

Strategy Management of Thai Kite Art and Cultural Revitalization and Preservation by the Participation of the Laksi Communities, Bangkok, Thailand

Asst. Prof. Dr.Sarunporn^a, C. Pongsrirojana^b

^a Faculty of Business Administration, Krirk University
sarunporn11@hotmail.com

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Abstract: The objectives of this research were to 1) investigate the body of knowledge of Thai kite art and culture, 2) investigate the community participation of Thai kite art and culture restoration and preservation, and 3) analyze strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of community people Laksi District, Bangkok. This research was a community-based research (CBR). The research methodology was mixed methods approach: qualitative and quantitative research design. The results showed that Laksi Thai kites had distinctive identity. Regarding the community participation, they did not participate in any Thai kite art and culture programs. The wisdom owners of the local Thai kite art and culture preserved their art and culture themselves without any support from the public sectors in Laksi District. The art of kite-making was gradually disappearing, despite the fact that its identity had been in the community for a long time. Besides, the majority of the community people intended to participate in the restoration and preservation of Laksi Thai kite art and culture programs. Moreover, the results of the analysis of the strategy management revealed that there were attempts of having the cooperative learning with the community in all phases: initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluating, and receiving benefits. In order to establish the community participation, it was necessary to have well-accepted leader in the community; public sectors to facilitate activities, and networks in all sectors.

Keywords: Strategy Management; Revitalization and Preservation; Thai kites; Participation

1. Introduction

“Kite” is one of the works of art resulted from the wisdom of Thai craftsman who uses the natural resources to create the playthings for children or the recreational equipment for people in all region. It also shows the identity of the Thai arts and culture that is passed on from generation to generation. The kite from each community and region has each own distinctive identity. Laksi Thai kites, for example, has its own features. At present, the art of Laksi kite-making is gradually disappearing since the kite-flying is less popular, and the lack of kite-making inheritors, therefore, the community members and the youth in the area lack opportunity to participate in the preservation project. Despite the fact that its identity has been in the community for a long time, as it is stated in the slogan of Laksi District that “Beautiful Laksi Temple, Thai Kite-Making site, Favorite Khon Masks, Good Looking Laksi District.” However, the historical background of Laksi Thai art and culture, especially Laksi Thai kites which has distinctive identity is disappearing because it lacks the inheritor. Besides, the community members and the youth in the area have no opportunity to learn. Thus, Laksi Thai kite art and culture remains only in the slogan of Laksi District. This research aims to find out the strategy management model of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of Laksi District communities, Bangkok, Thailand, and to enable Laksi Thai kite art and culture in creating the community sustainable worthiness and economic value in various dimensions.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this research article were to 1) investigate the body of knowledge of Thai kite art and culture, 2) investigate the community participation of Thai kite art and culture restoration and preservation, and 3) analyze strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of community people Laksi District, Bangkok.

3. Research Method

A. Research Design

This research was a community-based research (CBR). The research methodology was mixed methods approach: qualitative and quantitative research design. The research design was as follows:

1) Project participatory conference. It helped the planners

to build up an understanding of the context in which the involved people, these were: the cultural networks, Laksi District officers, other involved agencies, and the research team participated in the conference. The

conference provided suggestion, and support from the community members, and the stakeholders. It also served as the arena for exchanging ideas, revising, analyzing data and planning for the operation.

2) Monthly research team meeting. It helped the team to build up an understanding to achieve goals periodically. Besides, the meeting served as the place for exchanging ideas, reviewing, and analyzing the activities consecutively.

3) Focus group discussion. It enabled the community to find out the community body of knowledge and the kite-making art and culture from different points of view apart from the wisdom owner.

4) Survey. The survey was conducted to receive the background data of the community and the kite-making art and culture. The data included the history, attractions and art and culture of Laksi community.

5) Interview guides. The interviews were conducted to key informants, casual informants, and community sector informants to find out the community body of knowledge, Laksi kite art and culture, the present condition of the Laksi kite art and culture revitalization and preservation by Laksi community participation. The in-depth interviews used the divergent interviewing method of the wisdom owner for the details of the body of knowledge of Laksi kite art and culture and for the participation of the community members in revitalization and preservation of Laksi kite art and culture.

6) Questionnaire. The closed-ended form of questionnaire was used. The population of 105,588 people [7]. The research population determined by the Taro Yamane's sample size and accidental sampling method were 400 people. The questionnaire was constructed to acquire the need of participation in the strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation in six phases, starting from initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluating and receiving benefits. Then the interval scale was used and the data was analyzed by arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

7) Observation. The participatory observation and the non-participatory observation were used to observe and the data were collected and recorded in the Observation Record Form.

8) Data collection. The data of the Laksi kite art and cultural sites, including the meeting with the people in the area about the problems and the strategy management approach for art and cultural revitalization and preservation were collected.

9) Study tours. The research team had made study tours to the area accomplishing in the similar issues of the art and cultural revitalization and preservation. This created better understanding in the operation and received the lesson learned from these study tours to use in the research site.

B. Research Process

This research used a participatory study process to analyze the strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of the Laksi community, Bangkok, Thailand. The steps of this participatory research process were shown in Fig. 1

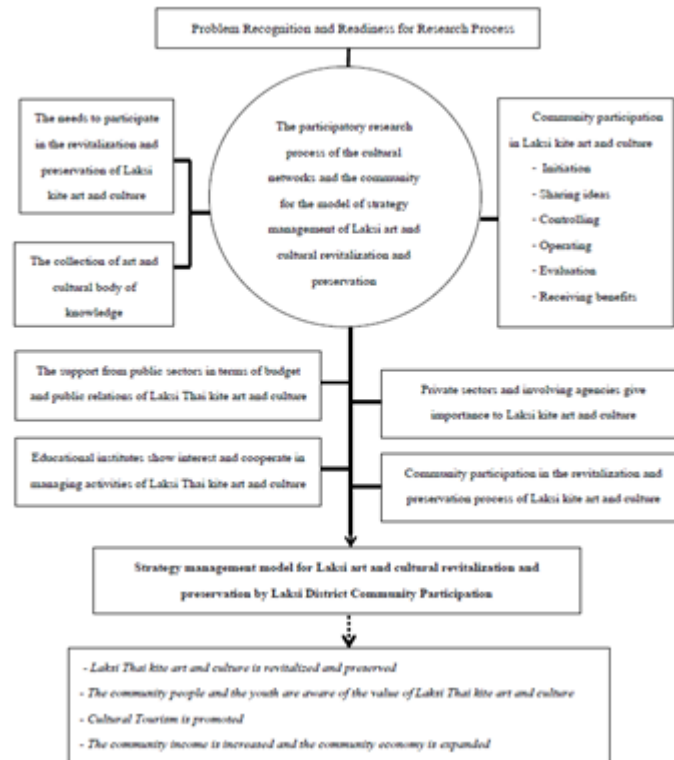


Fig.1 Research process for strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of community people Laksi District, Bangkok.

From Fig.1 can be explained to the strategy management of Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the community of Laksi District that it should start from mutual recognition of the problems in order to enter the participatory study process of the cultural networks and the community. This is to come up with the strategy management for art and cultural revitalization and preservation by conducting the research on the community needs for Laksi Thai kite art and culture, on the community participation in Laksi Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation, including on the collection of Thai kite art and culture body of knowledge, and on the community participation in Laksi Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation in the opinion of the wisdom owner and of the community people. This research process started from the initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluating and receiving benefits participated by the public sector, educational institutes, private sector, and the community. The result was a strategy management for Laksi Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation. Besides, the community members and the youth in the area were proud of Laksi Thai kite art and cultural values. In addition, Laksi District became the cultural tourist attraction. The community members earned income resulted in sustainable community economy.

4. Results

1. The collection of the body of knowledge for Laksi Thai kite art and culture, the results showed that Laksi Thai kite-making was established by Mr. Kun Bun-nok who is skillful in making all kinds of kites. His work in revitalization and preservation helps revitalize and preserve the local wisdom and is well-accepted at the national and international levels. He was honored Thai Wisdom Teacher, Year 4 in the field of Fine Arts in B.E. 2548 (2005) from the Office of Education Council, Ministry of Education. Moreover, Mr. Kun Bun-Nok received the signboard of “Kite-Making Community” from the public office as the name of the community where one of its residents was the kite-making craftsman. The importance of Mr. Kun Bun-nok’s kite-making has been stated in Laksi District slogan that “ Beautiful Laksi Temple, Thai Kite-Making Site, Favorite Khon Masks, Good-Looking Laksi District.” Laksi Thai kites had distinctive features in using good quality, durable and water resistant mulberry paper. Another prominent point of Mr. Kun Bun-nok’s kites was the emphasis on Thai arts and the images of literary characters, for example the images of characters in Phra Aphai Mani, Hanuman in various postures, the Tuk-Tuk kites, the kites of 12 zodiacs, etc. Such distinctive features of Mr. Kun Bun-nok’s kites attracted various business company owners to purchase his works of arts to decorate the booths or their shops.

2. The community participation in the opinion of the wisdom owner showed that there was only one successor of Laksi Thai kite-making. Although he wanted to revitalize and preserve the art of Laksi Thai kite-making, however, he did not have time to do so. Since he had to work full-time. Besides, the revitalization and

preservation project lacked support from the public office. In terms of the community members, they showed interest in learning and preserving Laksi Thai kite-making at high level ($\bar{X} = 4.00$, S.D. = 0.727)

3. The strategy management approach for Laksi Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of the community members of Laksi District revealed that in order to promote the efficient community participation to preserve Laksi District art and cultural identity, it was necessary to have: 1) a well-acquainted and well-accepted leader as the initiator, 2) the participation from the public sector, 3) the networking from all involving sectors, to provide knowledge on the community art and culture to its members, to arrange educational activities to revitalize and to pass on the wisdom to the community members by the wisdom inheritors, and to teach them how to do kite-making. For this reason, the community members were motivated to realize and be aware of the community art and cultural values and worthiness. Besides, the educational institutes were used as the place to install the conscious mind and to cherish Thai art and culture, with the support from the school administrators and teachers. As a result, the youth in the area became skillful and able to create their works for extra income. On the other hand, the partnership with the company expert in marketing could educate the community members of product development for marketing and on-line sales. Moreover, the arrangement of activities for Thai kite revitalization as annual activities to sustain Laksi Thai kite art and culture, these activities included the kite contests and the kite-flying competition. In addition, the community could participate for Laksi Thai kite art and cultural revitalization and preservation starting from initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluation and receive benefits. 1) The community initiation that recognized Laksi art and culture and participated in the meeting could come up with the solution to set up the conscious mind to cherish the art and culture of the area. The data received should transmit to the community leader, educational institutes, and the public sector to participate in providing solution and sharing ideas. 2) Sharing ideas. When Laksi District community members, the educational administrators, and the administrators of the involving offices recognized and comprehended the values of the art and culture in the area, the results led to sharing ideas, arranging learning, testing, operating, and analyzing the conclusion in doing activities. 3) Controlling. It was the process of decision to be the partnership of the community, public offices, educational institutes and the wisdom owner to achieve the goals by cooperating in the analysis of the data to set the activities format. 4) Operating. It was the phase to manage the activities follow the plan that had been cooperated. The partnership of all concerned sectors in order to achieve goals, according to the responsibility of each sector, for example, the cooperation of the public relations section in order to publicize the activities. The community leader encouraged the community members to participate in the activities by transmitting the activity information via line groups and the Facebook page of the community. Besides, the schools encouraged the students to participate in the art and cultural activities. Moreover, the public enterprise and the private sector participated in the activities by the coordinating from the community. 5) Evaluation. Each activity should be evaluated by all sectors participated. The results showed that the project participants were satisfied with the overall project/activity management and called for arranging more project/activity of this kind in the future. At the same time, the evaluation for the cooperation of the project/activity brought about the data for developing and managing further project/activity. 6) Receiving benefits. The project/activity which had been cooperated and found successful created pride and worthiness of the art and culture in the area, for example, on the occasion of the 22nd. Anniversary Celebration of Laksi District Office, the picture of Laksi Thai kite-flying art and culture was used as the backdrop and screened on the cloth-bags as souvenirs distribute to the guests. At the same time, the community and the youth could make use of the skill derived from kite-making to create the works of art of their own and earn extra income in the future.

5. Discussions

The process of the transmission of the local wisdom included within and outside the community. The knowledge is transmitted to the local youth or the interested people in the area. The knowledge transmission passed on to the groups of people, those who live in the area and those who were sent to attend the training. In terms of the learning factors, the learners were the young people who were willing to attend the training from the wisdom owner. The instructional methods included explanation, demonstration, and training. In terms of the social relationship, the learners and those who were interested in the activities participated in study tours and visiting the community. Besides, the neighboring communities gave the importance of the wisdom of Thai art and culture and agreed to revitalize and preserve Laksi Thai kite art and culture by circulating the knowledge through media. As a result, the youth and the community members showed more enthusiasm and participate in Laksi Thai kite art and culture. The result was in accordance with the research result of [12]. In terms of learning and transmission knowledge of the Nang Yai shadow puppet drama within the community, social adjustment in the form which was compatible with the present circumstances and the needs of the viewing participants. The interaction within the community had resulted in the realization of the value of the local folk arts and culture. This was conformed to the research findings [9]. The results of this research revealed that there were five factors concerning the wisdom of Likay performance, these were: language, dance, song and music, costumes, stages, setting, and light and sound. These wisdom initiated by learning, training, collecting knowledge, and transforming while sustaining old wisdom

that was considered valuable, correct and suitable. At the same time, the wisdom could be adjust, changed, and developed according to the social circumstances at that time in order to attract the interest of the audience. The conservation of Likay performance could be achieved by the support in terms of budget and promoting Likay's troupe performances from public and private agencies and the educational institutes. This create opportunities for exchanging attitudes and knowledge building for local wisdom networking to cooperate in preserving and transferring the local Thai art and culture. This was consistent to the approach for preservation consideration [8] that the operation through the consecutive applying process, the learners were able to recite the what, the how and the why of the operation. The result was consistent to the standard set by the instructor. The practice method was able to indicate the important factors which results in doing things consecutively and sustainably. After learning about the creating and preserving, the learners could recite fluently what had happened. Thus, this was important for revitalization and preservation. Besides, by supporting the wisdom owner to receive honoring awards could serve the cultural preservation and development approach. This was in accordance with [9] that the preservation and transmission model was managed through media, educational institutes, Likay contest and award giving.

As for the transmission approach for Laksi art and cultural wisdom, first of all there should have strategic plan for preserving and developing the body of knowledge, collecting the body of knowledge and the values of such art and culture and integrated into classroom teaching and learning course, for example, the course of Thai Kite Wisdom. Besides, they should provide the knowledge exchange regionally. The support from the educational institutes in the area encouraged to bring the learning of local art and culture into school. This was consistent to [3] that the researcher used the information received from the research in arranging the subjects in Thai Language and Social Sciences Sections in local school. As a result, students could learn and were installed the spirits of preserving the local art and culture. This was comply to [10] which stated that the school subject about local crafts should be set in the school curriculum at each level to educate and train students about local arts and culture. Moreover, there should have the arena for exchanging ideas in developing arts and culture, increasing public relations to promote arts and culture contests, such as Laksi Thai kite-flying contest. In addition, the local people should be aware of the need to revitalize and to preserve Laksi Thai kite art and culture. At present, it was necessary to focus educational management on building national wisdom to the human resource of the country and extending to the future as it was shown in [11] about the concept of culture and social development that it was necessary to have correct understanding of the wisdom which was vital strategy for the country development. Good execution, therefore, occurred regularly in exchanging ideas, supporting local cultural arena, knowledge collection, research support on creating various media, meeting, seminar and conference, supporting community organization and community learning process, improving the educational system to relate to Thai culture, supporting the cultural management activities to generate extra income for the youth and the community members.

In terms of the revitalization and preservation of art and culture by the participation of Laksi communities, the managing activities were performed in steps. Thus, the activities achieved the goals which were consistent to [2] which stated that the successful project should have well plan, regular consultation meeting and coordinating with relevant authorities. On the other hand, the participation in problem-solving of the cultural networks led by Laksi Cultural Council, public agencies, educational institutes and community members helped direct the activity achievement. This was in accordance with [13] which stated that the participation in project initiation by searching for the community problems and their causes, followed by participating in planning revealed that the arranging of activities using the school and the community activity center and participating and coordinating in planning and setting the transmission method, training with the wisdom owner including kite-flying contest project. These activities enabled the community members to participate and have responsibility in order to achieve goals. For this reason, the community members received information and participated in idea sharing for revitalizing and preserving Laksi art and culture. This was in accordance to [10] which mentioned that the participation of the community members in planning for integrated tourism attractions was achieved by coordinating and grouping. This was in accordance with [5] that the success of the community participation in local tourism management depended on the cooperation of the concerning public and private sectors, and non-government organization to provide knowledge, information and other assistance. In terms of the community participation, the community members had to participate in all phases, starting from initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluating, and receiving benefits. In terms of the participating in controlling and decision-making, the result was that in controlling the operation from the starting to the end of the activity, including providing knowledge, monitoring for public relations, the community members appreciated to participate. This was comply to [4] which showed that by participating in decision-making, the people participated in initiating the project by stating the problems, the need to prioritize the problem, the decision to do the project and the activities, and monitoring the activity management. As for the participation in operating the activities for revitalization and preservation the art and culture, the result showed that the cultural network and the community participated in the operation, they had the opportunity to be the kite-flying managing committee or the kite-flying competition committee to work along with all District Cultural Council, District Officers, educational institutes, private agencies and the wisdom owner. This reflected the full support from all related sectors and was consistent to [6] which mentioned that the participation in management

could allocate investment, the cooperation and coordination in the community activities. In terms of monitoring and evaluating the revitalizing and preserving activities, the cultural networks and the community members could participate in each step, starting from providing knowledge in arts and culture, training to observe the participants' interest and the satisfaction of the youth and the community members who participated in the project, including the use of evaluation form for the satisfaction of the project participation survey. This was consistent to [1] that the follow-up of the project affected the community economy. In terms of allocating benefits, the revitalization and preservation activities could generate benefits to the community. This was in accordance with [14] which mentioned that the community should derive benefits from participating the local tourism project. This, of course, was consistent to [6] that the community participation in management of the tourist attractions of the In-Buri District, Sing Buri Province resulted from the fact that the community members received benefits from the project, for example, the extra income receiving from selling souvenirs.

6. Recommendations

A. Recommendations for Practices

1. There should have the process to build strong community and to create networks with various sectors in setting priority for the proposition of the cultural revitalization, when budget was considered the vital energy to move the process.

2. There should have an administrative committee in the form of the organization to officially manage the art and cultural preservation. The committee might be elected or be the concerning community representatives. The committee should be consisted of a president, the committee members and a secretary to coordinate, give advice and set the plan for Laksi District art and cultural development systematically, such as setting the systems for preservation and transmission, marketing, and public relations. This should be set as the organization whose objectives is to preserve arts and culture. As for Laksi District art and culture, the District Cultural Council which is serve as the exchanging center for knowledge experience and ideas in managing the cultural mission, promoting and coordinating the activities of the member organization and managing other cultural activities that the Ministry of Culture or other offices asked for cooperation. The District Cultural Council is not responsible for the specific art and culture of the District. Besides, the Council received limited budget, therefore, the management of various activities of Laksi District lacked agility. This was because the District Cultural Council committee members were volunteers and worked without receiving payment. Therefore, it is necessary to have the establishment of the official administrative committee in the form of organization for specific art and cultural preservation. Besides, the public sector may need to provide enough budget to achieve effective revitalization and preservation project.

3. There should have the collection of art and cultural body of knowledge systematically, for example, handbook of Khon mask-making, and handbook of puppetry- making as the learning resources. These collections helped preserve the wisdom by integrated operation with the participation of Laksi District Cultural Council, public offices, community and educational institutes.

4. The community should realize the values and worthiness of Laksi art and culture. Besides, the community members should have knowledge about the history of art and culture in the area and participate in preserving Laksi art and culture. The community members especially the youth, should have awareness of the values of the importance of the local Thai art and cultural wisdom. Moreover, they should support, promote and inherit Laksi District Thai kite art and cultural wisdom by participating in the kite-making contests to build the awareness of being local.

5. The community of Laksi District art and cultural center should be established as the place where the District art and cultural body of knowledge is collected. The center could be established in Wat or in schools in the district as the community data-base and should be participated with the community members as the vital learning places and could lead to the building of integrated community courses or the community center. Besides, this could bring the body of knowledge to integrate to the learning activities in schools by arranging the local art and cultural subjects, such as the history and background of Thai-kite making, the practice of Thai-kite making, etc. Moreover, there should have the innovation of Thai kite-making method to attract the youth to participate the learning activities, such as to create the kites into different shapes, to have the workshop for exchanging ideas and come up with the information for improving and developing Thai kite art and culture, and to encourage people to show more interest in the District art and culture.

6. There should have the concrete and sustainable activities for cultural tourism in Laksi District by coordinating with the wisdom owner to arrange the cultural tourism program, watching performance, practicing in Thai kite-making, selling souvenirs, and the return on sales will go back to the community.

7. There should have the initiation in creating the art and cultural products appreciated for the period and be useful for living by using the local wisdom and bringing the scientific method and technology to top-up the

production and the administration, including the protection and environmental preservation with the coordination of the educational institutes, the public offices, and the public enterprises.

8. The knowledge on local art and culture or the historical background of Laksi Thai kite should be put in the educational curriculum for students to study in Laksi District schools, or they could be added to the subjects available in schools.

9. The local art and cultural activities should be promoted and publicized. The exchanging of local art and cultural wisdom from study tours, and visiting of art and cultural sites in other provinces helped broaden the horizon and bring back the ideas to use in the project.

10. The wisdom owner should receive praise and recognition for morale support as the inheritor of Laksi art and culture.

11. There should have dissemination and public relations with various media, for example circulating book for tourism that includes the historical background of Laksi Thai kite-making via internet or producing the DVD documentary about the valuable cultural heritage of Laksi District community for distribution or on sales. The interested people, thus, could retrieve the information by themselves. This was to motivate interested people to learn, to visit and watch the community art and culture in order to disseminate and publicize Laksi art and cultural information to the public. As a result, the people in the area have pride of their own art and culture and the community members could earn extra income.

12. There should have coordination of the offices and involving organization in both public and private sectors to invite Laksi Thai kite art and culture to be participated in the festivities and to promote Laksi Thai kite art and culture to display and to sell their kites at the booth. This is to disseminate and publicize Laksi Thai kite art and culture and to generate income to the community.

B. Recommendations for Further Research

1. The study on the strategy management of other Laksi art and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of the Laksi communities in puppetry, marionettes, and Khonmasks.

2. The study on the integrated knowledge between Thai kite and scientific knowledge, and new technology should expand the capacity of Thai kites to other interesting topics to catch up with the modern period.

3. The study of marketing strategy to increase value-added for the typical local cultural products.

7. Conclusion

Despite the fact that Laksi Thai kites had distinctive features, the community member did not show much enthusiasm. The results of the research could be used as the strategy management approach of Thai arts and cultural revitalization and preservation by the participation of the community members of Laksi District. The community members should participate in all phases starting from initiation, sharing ideas, controlling, operating, evaluating and receiving benefits. The cultural network and the community had selected Laksi Thai kites as the pilot project for arts and cultural revitalization and preservation by arranging activities participated by all sectors. As a result, the activities were successful and satisfying and could be used as the model for strategy management of Laksi Thai kite art and culture by the participation of the Laksi communities, Bangkok, Thailand.

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