

HOW CAN WE SEARCH FOR COMMUNITY SOFT POWER IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

Pimrawee ROCHARUNGSAT¹, Maturose PRABPRIREE¹, Nuttakan PHACHAN¹, Nuttawut SUWANNACHANG¹ and Monticha OZAWA¹

¹ Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Phetchaburi Rajabhat University, Thailand; pimrawee.roc@mail.pbru.ac.th (P. R.); maturose.pra@mail.pbru.ac.th (M. P.); say_hi_nuttakan@hotmail.com (N. P.); nuttawut.suw@mail.pbru.ac.th (N. S.); monticha.jam@mail.pbru.ac.th (M. O.)

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 31 July 2024

Revised: 14 August 2024

Published: 24 August 2024

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of soft power in community-based tourism within developing countries, emphasizing how local communities can leverage their cultural assets, social cohesion, and shared values to enhance their influence and attractiveness as tourism destinations. The research addresses the critical question of how soft power can be harnessed to promote sustainable tourism development, focusing on the Bang Taboon community in Phetchaburi Province as a case study.

The study's objectives are twofold: first, to identify the elements of soft power that can enhance community-based tourism, and second, to propose a comprehensive methodology for studying soft power within community tourism frameworks.

Employing a qualitative research design, this study utilized Fieldwork, in-depth interviews with community leaders, local business owners, and tourists, alongside with focus group and participatory observations. This approach provided a holistic understanding of the community's role and influence in tourism development.

Findings indicate that the soft power of the Bang Taboon community is rooted in its distinctive local cuisine made from indigenous plants, conservation-oriented products, and natural tourist attractions, all enriched by a vibrant history and unique cultural heritage. The study proposes eight essential steps for harnessing and maximizing this soft power, offering a structured framework for other communities to discover, develop, and utilize their soft power to effectively promote sustainable community-based tourism.

These insights contribute to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism management by highlighting the importance of cultural and social capital in enhancing destination attractiveness and community resilience.

Keywords: Soft Power, Community Tourism, Tourism Development, Developing Countries

CITATION INFORMATION: Rocharungsat, P., Prabpriree, M., Phachan, N., Suwannachang, N., & Ozawa, M. (2024). How can We Search for Community Soft Power in Tourism Development in Developing Countries?. *Procedia of Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(8), 52.

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors. This is a fully open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).