

# ปัจจัยความสำเร็จและความยั่งยืนของธุรกิจเพื่อสังคม ในการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนในประเทศไทย

## SUCCESS FACTORS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN THAILAND

กาญจนा สมมิตร\*

Kanjana Sommit\*

บุษบา ลิทมิการ\*\*

Bussaba Sitikarn\*\*

\* นักศึกษาปริญญาเอก ภาควิชาบริหารธุรกิจ สำนักวิชาการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยแม่ฟ้าหลวง

\* Ph.D. Candidate, Doctor of Philosophy Program in Business, School of Management, Mae Fah Luang University

\* E-mail: kanjana@feu.edu

\*\* ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ และปริญญาเอก ภาควิชาการจัดการการท่องเที่ยว สำนักวิชาการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยแม่ฟ้าหลวง

\*\* Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration in Tourism Management, School of Management, Mae Fah Luang University

\*\* E-mail: bussaba@mfu.ac.th

## บทคัดย่อ

ธุรกิจเพื่อสังคมการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนในประเทศไทยมีจำนวนหนึ่งที่ถือได้ว่าประสบความสำเร็จ แต่ปัจจัยความสำเร็จนั้นยังไม่ทราบแน่ชัดทางวิชาการ การศึกษานี้จึงมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อระบุปัจจัย ความสำเร็จที่สำคัญและความยั่งยืนของธุรกิจเพื่อสังคมการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนในประเทศไทย การศึกษานี้มี กลุ่มตัวอย่างคือผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียของธุรกิจเพื่อสังคมการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนใน 4 ชุมชนทั่วประเทศไทย จำนวน 350 คน เก็บข้อมูลโดยใช้แบบสอบถาม และการสัมภาษณ์แบบมีโครงสร้าง วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดย ใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนา การวิเคราะห์แก่นสาร (Thematic Analysis) และการวิเคราะห์ห้องคปประกอบเชิงยืนยัน ผลการศึกษาพบปัจจัยความสำเร็จสำคัญ 3 ประการที่เป็นลักษณะร่วมของทุกชุมชน ได้แก่ 1) ความเป็น ผู้นำ 2) ความเป็นของแท้และมีอัตลักษณ์ และ 3) การมีส่วนร่วมในการบริหารจัดการและการเป็นเจ้าของ ธุรกิจของภาคีการท่องเที่ยว ปัจจัยแห่งความสำเร็จเหล่านี้จึงควรนำมาพิจารณาในการบริหารจัดการและ การพัฒนาธุรกิจเพื่อสังคมการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนอื่น เพื่อนำไปสู่ความสำเร็จและความยั่งยืนทางธุรกิจ ต่อไป

**คำสำคัญ:** ปัจจัยความสำเร็จ การท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชน กิจการเพื่อสังคม ความยั่งยืนทางธุรกิจ

## Abstract

A handful of Community-based Tourism Social Enterprise (CBT-SE) in Thailand have been recognized as successful cases. Academically, what made those CBT-SE successful remained unknown. This study aims to identify the success factors of CBT-SE in Thailand that might lead to CBT-SE business sustainability. The sample group included 350 stakeholders from four successful CBT-SE cases in Thailand. Data were collected by using questionnaire and structured interview. The analysis of data was undergone by both quantitative and qualitative methods including descriptive statistics, thematic analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. The findings revealed three essential success factors: 1) Leadership, 2) Authenticity and Identity, and 3) Stakeholder Participation and Ownership that all case studies have in common. These factors should have been considering when managing and developing other CBT-SE for success and sustainability.

**Keywords:** Success Factors, Community-Based Tourism, Social Enterprise, Business Sustainability

## Introduction

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been globally promoted as a means of development for over three decades, whereby the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities are met through the offering of a tourism product (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Santilli, 2008). In global level, there are several successful cases of CBT as in Brazil (Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2012), Australia, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Vietnam (Vikneswaran & Amran, 2015). Literature on CBT in Thailand also reports the success cases in the country (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churuen & Duangsaeng, 2014; Nguangchaiyapoom, Yongvanit & Sripun, 2012; Suansri & Richards, 2013). Some of these CBT organizations have been managed under the core principle of social enterprise (SE) which is the focus on the impact on economic, social and the environment. In this paper, they are referred to as Community Based Tourism – Social Enterprise (CBT-SE).

Despite a number of successful cases, some studies reported the failure of CBT which may involve the small revenues of CBT (Goodwin, 2006; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008) which sometimes do not outweigh the costs. A lack of access to markets and poor governance can be the cause of CBT failure. Regarding previous literature, failure of CBT is often in focus. A few studies observed sustainability of CBT (Jitpakdee & Thapa, 2012; Kallayanamitra, 2011), however, Success Factors and business sustainability of CBT seems to be neglected. Viewing a CBT-SE as a business unit, the understanding of business sustainability is therefore crucial for all stakes. It is necessary to study the topics in detail due to the fact that business success and business sustainability today depends not only on earnings but also on a broader impact on social and the environment.

Considering the success of CBT-SE in Thailand, success factors proposed in related fields are used as the framework for this study. The main aim is to find out the essential keys to success and business sustainability of community-based tourism-social enterprise in Thailand. It is believed that the successful CBT-SE in Thailand had shared common success factors that might create business sustainability for them. The findings from this study are expected to be beneficial for those involving in CBT-SE development, especially the public and academic sector that need to work closely with CBT communities all over the country.

## Objective of the Study

This study investigates success factors and sustainability of Community Based Tourism – Social Enterprise (CBT-SE) in Thailand.

## Literature Review

### Success Factors of Community-Based Tourism Social Enterprise

Previous literature observed Success Factors of Community-Based Tourism (Lun, Pechlaner & Volgger, 2016; Nitikasetsoontorn, 2015; Rachel, Alisha & Kelly, 2016; Satarat, 2010) and Social Enterprise (Hudson, 2011; Jenner, 2016; Nielsen & Carranza, 2012; Weppen & Cochrane, 2012) separately. The two components are synthesized as CBT-SE success factors in our work (Sommit & Sitikarn, 2018) as follow.

First, Enterprise Orientation comprises abundance of tourism resources, effective natural resource management, creating a self-sustaining community-based business plan with a long-term strategy, preparing to invest time and resources during the start-up process, identifying resourcing, organizational capabilities, clear market orientation, growth orientation, and generate supplemental income for long-term sustainability.

Second, Stakeholder participation and ownership consists of level of community participation, include community members as partners in co-creation to enhance buy-in and ownership, participation in decision-making processes, local ownership, collective responsibility, participatory planning, and local management and fair benefit distribution.

Third, Strategic alliances and network with others refer to sufficient outside support, the inter-organizational networks among the partners, the social entrepreneur's network of learning process enablers, knowledge providers and co-creators, strategic alliances with others, collaborative networks, partnership and outside support, collaboration and partnerships facilitating links to market, assistance from enablers to access formal economy, and inter-sectoral networks

Fourth, Capacity development includes capacity building community's tourism management skills, a common orientation towards quality, and effective communication

Fifth, Leadership comprises strong leadership and management.

Finally, Authenticity and Identity include achieve authenticity and distinction and deliver authentic tourism experiences.

#### **Business Sustainability of Community-Based Tourism Social Enterprise**

Business sustainability from the perspectives of CBT-SE is based on the sustainable triple bottom line: social, environment and economic (Breugel's, 2013; Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002; Financial Times Lexicon, 2017; GRI, 2015; Høgevold, & Svensson, 2012; Mason, 2008; Nunthasiriphon, 2015; Satarat, 2010). There are three main variables: maintaining the sustainable triple bottom line, growing the triple bottom line, and reducing the impact on triple bottom line throughout the supply chain.

Firstly, the Social Sustainability is reflected by the revival of the local culture and way of living, community unity, bring education to the community, bring funds for community development, cooperation with government and private agencies, close contact with tourists, and improve health of local people.

Secondly, the Environmental Sustainability concerns the awareness of the importance of nature and environment conservation, encouragement of participation, and an increase of awareness regarding the preservation of environment, encouraging environmental planning, the restoration and maintenance of natural attractions, developing environmental management skills, managing environmental problems and clean place.

Finally, the Economic Sustainability requires the generation of additional incomes, the employment rate, and diversify the local economy.

## Background of the case studies

### 1) Ban Huay Tong Kor, Mae Hong Son

Huay Tong Kor village was established over 200 hundred years ago, named after "Tong Kor," a palm leaf which is used as natural roofing. Today, the people continue to live a simple, calm life guided by their Karen traditions. CBT Huay Tong Kor has been established since 1999. The main purpose of the village is to communicate with outsiders about their ways of life, self-sufficient living and their rotational farming practice. Tourism and business activities include trekking, sword dancing, learning local wisdom, and a group of textile business producing natural dyed fabrics and local products under "Tong Kor Family" Brand.

### 2) Ban Rim Klong , Samut Songkram

Baan Rimklong Community Enterprise was originally formed by simple dwellings of the local population who were located around the banks of the Khlong Pee Log, which is a river that goes down to Amphawa. People in the community became aware of the value of their resources; for example, some people lived and worked in a coconut plantation that was able to produce a variety of products. There is also the famous Lum Poo Tree that has fireflies come out at night to light up the water. In 2003, Khun Tirada Ekkaewnumchai and Khun Suan Huttheenako jointly renovated their house to welcome visitors and tourists. From then on, visitors spread the message by word of mouth of their satisfaction, in turn attracting more tourists to come to stay in the same place. After that, people in the community began to improve their own houses to welcome more tourists and to form a group which is called Baan Rimklong Homestay as today. They also try to maintain the traditional way of life as much as possible, which makes the tourist's experience more authentic. Tourism and business activities comprise homestay, tour programs and workshops, and local products.

### 3) Ban Nam Chiew, Trad

Ban Nam Chiew is a Thai-Muslim village with plentiful mangrove forests and Nam Chiew canal runs through to the village. The village located approximately 8 kilometers from Trad city center. 50 percent of the villagers are Muslim and another 50 percent are Buddhist. They do fishery, rubber gardening and fruit gardening (Rambutan, Mangosteen, Long Kong and Durian) for living. Their famous products are palm weaving hat or "lae" in local name and "Nam Tan Chak", Muslim sticky sweet made from sugar cane and coconut. Nam Chiew community based tourism grew from collaboration between community groups, the tourism industry and environmental organizations. Community members in Nam Chiew decided to develop CBT to increase income for local people; raise environmental awareness; preserve local culture, traditions and life style; and contribute towards reducing global warming. Tourism and business activities comprise homestay, tour programs and workshops and local products.

### 4) Khlong Daen Buddhist Community, Songkhla

Khlong Daen Community is named after the Khlong Daen Canal which divides Rha Note District of Songkhla Province and HuaSai District of Nakorn Sri Thammarat Province. The first settlement of the community was said to be merchants and people who benefited from marine trades. According to the historical evidence, Khlong Daen Community had expanded due to its juxtaposition to the Gulf of Thailand. After the completion of Highway 408, water trades and transportations had been diminished causing many residents to relocate and triggering the downfall of the community. Khlong Daen's floating houses and its livelihood were later revitalized

by National Housing Authority in an attempt to give birth to the community's tourism industry. The floating market was open every Saturday in order that the villagers were able to present their locally made products to tourists. The number of visitors has increased since the inception of the community's tourism campaign in 2009, and gradually benefited the whole village socially and economically. Tourism and business activities comprise community tours, community learning activities, tourist aids and services, and local products.

## **Methodology**

This study uses mixed-method research approach. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied in different stage of the study.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of this study included stakeholders of CBT-SE in Thailand. Purposive sampling method was used to select the sample group, which comprised totally 350 samples returned. Among these, 330 (94.29%) were committees and members of CBT-SE from the case study communities, 15 (4.29%) were CBT practitioners, and 5 (1.43%) were CBT partners.

### **Data Collection**

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for the study. The qualitative data were obtained by using focus group and structured interview, and the quantitative data were collected by using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The researcher organized a session of focus group in each CBT village to collect information relating to the success factors of each case. Then the selected key persons of each CBT-SE village, CBT practitioners and CBT partners were invited for an interview to elicit further and detailed information regarding general background of CBT-SE villages, market situation, income from tourism, CBT development, management, etc.

For quantitative data, the samples were asked to fill out the questionnaire on the same day of the focus group meeting. When the questionnaires were returned, the researcher checked for the completion of the all answers. If a question was not answered, the researcher encouraged the samples to try to response to the question. For some samples who were not available on the meeting day, the researcher sent the questionnaire to the CBT-SE leaders and ask him/her to help collecting the data from their members.

### **Data Analysis**

The qualitative data were analyzed by using thematic analysis (Guest, 2012). The researcher focused on repetitive statements related to CBT-SE Success Factors. The results were used to identify the successful dimensions for the application of CBT-SE Success Factors in the CBT-SE business sustainability studied.

The quantitative data were analyzed by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Hair et al. 2006). This is to analyse the model of success elements of CBT-SE business sustainability in Thailand. For reliability testing of the CFA model, Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Likert-Type Scales was used. The Cronbach's Alpha values of all dimensions were estimated using SPSS V 17. The results show that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient scores across the factors: Leadership (LDS) = .765, Authenticity and Identity (AI) = .721, and Stakeholder Participation and Ownership (SPO) = .708. Entire indicators within the dimension are greater than .60 for exploratory research with .740 of the total values. The factor loadings of indicators should be greater than

0.4 (Ford et al, 1986). Goodness of Fit Indices (GOF) cut-off-values were set at  $\chi^2/df < 3$  and  $p > .05$  (Carmines & McIver 1981; Ullman 2001),  $CFI \geq .95$  (Carlson & Mulaik 1993),  $TLI \geq .95$  (Hu & Bentler 1998),  $RMSEA < .08$  (Arbuckle, 1995), and  $HOELTER \geq 200$  (Hoelter 1983), which represent a good model fit and that the model can adequately explain the survey data when the requirements for indices have been met.

## Findings

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of CBT-SE Success Factors in this study revealed three essential keys to success and sustainability of the four case studies: 1) Leadership, 2) Authenticity and identity, and 3) Stakeholder participation and ownership. The details of each Success Factors are described below.

### Leadership (LDS)

The study focused on seven qualities of good leaders: strong leadership, staying updated with the world, transparency, coordination and integration skills, hard-working, eagerness to learn and dedicated leaders. Each quality is treated as a variable to be observed (see Table 1)

Table 1: Leadership Variables and Meanings

Variables	Meaning
LDS1 (A7.1)	strong leadership
LDS2 (A7.2)	staying updated with the world
LDS3 (A7.3)	transparency leaders
LDS4 (A7.4)	coordination and integration skills
LDS5 (A7.5)	hard-working
LDS6 (A7.6)	eagerness to learn
LDS7 (A7.7)	dedicated leaders

Based on the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the factor loadings ( $\lambda$ ) of some indicators in LDS are less than .40 and the squared multiple correlations ( $R^2$ ) of most of indicators are less than .50. This means that the indicators might not represent a good fit for LDS. The initial output values of the LDS dimension showed that the model was not fitted with the requirements regarding GOF indices:  $\chi^2/df (309.148 / 14) = 22.082$ ,  $p = 0$   $TLI = 0.438$ ,  $CFI = 0.625$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.246$ , and  $HOELTER = 27$  with a confidence level of 95%. As a result, this initial model was rejected and model modifications were applied. Factor loadings of indicators less than .40 were ignored.

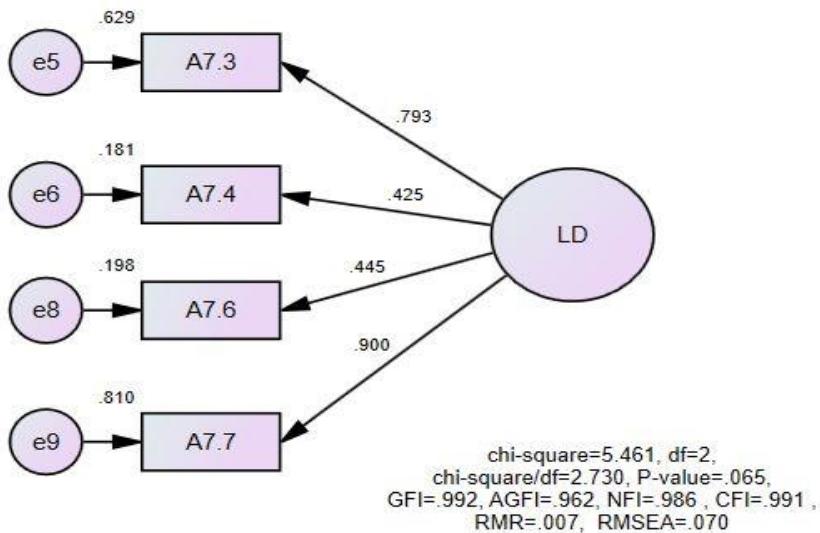


Figure 1: LDS congeneric measurement model modifications

Having a  $\chi^2/df$  value of 2.73, a p-value of 0.065, a TLI value of 0.972, a CFI value of 0.991, a RMSEA value of 0.07, and a HOELTER value of 383 with a confidence level of 95% of LDS congeneric measurement model modifications indicates that this model fits, as most required indices achieved the values. A factor loading of all indicators are greater than .4; therefore, the LDS dimension was accepted to be a latent variable in the model. Consequently, three indicators: strong leadership, hard-working and staying updated with the world are dropped. Only four indicators: dedicated leaders, transparency leaders, eagerness to learn, and coordination and integration skills remained in the LDS model.

The analysis result of the mean value ranged between 4.38 and 4.77, indicating that the respondents valued the importance of coordination and integration skills (Mean = 4.77, SD = .420). Based on the case studies, all CBT-SE leaders could coordinate their members to get involved in their CBT-SE activities effectively. For the view on dedicated leaders (Mean = 4.67, SD = .528), all CBT-SE leaders of the four cases showed their devotion of time and ability to the work for their CBT-SE. For eagerness to learn (Mean = 4.66, SD = .475), all CBT-SE leaders always learn new knowledge from different sources such as internet, self-conducted research, academics and related organizations.

### Authenticity and Identity (AI)

Three variables of authenticity and identity (AI): achieve distinction, achieve authenticity, and deliver authentic tourism experiences were investigated. See Table 3.

Table 3: Authenticity and Identity Variables and Meanings

Variables	Meaning
AI1 (A6.1)	achieve distinction
AI2 (A6.2)	achieve authenticity
AI3 (A6.3)	deliver authentic tourism experiences

The number of parameters to be estimated is equal to the number of sample moments; this leads to the model being 'just-identified' (Byrne 2001). As a result, this model was fixed with constraint to be 'over-identified' in order to estimate the value of indices (Byrne 2001). The values of indices were as follows: CFI= 1.00 and RMSEA=.547.

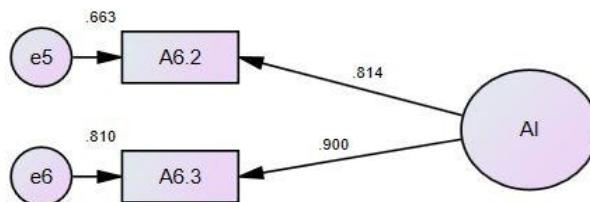


Figure 2: AI congeneric measurement model modifications

Although the indices did not meet the goodness of fit (GOF), the model can be accepted as a fitted model since the factor loadings for all indicators are greater than .40 and the squared multiple correlations of all indicators exceed .50. Also, this model was fixed to only estimate the value indices to explain the data in the model. All indicators could be accepted as a good fit for AI. This model was, thus, accepted. As a result, one indicator (achieve distinction) was dropped, and two indicators (achieve authenticity and deliver authentic tourism experiences) remained in AI model.

The analysis result of mean value ranged between 4.56 and 4.94. This indicates that the respondents agreed upon the importance of 'achieve authenticity' (Mean = 4.94, SD = .243) due to that fact that all CBT-SE villages expressed their authentic ways of life and local wisdoms including strong traditions and beliefs, self-sufficient living, rotational farming practice, a Thai-Muslim village with plentiful mangrove forests, floating houses and floating market. The respondents also see the importance of 'deliver authentic tourism experiences' (Mean = 4.66, SD = .475). These tourism experiences included learning local wisdom such as the blacksmith's work, palm leaf weaving, the Mueng Fai system the paddy field work, traditional food cooking, herbal medicinal cures, toy making techniques, traditional massage relieves, palm leaves embroideries, etc. The 'achieve distinction' (Mean = 4.56, SD = .525) was also seen as an essential factor since all CBT-SE villages have unique natural resources and unique ways of life.

## Stakeholder Participation and Ownership (SPO)

This study investigated eight stakeholder participation and ownership (SPO) variables: participation in decision-making processes, include community members as partners in co-creation to enhance buy-in and ownership, local ownership, local management, participatory planning, benefit distribution, trust among CBT member, and collective responsibility. See Table 5.

**Table 5:** Stakeholder Participation and Ownership Variables and Meanings

Variables	Meaning
SPO1 (A2.1)	participation in decision-making processes
SPO2 (A2.2)	include community members as partners in co-creation to enhance buy-in and ownership
SPO3 (A2.3)	local ownership
SPO4 (A2.4)	local management
SPO5 (A2.5)	participatory planning
SPO6 (A2.6)	benefit distribution
SPO7 (A2.7)	trust among CBT member
SPO7 (A2.8)	collective responsibility

The initial output values of the SPO dimension revealed that the model was not fitted with the requirements regarding GOF indices:  $\chi^2/df$  (40.541/20) = 2.027,  $p=.004$ , TLI= 0.915, CFI=0.939, RMSEA=0.054, and HOELTER= 271 with a confidence level of 95%. The factor loadings ( $\lambda$ ) of some indicators in SPO are less than .50, and the squared multiple correlations ( $R^2$ ) of most of indicators are less than .50. This means that most indicators might not represent a good fit for SPO.

The initial model was rejected, and model modifications were applied. Factor loadings of indicators less than .40 were dropped.

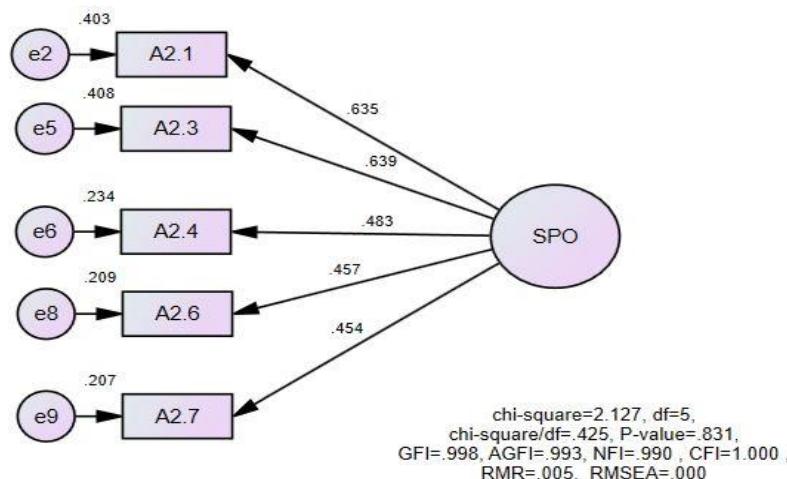


Figure 3: SPO congeneric measurement model modifications

Having a  $\chi^2/df$  value of 0.425 and a p-value of 0.831, a TLI value of 1.028, a CFI value of 1, a RMSEA value of 0, and a HOELTER value of 1817 with a confidence level of 95% indicates that this model fits well. Thus, the SPO dimension was accepted to be a latent variable in the structural model. As a result, three indicators (include community members as partners in co-creation to enhance buy-in and ownership, participatory planning and collective responsibility) were dropped. Five indicators (participation in decision-making processes, local ownership, local management, benefit distribution, and trust among CBT-SE member) remained in the SPO model. In this dimension, the analysis results of the mean values ranged from 4.14 to 4.51. This suggested that the respondents agreed on the importance of participation in decision-making processes (Mean = 4.51, SD = .512) as the CBT-SE members respected the decision of each other. Local ownership (Mean = 4.51, SD = .555) was also important as all CBT-SE members valued a sense of belongings and public mind. The respondents saw the benefit distribution (Mean = 4.45, SD = .583) as an essential key. The fact that all CBT-SE members get benefits from their participation such as home stays, local guides, food services, product selling, etc. Besides, benefits returned to the community in a form of funds or social welfares. Local management (Mean = 4.43, SD = .600) was agreed as important key as all CBT-SE members took parts in collaborative management through rules and regulations, transparent administration, and good governance. The respondents also agreed on the importance of trust among CBT-SE members (Mean = 4.43, SD = .496).

#### Discussion and Conclusion

It is interesting that most previous literature (Lun, Pechlaner and Volgger, 2016; Nitikasetsoontorn, 2015; Satarat, 2010; Weppen and Cochrane, 2012) often listed leadership as one of the crucial success factors for CBT-SE. However, when considering leadership in detail, those studies supported that strong leadership, leadership and management as the crucial success factors. In addition to those previous works, this present study discovered the more specific qualities of leaders, namely dedicated leaders, eagerness to learn, coordination and integration skills, and transparency leaders, which are essential to CBT-SE success and perhaps leading to their business sustainability.

Authenticity and Identity was also found as an essential key to success of CBT-SE in Thailand. This finding agreed with the studies by Nitikasetsoontorn (2015) and Lun, Pechlaner and Volgger (2016) who mentioned that achieved authenticity and distinction and delivered authentic tourism experiences were crucial to the success of CBT. It is suggested that the CBT-SE communities might need to conserve and protect their own authenticity and identity efficiently.

Stakeholder participation and ownership was confirmed as an important factor for success of CBT-SE. This finding supported the previous works by Hudson (2011), Satarat (2010), Nitikasetsoontorn (2015), and Rachel, Alisha & Kelly (2016). To bring this factor into practice, this study proposed that participation in decision-making, local ownership, local management, benefit distribution, and trust among CBT member should be more carefully considered.

It seems to be a today's tourism trend that CBT-SE become a big part of sustainable tourism development. This study proposed that there are three main keys: 1) Leadership, 2) Authenticity and Identity, and 3) Stakeholder Participation and Ownership that lead CBT-SE to success. It is believed that these Success Factors, if brought into practice appropriately and efficiently, would lead the CBT-SE to business sustainability as expected.

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