative economy development, potentially including Nora drama dance performances. Lee-Anant et al. (2023) research supports and extends the implications of the present study's findings by emphasizing the importance of cultural elements like Nora drama in tourism and creative economy development, especially in the face of global challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Their focus on resilience, adaptation, and innovation offers additional perspectives for enhancing the competitiveness and appeal of Nora culture in the tourism sector.

Practical and theoretical implications

The findings highlight the need for improved tourist facilities, accommodations, transportation services, and dining options in the Thakhae community. Practical steps such as developing lodging options, enhancing transportation connectivity, and supporting local restaurants can significantly boost tourism and creative economy development. Encouraging the active participation of community members in preserving and promoting Nora culture, including the enchanting Nora drama dance, is essential. Educational initiatives at family and school levels can contribute to this engagement. This can lead to a stronger sense of cultural identity and collective responsibility. Recognizing the role of government agencies in providing training, knowledge, and monitoring for creative tourism, increasing financial support can further accelerate Nora culture's development. Government intervention can also be crucial in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Several strategies can be implemented to foster individual participation in Nora culture amidst job commitments. These include offering flexible participation options like weekend workshops and evening classes to accommodate diverse schedules and providing incentives and recognition for involvement. Organizing community events focused on Nora culture can also encourage engagement. Local businesses can be motivated

to incorporate Nora culture into their operations, providing a daily connection to the heritage. Online platforms and resources offer accessible ways for individuals to learn about and engage with Nora culture conveniently. Additionally, volunteer programs can be tailored to individual availability and skills, allowing for varied contributions.

Government support is crucial in promoting and sustaining Nora culture within creative tourism. This involves financial assistance for cultural activities and training programs, infrastructure development for showcasing Nora culture , and educational initiatives in schools and community centres. The government's Marketing and promotional efforts can increase Nora culture 's visibility. Partnerships between the government, local communities, and the private sector are vital for developing sustainable tourism models incorporating Nora culture. Supportive policy frameworks are essential, including tax incentives for Nora culture-supportive businesses and responsible tourism practices.

The research underscores the significance of cultural tourism and the challenges involved in harnessing cultural assets for tourism development. It contributes to the theoretical understanding of how communities can leverage their cultural heritage to attract tourists. The shift towards creative tourism as an alternative to conventional cultural tourism is a significant theoretical development. It aligns with the evolving preferences of tourists seeking unique and authentic experiences, including artistic performances like the Nora drama dance.

Limitations and future directions

The qualitative sample size in this study was relatively small (20 respondents). While valuable insights were gained, a more extensive and diverse sample could provide a more comprehensive understanding of community perspectives. Findings are specific to the Thakhae community in Thailand and may not directly apply to other regions or cultural contexts. Future research should explore Nora culture in various settings to enhance generalizability. Interviews were conducted in the local language when necessary, potentially introducing language-related biases or limitations in interpreting responses. The study relied on a single quantitative survey to gather data. Future

research could benefit from a more extensive range of quantitative methods and data sources.

Researchers may conduct comparative studies between Nora culture in different Thai communities to identify regional variations and unique features. This can expand the understanding of Nora culture's potential in creative tourism. Long-term studies tracking the evolution of Nora culture and its impact on creative tourism can provide insights into sustainability and adaptation over time. Explore strategies for preserving Nora culture, including the Nora drama dance, while enhancing its appeal for creative tourism. This could involve collaborations between communities, artists, and tourism stakeholders. Investigate the effectiveness of government policies and interventions in promoting creative tourism and cultural preservation. Evaluate the outcomes of increased financial support and training programs. Future research can delve deeper into understanding the tourist experience related to Nora culture, including the role of storytelling, engagement with local communities, and the impact of cultural performances like the Nora drama dance on visitor satisfaction. Given the ongoing pandemic's influence on tourism, assess cultural tourism's long-term effects and recovery strategies, including the show business industry and performances like Nora Dance.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this comprehensive examination of various studies sheds light on critical aspects of cultural development and creative tourism, explicitly focusing on Nora culture, including the captivating Nora drama dance, in the Thakhae community of Thailand. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, these studies provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in harnessing cultural heritage for tourism and creative economic development.

Qualitative interviews with community members reveal common concerns about inadequate tourist facilities, including accommodations, transportation services, and dining options, hindering the development of Nora culture, particularly the enchanting Nora drama dance, as a creative

tourism attraction. Despite recognizing the cultural importance of Nora, community members need help to actively participate due to time constraints and doubts about economic benefits. Government support is recognized for providing training, knowledge, and monitoring for creative tourism, with some respondents suggesting additional financial support to bolster Nora culture's development.

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