



Integrating Lakhon Chatri into Community-based Tourism Promotion in the Nang Loeng Area, Bangkok, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study examined the role of Lakhon Chatri in the Nang Loeng community, Bangkok in Thailand, and evaluated its potential to promote cultural tourism and strengthen community identity.

Methods: A mixed-methods approach was applied, including surveys of 400 tourists via convenience sampling and 20 in-depth interviews via purposive sampling.

Results: Most visitors are repeat tourists who are highly interested in local culture, daily life, and Nang Loeng's historical heritage. Participants expressed very positive attitudes toward integrating Lakhon Chatri into tourism development (overall mean = 4.64), especially through cultural learning centers and interactive activities such as dance practice and traditional costume experiences. Findings also indicate that the performance style, costumes, and narratives of Lakhon Chatri enhance memorable cultural experiences and foster community participation.



Conclusion: Key recommendations include regular performances, cultural routes, souvenir development, and social media promotion, along with community engagement and youth participation to ensure the long-term preservation of this valuable intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Lakhon Chatri, Tourism Promotion, Nang Loeng Community, Community-Based Tourism, Performance Style, Costumes, Narratives of Lakhon Chatri

1. INTRODUCTION

The preservation and continuation of Lakhon Chatri, a traditional Thai dance-drama rooted in the Nang Loeng community of Bangkok, aims to trace its historical development, identify effective preservation strategies, and examine the community's role in safeguarding this cultural heritage. Lakhon Chatri in Nang Loeng represents a distinctive form of Thai dramatic performance, reflecting a synthesis of Nora Chatri, Lakhon Nai (Royal Court Theatre), and Lakhon Ram (Central Thai Dance Drama). Within the community, families have long served as kinship-based custodians of knowledge, transmitting performance techniques, linguistic artistry, and cultural values from one generation to the next.

At present, however, most remaining Lakhon Chatri performers are elderly, typically aged sixty and above, which highlights the critical need for immediate and systematic preservation efforts. Ensuring the continuity of this art form requires raising public awareness of its cultural and historical importance and encouraging active participation from younger generations through creative initiatives that align with their interests and contemporary lifestyles. The residents of Nang Loeng continue to express deep affection and respect for Lakhon Chatri and related performing arts, demonstrating the community's enduring commitment to cultural preservation.

The most effective means of sustaining and revitalizing Lakhon Chatri lies in establishing structured dialogue and formal collaboration between community members and external organizations across both the public and private sectors. Such partnerships can lead to the formulation of clear, evidence-based policies and strategic frameworks that promote the preservation, transmission, and adaptation of Lakhon Chatri in modern contexts. Through coordinated, inclusive efforts, sustainable mechanisms can be developed to safeguard this traditional art form while ensuring its continued relevance and visibility in contemporary Thai society.

Trok Lakhon, a narrow lane rich in traditional art and performance culture, is located near Nang Loeng Market, connects to Lan Luang Road, and is situated close to Wat Sunthorn Thammathan (Khae Nang Loeng). The lane is home to a community of traditional performers, including artists of the Piphat ensemble (Thai classical orchestra), Lakhon Chatri, Likay (folk theatre), and Nang Talung (Southern Thai shadow puppetry). This neighborhood is widely recognized for its long-standing association with Thailand's



traditional performing arts and remains a vibrant center of cultural heritage in the heart of Bangkok.

Particularly noteworthy is Khru Phun Rueangnon's Lakhon Chatri troupe, which inherited its performance traditions directly from ancestors who migrated from Nakhon Si Thammarat during the reign of King Nangklao (Rama III). This lineage highlights the deep historical and cultural roots of the Nang Loeng community and its continuing contribution to Thailand's intangible cultural heritage. However, in 1982, a devastating fire swept through the Trok Lakhon area, destroying many houses and valuable tools and equipment used in traditional performances. The fire also consumed the shadow puppets used in Nang Talung, leading to the disappearance of this art form from the community and marking a significant cultural loss that disrupted artistic traditions carefully preserved for generations.

Despite the tragedy, several descendants of Mr. Phun Rueangnon rebuilt their homes in the fire-damaged area and undertook deliberate efforts to restore what had been lost. They gathered surviving tools and painstakingly recreated destroyed equipment, driven by a strong sense of duty to preserve and transmit the art of Lakhon Chatri. Their commitment has not only sustained the performance tradition but has also safeguarded the cultural knowledge embedded within it as a living heritage of the Trok Lakhon community. In contemporary times, the Piphat ensemble and Lakhon Chatri have received limited public attention, while other traditional genres once present in the area, including Khon (masked dance-drama), Nang Talung, and Likay, have already disappeared. Nevertheless, Lakhon Chatri Lan Luang and the Piphat ensemble continue to endure, owing to the sustained preservation efforts of the descendants of Khru Phun Rueangnon.

Lakhon Chatri originated during the Ayutthaya Kingdom, when royal court performers traveled to southern Thailand and introduced the art form to local communities. Over time, Lakhon Chatri gained widespread popularity in the South, particularly through performances of *The Tale of Phra Suthon and Manora*, which later evolved into the form known as Nora Chatri.

In 1769, King Taksin the Great of Thonburi led his forces to defeat the ruler of Nakhon Si Thammarat and brought the people back to the Thonburi Kingdom. Among them were performers who introduced a distinctive dramatic tradition that contributed to the development of Lakhon Chatri. In 1780, during the Emerald Buddha celebration, King Taksin invited performers from Nakhon Si Thammarat to present their art at the Royal Women's Court Theatre, further elevating its status and visibility.

Later, in 1832, during the reign of King Nangklao (Rama III), Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawongse (Dit Bunnag), then serving as Minister of the Treasury (Chao Phraya Phra Khlang), was dispatched to quell unrest in Thailand's southern provinces. Several southern Thai people accompanied him to Bangkok. Some were appointed to royal service, while others were resettled in the area now known as Lan



Luang Road and Damrong Rak Road, where they established performing groups to sustain their livelihood.

Lakhon Chatri is distinguished by its figurative and poetic language, conveyed through verse, lyrical song, and recitative narration. These artistic elements function not only as a medium of storytelling but also as a living repository of linguistic and cultural heritage, preserving folk literature and transmitting it across generations. The cultural dimension, as exemplified by Lakhon Chatri, forms the foundation of a strong and enduring community. It plays a vital role in fostering communal growth and guiding the transition toward modern society, while continuing to shape people's everyday lives and social practices (Kasempholkoon, 2018).

Cultural values influence people's ways of life and the social contexts in which they live, ultimately giving rise to what is known as cultural heritage or cultural capital, which shapes each society's distinctive identity. Cultural heritage can be broadly categorized into two types: 1) tangible cultural heritage, which includes physical artifacts such as buildings, museums, and objects; and 2) intangible cultural heritage, encompassing knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, traditions, and other non-material expressions of culture. Both types of heritage have been passed down from generation to generation, continually shaping people's thinking, behavior, and way of life. Therefore, they hold profound importance and must be carefully preserved to ensure their continued existence within the community (Nerngchamnong, 2020).

However, the preservation of Lakhon Chatri cannot rely solely on oral transmission from one generation to the next. Sustainable preservation requires systematic documentation and management of its cultural knowledge. This includes creating written records, evidence-based archives, and organized collections that safeguard scripts, performances, and linguistic elements. Through such structured preservation efforts, the art of Lakhon Chatri can be effectively taught, studied, and passed on, ensuring that its language, literature, and artistic traditions remain a living part of Thailand's cultural heritage.

Effective knowledge management plays a crucial role in preventing the disappearance of spoken narration, poetic verse, lyrical song, and literary artistry. By systematizing and disseminating this knowledge, Lakhon Chatri can be incorporated into educational curricula, integrated into classroom teaching, and promoted through digital platforms and cultural tourism initiatives. Such approaches not only preserve the art form but also expand its accessibility and relevance in contemporary society (Visetpricha, 2015).

Therefore, employing Khru Phun Rueangnon's and Khru Chongkon Pongnamchai's Lakhon Chatri troupes as case studies holds significant academic, practical, and cultural value. Both troupes exemplify effective knowledge management practices in preserving and sustaining the linguistic and literary dimensions of Lakhon Chatri. Their systematic approaches to teaching, documentation, and performance transmission serve as exemplary models that other communities can adapt and implement in their own cultural preservation efforts. Furthermore, these practices align with UNESCO's recommended principles for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, emphasizing community



participation, intergenerational transmission, and the integration of traditional knowledge into contemporary cultural contexts.

The researchers are interested in examining the integration of Lakhon Chatri's characters into tourism within the Nang Loeng community in Bangkok, to apply the findings to enhance and promote local tourism in sustainable ways. Establishing a distinctive cultural identity that captures tourists' attention is vital to increasing the community's visibility and appeal. The study's outcomes can contribute to the development of Lakhon Chatri-based cultural tourism initiatives, highlighting its artistic value, particularly the intricate craftsmanship of its costumes and stage aesthetics. These outcomes also reinforce its role as a unique cultural symbol of the Nang Loeng community.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To examine tourists' behavior toward the use of Lakhon Chatri as a means of promoting tourism in the Nang Loeng community
2. To investigate tourists' interest in the use of Lakhon Chatri for tourism promotion
3. To evaluate whether Lakhon Chatri can effectively promote tourism in the Nang Loeng community.

1.2 Research Questions

What are the characteristics and forms of integrating Chatri Drama and the promotion of community tourism in the Nang Loeng area?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Lakhon Chatri History

Lakhon Chatri's popularity has fluctuated over time, shifting from a widely admired traditional performance to a less prominent art form. During the reign of King Rama VII, its decline coincided with a period of significant political and economic transformation. The global economic downturn and Thailand's political transition deeply affected the nation's cultural landscape. Following the Second World War, rapid economic and social changes further influenced people's lifestyles and entertainment preferences, contributing to the gradual decline of Lakhon Chatri's prominence in Thai society (Songsiri, 2015).

These social and economic transformations profoundly affected Lakhon Chatri performers, particularly after 1957, when the art form experienced a sharp decline in popularity. The rise of modern entertainment media from abroad, including cinema, television, and later digital media, gradually shifted public interest toward new forms of leisure, causing Lakhon Chatri to fade from mainstream Thai society. In addition, the relatively high cost of staging a Lakhon Chatri performance, compared to other



traditional or contemporary art forms, made it increasingly difficult for troupes to secure employment. As a result, opportunities for performers dwindled, leading to a significant reduction in the number of active Lakhon Chatri artists (P. Ruengnon, personal communication, October 6 and November 17, 2018).

The Nang Loeng community comprises several palaces that once belonged to members of the royal family. This factor contributed to its emergence as one of Bangkok's central hubs of commerce and entertainment. Evidence indicates that the origin of Lakhon Chatri in this community dates back to the reign of King Nangklao (Rama III), between 1830 and 1832, when Somdet Chao Phraya Borom Maha Prayurawongse (Dit Bunnag) led military forces to suppress a rebellion in the southern provinces. Following the campaign, some residents from Nakhon Si Thammarat accompanied him back to Bangkok, then known as Phra Nakhon. Many of these individuals possessed artistic expertise, which later contributed to the establishment and flourishing of Lakhon Chatri in the area.

Recognizing their talents, King Nangklao appointed these southern followers as royal attendants under the Krom Kan Bun (Department of Merit-Based Conscription), an institution dedicated to the creation and performance of traditional arts such as Lakhon Chatri, Nang Talung, and the Piphat ensemble. Demonstrating his benevolence, the King also granted them land to settle in the Sanam Krabue area, which is present-day Lan Luang, as well as around Wat Sunthorn Thammathan (Khae Nang Loeng). Because many settlers were professional performers, Sanam Krabue subsequently evolved into a thriving center for traditional performing arts, laying the foundation for Nang Loeng's long-standing reputation as a cultural and artistic hub in Bangkok.

The term Lakhon Chatri originated from the introduction of Nora Chatri, a traditional performance from southern Thailand, to Bangkok. Over time, the art form evolved through its interaction with Lakhon Ram of central Thailand and Lakhon Nai, ultimately developing into what is now recognized as Lakhon Chatri. The performances typically draw upon royal literary works or Thai folk dramas centered on royal themes, reflecting both the aesthetic refinement and cultural values of their time (Klaymuk et al., 2007).

Archival evidence indicates that groups of Lakhon Chatri performers settled in the Sanam Khwai area, present-day Nang Loeng, during the reign of King Nangklao (Rama III). Among them, the troupe led by Khru Phun Rueangnon emerged as the most prominent, influential, and widely recognized ensemble of the period. The artistic lineage was sustained across generations, as seen in the mothers of Ms. Charuwan Suksakhon and Mr. Chukiat Kaeofacharoen, whom their great-grandmothers trained in the art of Lakhon Chatri. Both later became Nang Lakhon (female performers in traditional Thai drama) working under the guidance of Khru Phun Rueangnon and further contributing to the preservation of this cultural heritage. In addition to their collaboration with Rueangnon's troupe, they were also active members of the Thai Siri troupe, a theatrical ensemble renowned for performing ritual dances at the Bangkok City Pillar Shrine, as well as the Ban Narasin troupe, thereby extending the reach and continuity of Lakhon Chatri performance within Bangkok's evolving cultural landscape.



Traditionally, Lakhon Chatri adheres to distinctive stylistic conventions that integrate elements of Lakhon Nok (a lively folk drama originally performed for common audiences). Over time, the number of performers expanded to include both men and women, enriching the performance's visual and musical dimensions. While the traditional ensemble consisted primarily of Thon and Klong Tuk (drums), Krab (wooden clappers), Pi (an oboe-like wind instrument), and Ching (small cymbals), later adaptations occasionally incorporated the Ranat Ek, the leading xylophone in a Thai classical ensemble, to enhance melodic depth and texture.

At present, the role of Lakhon Chatri primarily involves ritual offerings and festive performances. Its enduring prominence in Bangkok's cultural scene is reflected in the frequency and duration of performances. Historical records indicate that Lakhon Chatri was once performed continuously throughout the day until evening, underscoring its significance as both a sacred and communal form of artistic expression.

However, confronting rapid social and cultural change has inevitably affected the livelihoods and continuity of Lakhon Chatri troupes. The challenges that arise from this transformation vary across groups, each requiring distinct strategies to sustain their artistic practice and cultural identity within a modernizing society. For example, the Lakhon Chatri Chongkon Prongnamchai troupe has faced a steady decline in audience numbers as younger generations increasingly turn to modern forms of entertainment, leading to a decrease in the popularity of Lakhon Chatri festive performances.

In response, the troupe has continually adapted its practices to remain relevant. In 1976, the Chongkon Prongnamchai troupe began performing Lakhon Chatri ritual dances at the Erawan Shrine (Phra Phrom Shrine), located at the Ratchaprasong intersection in Bangkok. These performances serve as sacred offerings to Phra Phrom, fulfilling vows made by worshippers whose wishes have been granted. This adaptation not only preserved the spiritual function of Lakhon Chatri but also provided a sustainable livelihood for troupe members, and this tradition continues to the present day.

Although younger generations still commission ritual dance offerings at various venues, performances have been considerably shortened, retaining only the ceremonial segment. The modern ritual performance now lasts about thirty minutes, whereas in the past it included multiple sequences such as Khiu singing (a vocal prelude), slow dance, fast dance, and Long La (the closing sequence). To maintain audience interest despite this reduced duration, the troupe has creatively modernized its repertoire by introducing new visual elements. For instance, a Chinese fan is used in the Fan Dance, a lotus flower serves as a prop in the Lotus Dance, and a garland features prominently in the Garland Dance (Fon Malai). These innovations demonstrate the troupe's ability to balance tradition and adaptation, ensuring that Lakhon Chatri remains both meaningful and appealing in contemporary Thai society (Klinsuepchuea *et al.*, 2019).



2.2 Lakhon Chatri Characteristics

Performance Style

It is a simple, entertaining, and interactive form of performance. It uses unique folk music and a few performers. The characters present a sense of humor. Improvised words are applied to current events. The music is a pipe band. The atmosphere of the performance is friendly, suitable for outdoor or auspicious events, with timely content, fun, and not strictly ceremonial—Khun Chang Khun Phan Kraithong—Reflecting on the motto of faith, good deeds, and love. Chatri drama originated in southern Thailand, from rituals and dances to worship the sacred, to be performed to communicate between humans and the supernatural for prosperity.

Costumes

The costumes are unique. Emphasis is placed on simplicity, conciseness, and agility, as it requires dancing and singing, wearing tight shirts, buttoning the face, using stingrays for mobility, and wearing colorful jewelry.

Narratives of Lakhon Chatri

The fun of the Chatri drama is its friendliness. The actors can insert jokes and wit and interact with the audience, making the drama "come to life. Therefore, Chatri drama is not only a performing art but a medium of faith, memory, and community identity.

2.3 Community-based Tourism Promotion

Community-based tourism promotion can be carried out in many ways, including:

Create Charm and Uniqueness for the Community

Chatri drama is an ancient performance, a part of the way of life, that is difficult to find. Chatri dramas often tell folk tales tied to local beliefs.

Increase Economic Value and Distribute Income to the Community

The Chatri drama exhibition generates income for the actors. Musicians and related persons, as well as tourists who come to see Chatri dramas, often spend money on souvenirs. Food, accommodation, and other services circulate income and create incentives for the preservation and inheritance of this branch of art.

Preserve and Restore Local Culture

The new generation appreciates the importance of learning, training, and inheritance. Therefore, Chatri Drama is a cultural heritage and a source of common pride for the community and the young generation.



Promote Learning and Cultural Exchange

In addition to being spectators of the show, tourists also learned from costume trials. Practice singing and dancing. This makes for a deeper experience than ordinary sightseeing. There is an exchange of knowledge and perspectives between them.

Create Memorable and Different Experiences

The community atmosphere, temple courtyard is different from watching in big theaters with impressive values, coupled with living stories, making it easier to understand the culture.

2.4 Research Framework

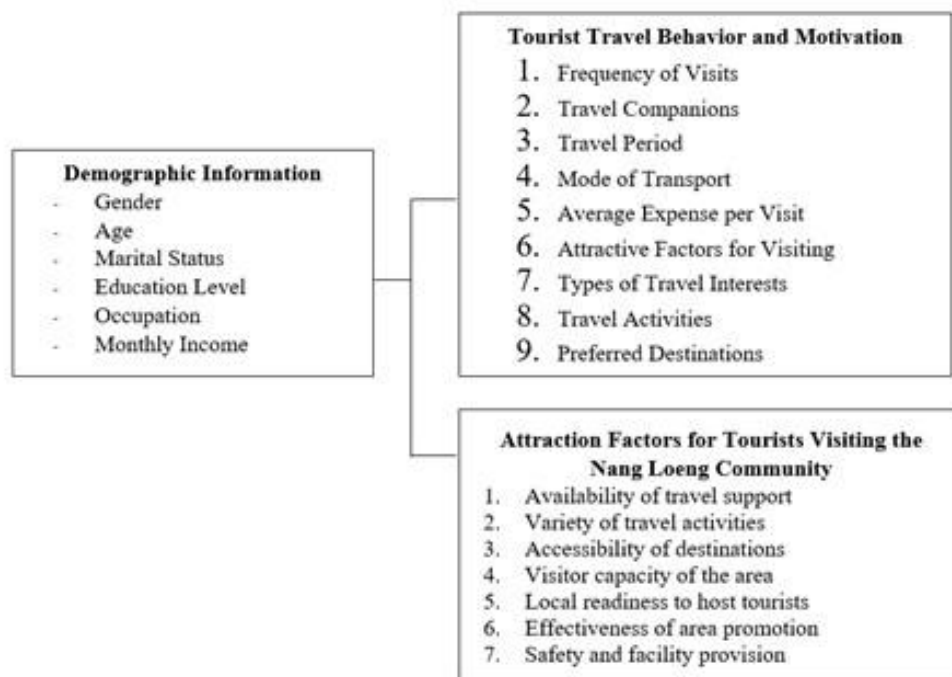


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods research design. The participants were tourists visiting the Nang Loeng community. The researcher used convenience sampling to select 400 respondents for the survey and purposive sampling to select 20 interviewees. To determine the appropriate sample size from an unknown population, the researchers applied Cochran's formula (Cochran, 1977 as cited in Akakul, 2000), aiming for a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The calculation yielded a sample size of 384



respondents. To further enhance data reliability, an additional 4% was added, bringing the total to 400 respondents. The formula is shown as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2}{4e^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2}{4 \times (0.05)^2}$$

$$N = 384$$

N represents the number of targeted respondents, Z is the z-value corresponding to the 95% confidence level (1.96), and e denotes the margin of error (0.05).

The research instrument was a questionnaire survey consisting of two parts. Part 1 included six checklist items focusing on tourists' behaviors related to the use of Lakhon Chatri to promote tourism in the Nang Loeng community, Bangkok, Thailand. Part 2 contained seven Likert-scale items that examined tourists' interest in using Lakhon Chatri to promote tourism in the same community. In addition, unstructured interviews were conducted to obtain supplementary qualitative data.

The researcher developed the survey for data collection and used it to evaluate its validity and reliability. Three experts examined the instrument's content validity, and revisions were made based on their feedback to achieve acceptable IOC (Index of Item–Objective Congruence) scores of 0.67 or higher. To further assess reliability, the researcher administered the survey to a pilot group of 30 participants who were not part of the actual study. The reliability coefficient, determined through Cronbach's alpha, was found to be 0.82. For data analysis, the researcher employed descriptive statistics. To address the first research objective, frequency and percentage were used, while the second objective was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. In addition, content analysis was applied to interpret the interview data.

The researchers went to the area to familiarize with the target group, conducted community activities, interviewed and discussed the questions and issues prepared through group discussions. The key informants were the experienced localists who have been working in the community with background knowledge in drama and tourism management in the community. The group consisted of 15 representatives of government agencies, the private sectors, community leaders, and tourism entrepreneurs. The unstructured interview was employed. The researchers analyzed data from group discussions, including observations, using content analysis according to the study. Triangulation verification was used to validate information from all data sources.

4. RESULTS

Table 1 shows Tourists' Behavior toward the Use of Lakhon Chatri for Promoting Tourism in the Nang Loeng Community

**Table 1.** Tourists' behaviors and needs (n=400)

Items	n	%
Frequency of Visits		
1. Once	105	26.25
2. Twice	126	31.50
3. More than twice	169	42.25
Total	400	100.00
Companions on the Trip		
1. Family	201	50.20
2. Friends	120	30.00
3. Solo	44	11.00
4. Group from an organization	31	7.80
5. Guided tour	4	1.00
Total	400	100.00
Visit Motivations		
1. Experiencing local life in Nang Loeng	206	51.50
2. Participating in Lakhon Chatri history lessons	153	38.25
3. Visiting cultural tourism sites	41	10.25
Total	400	100.00
Mode of Transport		
1. Personal car	305	76.25
2. Rental car/van	53	13.25
3. Guided tour vehicle	16	4.00
4. Fixed-route vehicle	11	2.75
5. Motorcycle	15	3.75
Total	400	100.00
Average Expense per Visit		
1. Less than 1,000 baht	203	50.70
2. 1,001–1,200 baht	157	39.30
3. 1,201–1,300 baht	30	7.50
4. More than 1,300 baht	10	2.50
Total	400	100.00
Attractive Factors for Visiting		
1. Beauty of the community	167	41.75
2. Art & culture (temples, palaces & ancient sites)	82	20.50
3. Local way of life	61	15.25
4. Being a historical travel destination	33	8.25
5. Being a culinary tourism destination	30	7.50
6. Local traditions and festivals	27	6.75
Total	400	100.00
Types of Travel Interests		
1. Historical Tourism	174	43.50
2. Culinary Tourism	60	15.00
3. Religious Tourism	54	13.50
4. Cultural Tourism	41	10.25
5. Nature-Based Tourism	26	6.50
6. Creative Tourism	24	6.00
7. Health and Wellness Tourism	18	4.50
8. Art and Cultural Tourism	3	0.75
Total	400	100.00



Regarding frequency of visits, 105 respondents (26.25%) had visited the Nang Loeng community once, 126 respondents (31.50%) had visited twice, and 169 respondents (42.25%) had visited more than twice. Regarding travel companions, 201 respondents (50.20%) traveled with family, 120 (30.00%) with friends, 44 (11.00%) alone, 31 (7.80%) with an organizational group, and 4 (1.00%) on a guided tour.

Turning to visit motivations, 206 respondents (51.50%) came to experience local life, 153 (38.25%) participated in Lakhon Chatri history lessons, and 41 (10.25%) visited for cultural tourism purposes. In relation to modes of transport, 305 respondents (76.25%) used a personal car, 53 (13.25%) rented a car or van, 16 (4.00%) traveled by guided tour vehicle, 11 (2.75%) used a fixed-route service, and 15 (3.75%) traveled by motorcycle.

About expenditure, 203 respondents (50.70%) spent less than 1,000 baht per visit, 157 (39.30%) spent between 1,001–1,200 baht, 30 (7.50%) spent between 1,201–1,300 baht, and 10 (2.50%) spent more than 1,300 baht. As for attractive factors, 167 respondents (41.75%) cited the beauty of the community, 82 (20.50%) referred to art and cultural sites such as temples, palaces, and ancient buildings, 61 (15.25%) mentioned the local way of life, 33 (8.25%) noted its historical character, 30 (7.50%) pointed to culinary tourism, and 27 (6.75%) highlighted local traditions and festivals.

Finally, regarding overall travel interests, 174 respondents (43.50%) expressed interest in historical tourism, 60 (15.00%) in culinary tourism, and 54 (13.50%) in religious tourism. Additionally, 41 respondents (10.25%) reported an interest in cultural tourism, 26 (6.50%) in nature-based tourism, 24 (6.00%) in creative tourism, 18 (4.50%) in health and wellness tourism, and 3 (0.75%) in art and cultural tourism.

Table 2 shows Tourists' Interest in Integrating Lakhon Chatri to Promote Tourism in the Nang Loeng Community

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of tourists' interest in the integration of Lakhon Chatri (n=400)

Tourism Resources	\bar{x}	<i>S.D.</i>
1. Lakhon Chatri Learning Center	4.84	0.367
2. Local Way of Life in Nang Loeng	4.61	0.489
3. Traditions and Culture of Nang Loeng	4.66	0.473
4. Tourist Attractions around Nang Loeng	4.52	0.500
5. Food, Souvenirs, and Desserts in Nang Loeng	4.67	0.472
6. Cultural Landmarks (Temples, Palaces, Ancient Sites)	4.66	0.473
7. Historical Sites	4.52	0.500
Total	4.64	0.196

As shown in Table 2, the majority of respondents expressed strong support for the use of Lakhon Chatri to promote tourism in the Nang Loeng community, indicating the highest level of overall agreement ($\bar{x} = 4.64$, *S.D.* = 0.196). In terms of individual categories, "Lakhon Chatri Learning Center" received the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 4.84$, *S.D.* = 0.367). This was followed by "Food, Souvenirs, and Desserts in Nang Loeng" ($\bar{x} = 4.67$,



S.D. = 0.472). “Traditions and Culture of Nang Loeng” (\bar{x} = 4.66, S.D. = 0.473) and “Cultural Landmarks (Temples, Palaces, Ancient Sites)” (\bar{x} = 4.66, S.D. = 0.473) ranked next with identical mean scores. The “Local Way of Life in Nang Loeng” was also rated highly (\bar{x} = 4.61, S.D. = 0.489), while both “Tourist Attractions around Nang Loeng” (\bar{x} = 4.52, S.D. = 0.500) and “Historical Sites” (\bar{x} = 4.52, S.D. = 0.500) shared the lowest mean score, though still at a high level of agreement.

Effectiveness of Lakhon Chatri in Promoting Tourism in the Nang Loeng Community

The analysis of Lakhon Chatri’s potential as a medium for promoting sustainable and creative tourism in the Nang Loeng community revealed the following key aspects: Lakhon Chatri’s potential as a tourism medium in the Nang Loeng community is both evident and distinctive. Its unique features, including elaborate costumes, traditional makeup, and expressive dance movements, serve as powerful visual and cultural attractions that can easily and effectively capture tourists’ attention.

Presenting Lakhon Chatri characters as part of tourism activities can help create a distinctive identity for the Nang Loeng area, making it more memorable and culturally engaging. The diverse storylines featured in Lakhon Chatri, ranging from tales of love and adventure to narratives rooted in Thai history, offer rich content that can be adapted to enhance the tourist experience. By showcasing these stories, visitors can enjoy an experience that is not only entertaining and joyful but also educational and emotionally engaging.

Moreover, the characters of Lakhon Chatri possess a high degree of adaptability, allowing them to be presented in diverse and changing contexts. Incorporating these characters into tourism activities can be done flexibly to suit different target audiences, making the experience more engaging and interactive. This adaptability encourages greater tourist participation, fostering meaningful cultural exchange and enhancing the overall appeal of the Nang Loeng community.

Presenting the characters of Lakhon Chatri within tourism activities can also promote community members’ active participation in planning, management, and operations. Such involvement not only empowers residents but also fosters a sense of shared ownership and pride in their cultural heritage. When community members collectively sustain and showcase Lakhon Chatri, the art form becomes a unifying force that strengthens social bonds and reinforces the community’s cultural identity.

Audiences who experience Lakhon Chatri can gain lasting and meaningful impressions, particularly when they have the opportunity to try on traditional costumes or learn about its rich history and origins. Such interactive and immersive experiences not only deepen tourists’ appreciation of Thai cultural heritage but also leave them feeling delighted, fulfilled, and emotionally connected to the Nang Loeng community.



Factors Integrating Lakhon Chatri to Promote Creative and Sustainable Tourism in the Nang Loeng Community

Regular Performances: Hold Lakhon Chatri performances regularly in various locations across the Nang Loeng area, such as temples, markets, and public spaces. Each performance should be thoughtfully adapted to suit the context and occasion.

Interactive Workshops: Organize participatory workshops that enable tourists to experience Lakhon Chatri firsthand, including activities such as learning basic Thai dance movements, applying traditional Thai makeup, and crafting traditional Thai costumes.

Cultural Products: Design and sell Lakhon Chatri-inspired souvenirs, such as T-shirts, postcards, and handmade crafts, to enhance visitors' cultural connection while supporting local artisans.

Cultural Routes: Develop travel routes that highlight the history and origins of Lakhon Chatri, guiding visitors to former residences of performers and other heritage sites associated with the tradition.

Promotion and Dissemination: Publicize Lakhon Chatri and related tourism activities through diverse media channels, including community websites, social media platforms, and printed materials such as brochures.

Sustainable Tourism

To ensure that these initiatives contribute to sustainable tourism, the following principles should be observed:

Cultural Preservation: Emphasize the authentic continuation of Lakhon Chatri and safeguard it from commercialization or cultural dilution.

Equitable Economic Distribution: Ensure that income generated from tourism is distributed fairly among community members.

Environmental Management: Implement practices that minimize negative environmental impacts resulting from tourism activities.

Community and Visitor Satisfaction: Foster a sense of satisfaction among both community members and visitors by ensuring that tourism activities are meaningful, inclusive, and beneficial to all stakeholders.

Continuous Development: Promote the ongoing development of community-based tourism through the continuous improvement and adaptation of local products and services to align with contemporary social and economic contexts.



5. DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Research Objective 1:

To examine tourists' behavior toward the use of Lakhon Chatri as a means of promoting tourism in the Nang Loeng community

To address this objective, data on tourists' visitation patterns and travel characteristics were first analyzed.

Regarding visitation patterns, 105 respondents had visited the Nang Loeng community once, 126 twice, and 169 more than twice. As for travel companions, most respondents reported traveling with family (201), followed by friends (120), while 44 traveled alone, 31 joined an organizational group, and 4 joined a guided tour.

Looking at motivations for visiting, 206 respondents came to experience local life, 153 to participate in Lakhon Chatri history lessons, and 41 to engage in cultural tourism. Regarding transport choices, 305 respondents used a personal car, 53 rented a car or van, 16 used a guided tour vehicle, 11 relied on a fixed-route service, and 15 traveled by motorcycle.

Regarding spending per visit, 203 respondents reported expenses below 1,000 baht, 157 between 1,001–1,200 baht, 30 between 1,201–1,300 baht, and 10 more than 1,300 baht. In terms of attraction factors, 167 respondents cited the community's attractiveness, 82 pointed to art and cultural sites, 61 mentioned the local lifestyle, 33 noted the area's historical value, 30 referred to culinary tourism, and 27 mentioned local traditions and festivals.

Finally, regarding types of travel interests, 174 respondents indicated 'Historical Tourism', 60 reported 'Culinary Tourism', and 54 reported 'Religious Tourism'. In addition, 41 respondents expressed interest in 'Cultural Tourism', 26 in 'Nature-based Tourism', 24 in 'Creative Tourism', 18 in 'Health and Wellness Tourism', and 3 in 'Art and Cultural Tourism'.

5.2 Research Objective 2:

To investigate tourists' interest in the use of Lakhon Chatri for tourism promotion

The findings revealed that most respondents strongly endorsed using Lakhon Chatri to stimulate tourism in the Nang Loeng community, yielding the highest overall agreement ($\bar{x} = 4.64$, S.D. = 0.196).

At the item level, the "Lakhon Chatri Learning Center" received the highest rating ($\bar{x} = 4.84$, S.D. = 0.367). It was followed by "Food, Souvenirs, and Desserts in Nang Loeng" ($\bar{x} = 4.67$, S.D. = 0.472). Both "Traditions and Culture of Nang Loeng" and "Cultural Landmarks (Temples, Palaces, Ancient Sites)" shared the same mean score ($\bar{x} = 4.66$,



S.D. = 0.473). The “Local Way of Life in Nang Loeng” was also rated very favorably (\bar{x} = 4.61, S.D. = 0.489). Meanwhile, “Tourist Attractions around Nang Loeng” (\bar{x} = 4.52, S.D. = 0.500) and “Historical Sites” (\bar{x} = 4.52, S.D. = 0.500) had the lowest means, though they still reflected a high level of agreement.

The findings align with Wanwichai (2017), who studied Lakhon Chatri Mueang Phet in Phetchaburi and concluded that preservation depends on fostering appreciation among younger generations. She emphasized the roles of government and private sectors in supporting conservation through clear policies and adequate funding, as well as integrating Lakhon Chatri into formal education. Similarly, Boonmee (2017) found that exposing Rajavinit Mathayom School students to Lakhon Chatri increased engagement, supporting its inclusion as an elective at the university level. The literature also stresses the need for varied public relations strategies, broader awareness campaigns, and the establishment of collaborative networks for knowledge exchange with other communities to ensure the long-term preservation of Lakhon Chatri.

5.3 Research Objective 3:

To examine the integration of Lakhon Chatri into tourism within the Nang Loeng community and to propose practical guidelines for promoting community-based tourism through the utilization of Lakhon Chatri. The findings highlight several practical recommendations to enhance the role of Lakhon Chatri in sustainable cultural tourism:

5.3.1. Integration into Cultural Activities:

Lakhon Chatri should be actively incorporated into various cultural events, including religious ceremonies and traditional Thai festivals, to ensure its continued presence in community life. In addition, online and social media platforms should be strategically used as cost-effective, far-reaching tools to promote awareness, participation, and appreciation of Lakhon Chatri among diverse audiences.

5.3.2. Development of Cultural Tourism Activities:

Activities that combine tourism with the preservation of local arts and culture should be developed to strengthen community-based tourism initiatives. Such integration not only facilitates the dissemination of cultural knowledge and wisdom but also enhances the visibility and perceived value of traditional practices. This approach aligns with the current trend in sustainable tourism, which seeks to expand cultural capital within communities while simultaneously supporting local economic growth.

5.3.3. Engagement of Younger Generations:

The preservation of Lakhon Chatri should be supported by efforts to raise public awareness and foster positive attitudes, especially among young people. Youth engagement is crucial, as they learn quickly, influence peers, and can sustain the tradition



by participating in related activities. Involving younger generations helps secure long-term cultural transmission and extends interest beyond the local community.

5.3.4. Intergenerational Transmission through Family Teaching:

The preservation and continuation of Lakhon Chatri should begin with its most fundamental form, namely, direct teaching and performance training within families. This traditional approach, in which skills, techniques, and cultural values are passed from one generation to the next, remains the cornerstone of sustaining the authenticity and vitality of Lakhon Chatri. Strengthening these familial teaching practices ensures that the art form's essence and identity are preserved within the community.

5.3.5. Digital Promotion and Knowledge Dissemination:

Lakhon Chatri, as an important form of Thai intangible cultural heritage, should be actively promoted through social media and digital platforms to broaden public awareness. Such promotion can educate new audiences, deepen understanding among those already familiar with the art, and keep Lakhon Chatri visible and relevant in contemporary society. Using online media as a cultural channel aligns with modern learning habits and supports long-term preservation through widespread digital exposure.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that the community collaborate with both the government and the private sector and establish dedicated groups or clubs to preserve and promote Lakhon Chatri. Such partnerships and organized efforts would make preservation more concrete and visible, enhance sustainability, and foster a stronger sense of pride and collective responsibility among community members.

6.2 Future Research

This study could only be explained in the Bangkok area of Thailand. Therefore, other areas should be included for further studies. Moreover, future research should not only explore additional forms of Thai literature applicable to academic and professional contexts, but also examine cultural heritage in other communities, particularly in relation to local awareness and appreciation. Such studies would reinforce the link between cultural heritage and contemporary scholarship while demonstrating how community pride and engagement contribute to the preservation and continuity of traditional culture for future generations.



DECLARATION

There is no conflict of interest. The author (s) declare that they did not use AI for text generation, except for software for grammar checking and paraphrasing.

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