

Article

The Feasibility of Upgrading Cultural Resource Tourism Routes in Betong District, Yala Province, Thailand, Under the Limitations of Border Areas

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Abstract

This study aimed to systematically categorize and critically analyze the feasibility of developing a cultural resource-based tourism route in Betong District, Yala Province, the southernmost area of Thailand, which is called “the city in the mist.” Research and development techniques were employed using a simulated map from an information system and community forums to create and revise a cultural resource-based tourism map in these areas: the Aiyoweng, Tano Maero, Betong, and Than Nam Thip Subdistricts. The participants from five communities, 10 people per community, totaling 50 participants, were selected through purposive sampling to join in drafting a cultural resource map by pinpointing important areas in each subdistrict. The fieldwork data collected in each subdistrict were categorized and the content was analyzed to examine the feasibility of the approach to creating a map based on cultural resources. The results found that the tourism patterns resulting from a strong resource base could be divided into tangible and intangible cultural resources. The selected resources include local food, learning centers, tourist attractions, interesting entertainment activities, and community service centers. These were then used to create a simulated map, which was analyzed to determine the feasibility of a tourism route based on resource capital, abundant forests, cultural capital in historical sites, and social capital that were covered in community tourism policies, plans, and guidelines for tourism management to achieve maximum benefits, resulting from the community process that had to jointly design the process. The results of this study are part of the restoration of tourism based on resources for income management and for local organizations to expand and upgrade tourism to the regional economic zones in the southern border provinces.



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Keywords: cultural resource-based; feasibility; tourism route; Betong District; border areas

1. Introduction

Betong is a district of Yala Province and is the southernmost town of Thailand, bordering the Malaysia states of Perak, Kedah, and Penang [1]. It is a sustainable, self-reliance model city with most of its revenue from tourism resulting from many infrastructures in the government development plans to accommodate tourists, such as the Betong Airport

Project, Aiyoeweng Sea of Mist Viewpoint Project, Aiyoeweng Skywalk, and the Community Tourism Project. These infrastructures have great potential for tourism growth, align with the objectives of the government's security policy, and receive continuous support from the provinces bordering the southern border. However, Betong was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the violent unrest in the three southern border provinces, which stalled for a period [2]. The creation of cultural and environmental values in the area must take into account cultural and external environmental values as well. To build on sustainability, local meetings must be organized to create trust and confidence among people of all ages. Having tourism tools requires consideration of improving standards in expanding community sharing to plan for continuous and targeted development. Community engagement is essential to reconstruct the past, raise local awareness, educate about cultural heritage, and promote the conservation and management of local cultural resources. Local tools must be used to bridge the gaps between policy and community experience to be culturally dynamic, laying the foundation for both policy and research. Moreover, the transportation system in Betong is not yet strong, which is one factor that tourists consider when deciding to visit Betong in terms of cost-effectiveness. Nevertheless [3], visitors also take into account the infrastructure and local way of life of the places they wish to visit. Betong has numerous interesting features that are related to its local history and natural way of life.

The growth of Betong has gradually improved. In the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan, B.E. 2566–2570, or A.D. 2023–2027 [4], the Policy Analysis and Plan Subdivision focuses on upgrading the competitive ability of the production and service sectors by promoting important products and services. This includes applying technological innovations created to respond to the needs of the new generation, with an emphasis on environmental friendliness linked with the local economic system. The development plan also incorporates the selection of border cities with policies, city plans, and tourism that are sustainably self-reliant. Development concept “triangle” It is one of the key concepts for effective border area development. As a result, the transportation system has been developed continuously, and tourism is an significant plan requiring urgent and concrete support. Developing a community-based tourism model requires ideas based on local wisdom, brainstorming, and assessment. The community must take ownership of the model to set the direction and make decisions to be proud of their local identities and share knowledge among people with different cultures [5]. In tourism management, the requirements for developing community-based tourism are based on the potential of the community and income distribution. It also requires field surveys for tourism feasibility, readiness for tourist attractions, and strong leadership, strengthening the community. Betong District has all these requirements and is strong in coordination with the management of different groups to have their participation in tourism activities. The survey [6] revealed that it stimulated history, integrated cultural resources, and promoted people's understanding to protect the community's resource base by producing tools to support the economy and improve community information. It is necessary to do this research so that the community will have the tools to drive the community economy and expand activities from strong community capital.

Therefore, developing alternative tourism routes is suitable because tourism will improve the quality of life among residents. It is a strategy that promotes tourism and is incorporated into the community, making it feasible [7]. In using bodies of knowledge to truly and creatively manage community-based tourism, the strategy serves as an indicator to better understand the characteristics of cultural ecosystems and transform their development and management from a problem-solving perspective. The starting point is the development of tourism routes to meet the necessities of tourists and provide them

with convenience [8]. The assessment must focus on the historical value of the community, not just a superficial study of relationships considering shared use, because even limited resources are located in a communal area. The study of the meandering nature of the environment is a limitation, with the crucial context of spatial use being the users [9]. Development practices aimed at mitigating negative environmental and economic impacts on the area, including the landscape, have limitations, relying more on visitor experiences to respond to area management than on subjective data collection. The groups of service utilizers will be provided with services of technological connections that are attractive innovations, convenient, and up-to-date. The community must have support from tourism networks and border trading. This study mainly utilizes community participatory research techniques to develop tourism in terms of tourist routes as destinations for the benefit of the community. Research questions regarding feasibility stem from three issues arising from the existing gaps: (1) What are the conditions of the border area in Betong District and the considerations of possible locations within the border region? (2) How is the potential of communities to develop border areas into development routes assessed through practical methods? (3) What are the frameworks for developing routes through community participation and ensuring sustainability in the border area's resilience?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cultural Route Management by Community

Cultural route management is one of the processes of activities, practices, and ways of thinking related to cultural resources of wisdom. Art and culture must create happiness together with a group of people. Cultural routes are produced to provide a holistic cultural experience appropriate to the context and to support the conservation of cultural heritage in controlling tourism activities through design based on principles and community participation, including a systematic thinking process in designing routes for efficiency and future utilization, which must consider the level of implementation as significant [10,11]. Cultural tourism management is a collaborative effort that requires a systematic approach through cooperation between the government, private sector, and the public. A clear system must be established, roles for receiving benefits must be defined transparently, and communities must establish fair practices to support local cultural entrepreneurs and community enterprises. Cultural resource management needs the classification of data on both tangible and intangible cultural resources involving cultural objects, traditions, beliefs, local foods, groups, and expressions. In addition, data on social interactions must be considered. Ref. [12] pointed out the importance of the concept of systematic cultural resource management. This approach requires systematic analysis and the storage of databases to support the organization and its personnel in the future [13]. Cultural tourism routes need to be designed to attract both new and existing tourists, distribute benefits equally, and generate profits for the community while also considering both accommodation and tourism costs. This study explored the possibilities of pilgrimage routes as intersections between cultural heritage, tourism, and rural development using digital technologies and narration.

New ideas are explored and developed in the innovation process network, which prioritizes allocating community resources. Managing culture requires action and community participation, as well as addressing barriers to data management, such as effective decision-making, platform management, transparency, and accountability. Upgrading cultural resources requires upgrading products to support modern tourism as an incentive for tourist destinations. Therefore, a key gap in the resource base for management is the need to create new tourism experiences through unique activities, transfer routes, and develop products for applications [14]. Another gap in the feasibility of the route survey

is the issue of cultural heritage, tourism, and considering the strengths of the local area before using the tool [4]. Discussions and exchanges of opinions and the confirmation of community identity are important in designing the revival of local culture. It is also a way to convey the value of history that must draw out the potential in important places, exhibitions, food, and people's way of life to be used as selling points in identifying the tourism route. The selection criteria for the resource base, both in terms of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the area, are therefore important in expanding the scope of tourism. In addition, the design of tools must include products and services in the data presentation package [15]. Applying the concept of tourism route planning to research in the Betong District will be able to close the gaps and determine the direction and important points that respond to the level of implementation in work and the self-management of both the community and the agency. Conservation and propulsion create tourism value, which must be applied with technology and tools for tourism management. Refs. [16–18] point to the feasibility of upgrading cultural resource tools to support work as a method for pre-investing in economic matters, including cost-benefit analysis in decision-making as a preliminary assessment for greater efficiency. This compares the possibility to traditional modeling, filtering through perceived cultural differences and similarities, and proving underlying factors from group experiences to ensure appropriate future support. Possibility is one experimental process to see satisfaction, efficiency, cultural communication, and the stability of future operations.

2.2. Tourism Potential and Feasibility Concept

There are potential limitations in capacity and growth of the tourism sector in Thailand in terms of natural resources. Cultural heritage is a policy that has been put forward as a strategy for proactive development in leveraging community potential. Emphasizing that people should work together to conserve, take care of, maintain, and restore natural resources within and outside the community is conducive to developing a strong community and strategies for developing defenses in building knowledge management. Social network representations indicated that community tourism network potential and intercommunity relationships (horizontal network) were generally high for better network improvement [19]. The perception of potential principle is one of the processes for creating a collaborative network. This involves two principles: (1) the map-making approach and (2) risk perception, which is a tool that was used as a questionnaire for members to see their own potential [20]. Community potential analysis requires the extraction of community potential. Internal factors are social and economic dimensions. External factors involve physical dimensions and the community environment.

The last factor is the matter of law and policy. It is a tool for analyzing potential through the perspective of the community, from the potential of the community to explore its historical and current area. The general infrastructure must be considered for the potential of activities that provide opportunities and platforms to benefit the community, which can be extended in the future. Managing tourism development approaches and opportunities, the limitations of the area are to anticipate situations, including the area, facilities, safety, and the effectiveness of response, as well as driving the relationship of the structural functions of the enforcement of the people in the area, including understanding and not violating the original local history without aiming for the need to be an economic area [21]. In managing sustainability, it is necessary to set rules and regulations to control both insiders and outsiders. This entails the integration of the labor sector of the community in tourism management in enhancing skills. Tourism potential must be adjusted in line with new trends, the private sector, and the business sector in responding to places, routes and tourism activities. It also includes accommodation to increase future interest, adjusting

tourism activities so that tourists can come in every season of tourism, and increasing the variety and distribution of income to the local community by adapting to the Betong District in the Yala Province in increasing tourism activities. There are four major issues in adding value to tourism products and services: (1) creating more value add, including issues in terms of human development; (2) man-made attractions, i.e., (3) Having a comprehensive infrastructure system, the capacity to develop both transportation and safety management systems, and (4) recognizing and giving importance to knowledge from outsiders coming into the area from tourism experience to increase the chances of being a good host and responding to the need for repeat tourism [22]. Community participation in developing potential must include positive tourism behaviors, as they are a good stimulus and support for tourism agencies to reduce conflicts in tourism management that will negatively affect the future. Ref. [23] Development and activities related to tourism in a limited context, an important consideration is the readiness of the area's local people to welcome and cope with the influx of tourists. Furthermore, feasibility contributes to a more flexible selection of information, reducing disparities and increasing equality. Ref. [24] points out that route planning requires landscape indicators to determine points and techniques and strategies to seek the value of the area, so as not to lose the identity crisis in the transfer of information to be disseminated in the public sphere. Ref. [25] studied heritage management focusing on cultural heritage sites with legal limitations and explored the understanding of overlapping community spatial structures to generate increased economic value. Ref. [26] discussion focused on the feasibility of developing technical routes, emphasizing the necessity to regulate the area, preserve local identity and materials, and integrate them with contemporary local technologies. These limitations impact the sustainability of community resource utilization. The research findings, which provide a framework for developing areas with limitations, can be summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Summary table of feasibility studies in border areas and their application. Created by Boonwanno.

Topic	Year	Concept	Apply	No. Reference
Value-based optimization model for cultural route design: Ancient water supply heritage of Istanbul (Türkiye)	2024	Route simulation design creates an experience through an optimization model. It uses area selection criteria based on historical periods to provide data dimensions and conditions for route planning. It employs quantitative calculations combined with heritage value assessments.	- Criteria for data selection should be based on the experiences of people living in the area - Limitations regarding the feasibility of reducing tourism density must be considered - A system that does not undermine the crisis and community identity must be established - The value of heritage must take into account its historical significance to the place	[27]
Developing the cultural route evaluation model (CREM) and its application on the Trail of Roman Emperors, Serbia	2016	Employed a simulation-based approach through narrative-based experience, developing models for evaluating main values and tourism-specific values, analyzing routes, and directly testing them at cultural sites.	- Develop an assessment model to evaluate accuracy and potential - Select tourist attractions based on narratives for further development. - Develop criteria using the cultural route evaluation model (CREM) - Apply the model for selective targeting, rather than reinforcing stereotypes	[25]

Table 1. Cont.

Topic	Year	Concept	Apply	No. Reference
Feasibility and challenges of cultural landscape and countryside conservation: A case study of the Ngong Ping Tea Factory	2025	Examines rural areas under pressure to develop appropriate tourist attractions through local participation, utilizing historical methodology, in-depth field landscape surveys, and experimental processes by the research team.	- Identify areas that are vulnerable yet still have development potential - Analyze feasibility by considering constraints as a specific criterion - Conduct field surveys based on historical data	[28]
Designing cultural routes as a tool of responsible tourism and sustainable local development in isolated and less developed islands: The case of Symi Island in Greece	2023	Examines routes in remote areas using a mass tourism development process and the potential impacts of tourist attractions by utilizing multi-sectoral data, including networks, integration, and integrated planning methods to identify key points in the area.	- Studying information on important sites along with future technological development trends - Emphasizing participation in designing historical and cultural activities - Developing a network system for further development	[29]
Analyzing cultural routes and their role in advancing cultural heritage management within tourism	2023	Examines activities that combine entertainment and learning through pathways connecting with history, utilizing heritage sites, learning experiences, and user-centered management based on the PRISMA methodology.	- Study information on important sites alongside future technological development trends - Emphasize participatory approaches in the design of historical and cultural activities - Develop a network system to support further development	[30]
Digital strategies to enhance cultural heritage routes	2023	Cultural heritage routes promotes historical learning by using drones to record historical data, including surveying, collecting, and analyzing heritage sites, reducing steps and enabling the projection of 3D data and GIS systems.	- Extend connections to nearby and surrounding areas - Develop tools that are appropriate to the location and to activities within a limited area - Acknowledge that certain limitations may lead to the omission of intangible cultural information, which is a sensitive issue that requires careful consideration	[31]
Assessing the feasibility of PPPs for cultural heritage enhancement in UNESCO sites: The case of Matera (Italy)	2025	Managing the education of World Heritage sites in limited areas requires collaboration between the public and private sectors in historical cities. This includes analyzing internal and external factors, as well as using data and create a tourism foundation, in order to reduce long-term conflicts regarding budgets.	- Design activities that promote sustainable tourism - Develop tools to analyze investment trends in the private sector - Recognize that delayed or insufficient government cooperation may lead to conflict	[32]

Table 1. Cont.

Topic	Year	Concept	Apply	No. Reference
Evaluation of alternative travel routes concerning environmental considerations, individual expectations, and requirements	2026	Developing environmentally alternative routes in border areas must reflect user needs and travel limitations. Analysis of factors affecting the effectiveness of various approaches is crucial for spatial resilience	- Consider constraints in the identification of routes - Establish evaluation criteria that incorporate environmental factors to support route development - Recognize that reviewing experiential data may involve sensitive information that certain groups may be reluctant to share	[23]

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. The Target Groups

Participants are representatives from all five communities, totaling 50 persons divided into 4 groups: 10 community leaders, 25 community representatives, 10 representatives of the government sector, and 5 representatives of the private sector. The selection of the target group was done by selecting a group of informants using the guidelines of [33] in the piloting of qualitative research studies. The group must pilot the study by dealing with and understanding the data. The process involves study tools that have systematic steps and corrections of the design of the data set, which leads to efficient data management of the study.

3.2. Data Collection

The implementation of a model for tourism development titled “Betong has good things to share” was used to investigate the conditions and potential of cultural resources, which were the strong points of the area. The research team used the criteria for evaluating the survey based on the approach in [34], as it aligned with the feasibility study’s comprehensive approach encompassing cultural contexts while maintaining attention to economic, social, and environmental links. This approach allows for a project appraisal that explores the feasibility of developing routes within the constraints of the area, considering site suitability, technology and operational allocation; resource management in case of tourism; and the needs of the local people without compromising their way of life. These criteria were used to design the interview methodology, focus group discussions, brainstorming activities, and development processes. A feasibility scale is provided for considering locations based on the following elements.

3.3. Research Instruments

A model for drafting community maps. The semi-structured interview questions were open-ended to cover the data stated in tourism development. The interviews were to identify the potential of the communities to develop tourism routes based on the resources in the areas through the implementation plan of mapping within the scope that had been set. The study used the method in [35] to confirm data collection. In confirming the results, it must rely on the principles of both relationships that occur, confirmation from the conversation (dialog), and collecting interactions between the interviewer and the researcher (interaction). This involved summarizing the research (inquiry brief), reflection of the semi-structured interview, analysis and checking with members (member checking) to show the reliability of the data (credibility), and triangulation.

3.4. Analysis

The data were obtained by exploring the concepts of cultural route management, tourism potential concepts, data analysis classification, and synthesis from focus groups. Then, they were categorized before content analysis was performed, followed by a descriptive analysis of the phenomena that occurred.

3.5. Data Validation

Data triangulation was performed concerning the schedules for behavioral observations and interactions during the interviews. Methodological triangulation was also performed to validate the data in terms of the related theories, field data collection, and data collection methods. The documents were validated for interpretation for data accuracy.

3.6. Protection of the Rights of the Main Informant

The interview questions used for data collection were constructed to avoid content that could cause conflict and that could be sensitive. Research ethics were the main concern, and the rights of the target groups were protected. The researchers displayed their research ethics certificates. This research was certified by the Human Research Ethics Committee from Boromarajonani College of Nursing, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, No. E-05/2565., approval date: 23 December 2022. The study's objectives and research methods were explained to the informants, who were allowed to ask questions. The data were kept with strict confidentiality to prevent damage to individuals and organizations.

3.7. The Process of Reflecting on and Confirming the Feasibility of the Information

Emphasis is also needed on information about all the tourist attractions on the routes, and the stories of these attractions should be linked, gathered, and presented as a theme to attract tourists' interest. Therefore, the researchers of this study decided to create a title or theme for the model, namely "Betong has good things to share", to gather the potential of all five subdistricts of the Betong District and design a variety of tourism routes suitable for tourists. This research utilizes the Research and Development (R&D) concept, based on the framework of [36], methodology based on cultural resources, which consists of 4 steps as follows: (1) The data preparation stage: Analyze documents in the preliminary content of the field study; using the activity, survey the field area first. Use the data by identifying important points; manage the data and informally interview those involved in the area; manage the data and select tourist areas from the initial data. studying the current situation and contextual needs (R1) (2) Plan: Categorize the data according to important points, which are the tourist facilities and opportunities for developing network connections, and check the accuracy and appropriateness of the location. Confirm the results of the route with people who are familiar with the area to confirm the data and interpretation. The research team uses important events in the area as a point for considering the data. Design combined with Development (D1) as a process, (3) Brainstorm, revise and develop the map, present the needs of the tourism network, organize a group meeting with the community committee on the map data, and plan with the community to summarize the results of the data from all 5 subdistricts. defining the structure, form, process, or components of developing an innovation framework and prototype, Formative Evaluation (R2) (4) Revision (D2) to confirm the results of the data, opportunities for implementation, and evaluation to improve the potential of the plan, Confirm the results for verification. The research team initially brought the revised map from the community committee to confirm the points of the location again and confirm, suggest, and adjust important points. Organize a group meeting of the information providers and exchange and confirm important points to be specified in the map. The feasibility of making a map involves the analysis of

important places and long-term development with the selection of designated locations and conclusions on the possibility of upgrading the tourism of cultural resources in the tourism development of the Betong District, Yala Province, Thailand (see Figure 1). The information above serves as a step-by-step checklist for the research process, illustrating the consideration of the feasibility of developing tourism routes in a limited area., highlights the limitations of special areas, emphasizing the need for systematic verification during the selection process.

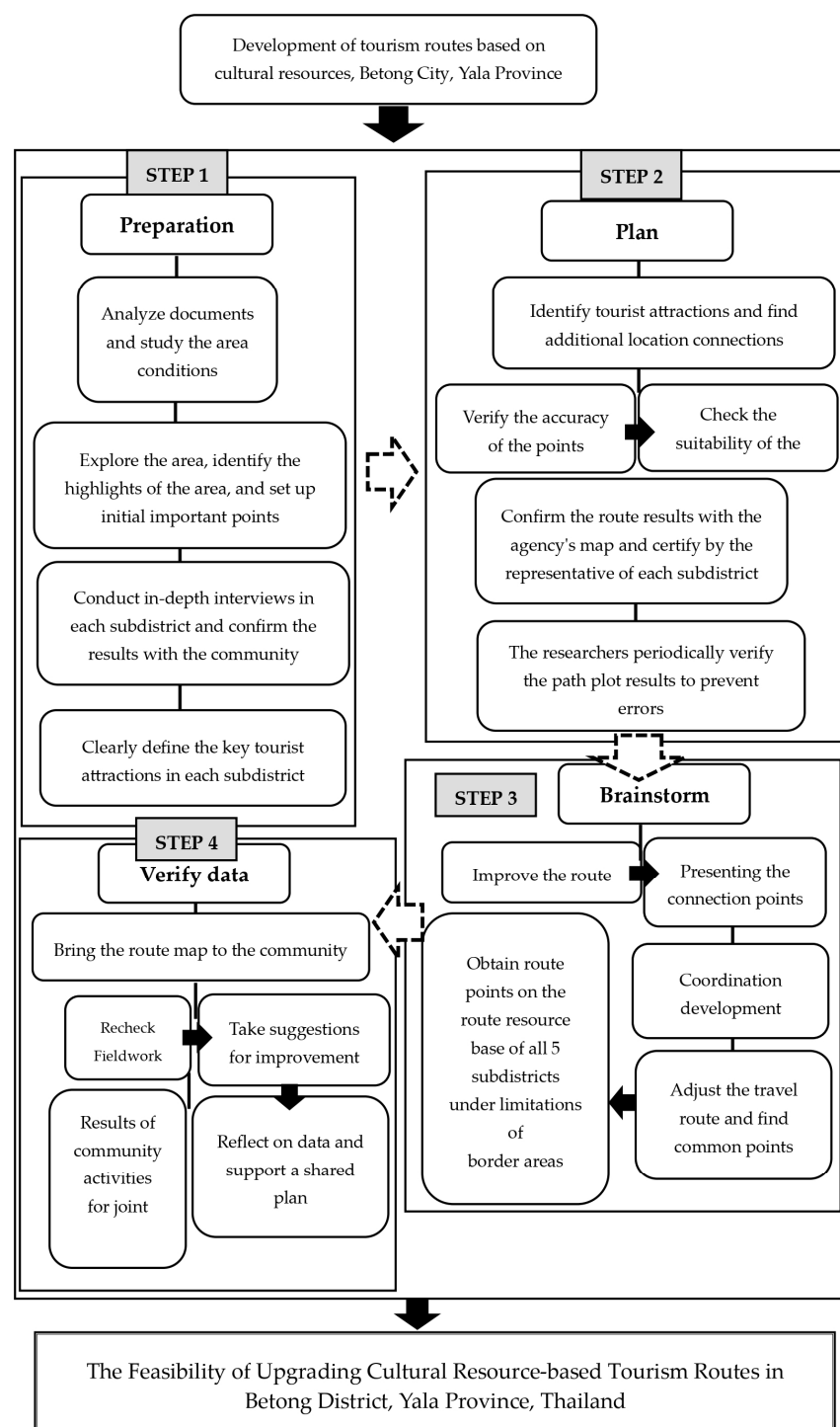


Figure 1. Process of verifying feasibility based on spatial constraints to confirm the result. Created by Boonwanno.

4. Results

The study results related to the resource capital for cultural tourism management in the Betong District, Yala Province, revealed that the cultural resources of the district were good capital for tourism route development. The field data collected were classified into tangible and intangible cultural resources. The data were collected according to the criteria set for the study area survey and validated with a group process. The two types of data were (1) intangible cultural resources, such as beliefs, rituals, and wisdom, and (2) tangible cultural resources that were further classified into local foods—both savory and sweet, community learning sources, major places in the community, interesting places, and community service centers. The communities were asked to set the places using colors to distinguish them according to topics. Furthermore, promoting awareness and recognition of the community's strong potential and resources is crucial for conservation from within. The following steps and details were utilized.

4.1. The Model Maps and the Points Assigned to Resource Bases

4.1.1. The Original Map Base as a Guide and the Exploration of Abandoned Areas

The model of all subdistricts were obtained through maps. The Betong District is located next to the Thai–Malaysian border (See Figure 2), map shows the clustering of border towns and the location of areas with dense resource bases, representing a diverse range of urban elements. the representatives of the community committees considered and explained the details and brainstormed about important places in their communities. They had meetings among the groups for consultations and to start drawing a map of their community. They used an empathy map canvas, a tool that helped them understand the context of their communities in the design thinking process to give the target groups a better understanding of the areas and expectations of the area changes. Consequently, they could understand the insights of the group of designers through the community maps that resulted in a form of social innovation. The researchers consulted the communities about designing the community maps for data confirmation and in-depth interviews. The communities drew maps to identify the scopes of important places using different assigned colors to ensure clear grouping and the potential of tourism route development. Important places resulted from the community forums and group meetings.

After studying data from community maps and government maps (including government maps for verification), the survey found several areas with limitations requiring restoration and development of routes, and consideration of the possibility of further access to these areas, such as (see Figure 3, location (a)—Ban Wang Kao Bridge, community transportation history, original natural routes; location (b) Village—village name sign and community cultural landscape that still lacks restoration). The field survey provided the research team with a set of data to group possibilities and confirm the readiness for data compilation. The research attempts to study the conditions for developing development pathways from an insider's perspective based on maps, and whether this impacts actual development. Furthermore, it examines how these limitations act as structural mechanisms, highlighting the crucial role of care and collaboration through the possibility of understanding the balance between limitations and opportunities.

4.1.2. Community Maps and Conclusion for Tourism Route Development

Therefore, mapping community tourism routes (See Figure 4, for example, location (a)—map demonstrating routes drawn by the community, Betong, and subdistrict (b)—map demonstrating routes drawn by the community, Aiyerweng subdistrict) is a way to overcome obstacles and challenges. Its dynamic role and cultural fluidity represent a policy strategy, but limitations stemming from field surveys to verify data reveal both limitations and the

inherent value of historical artifacts. The research team then considered this data set to test its authenticity. Boader areas, in another dimension, are like marginalized regions; without tourism, development is lacking.

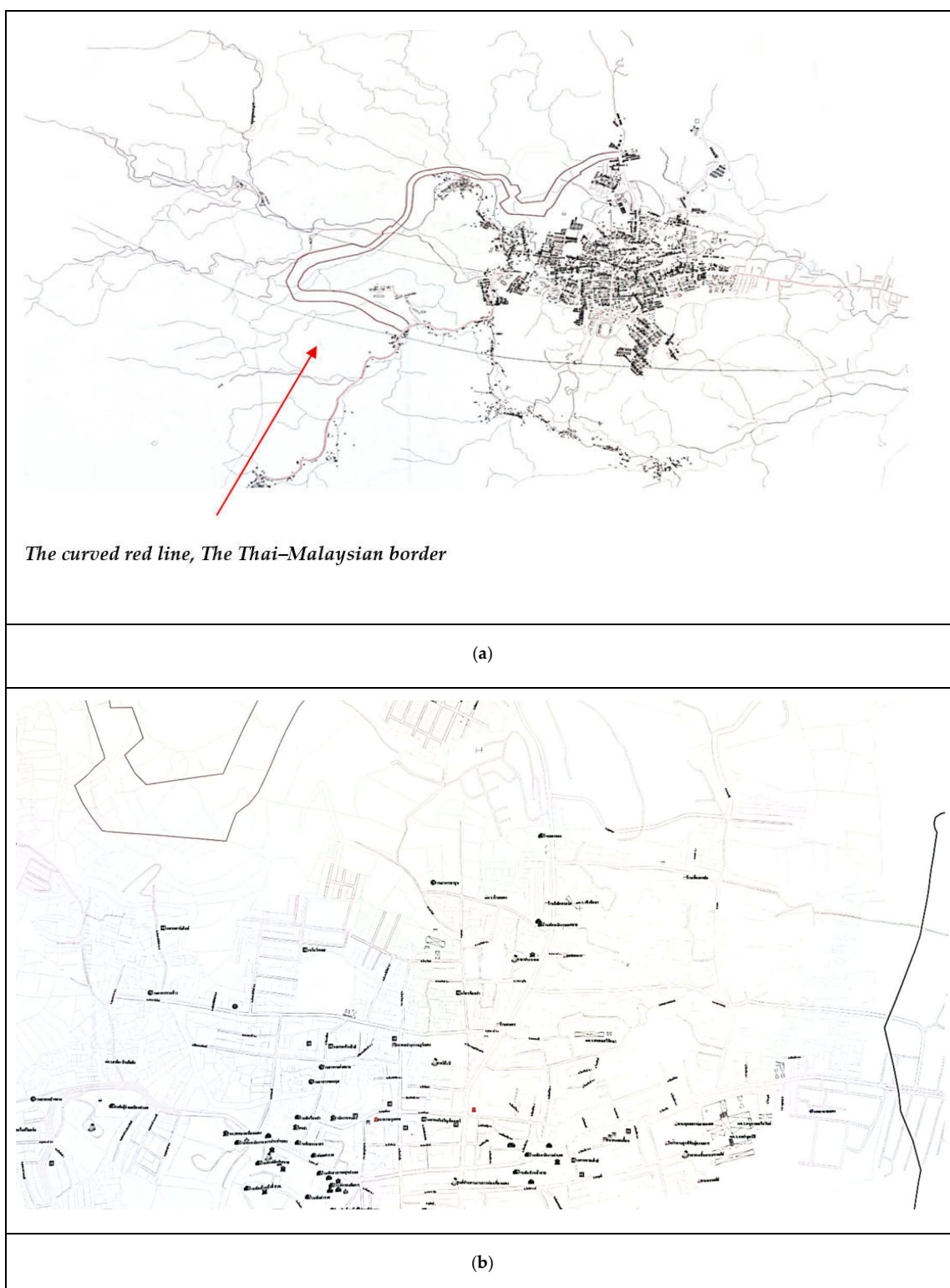


Figure 2. An overview map from a survey conducted by a government agency, but it does not specify cultural resource locations. Source: (a) Betong Municipality, Betong District, Yala Province, Thailand and (b) A map showing the distribution of key cultural landmarks in Betong was used as a framework for considering possibilities between the research team and local people.



(a) The old Ban Wang Bridge: a cultural asset beginning to deteriorate



(b) Signs displaying the cultural landscape of the village are in need of restoration

Figure 3. Historical community sites and abandoned signposts.

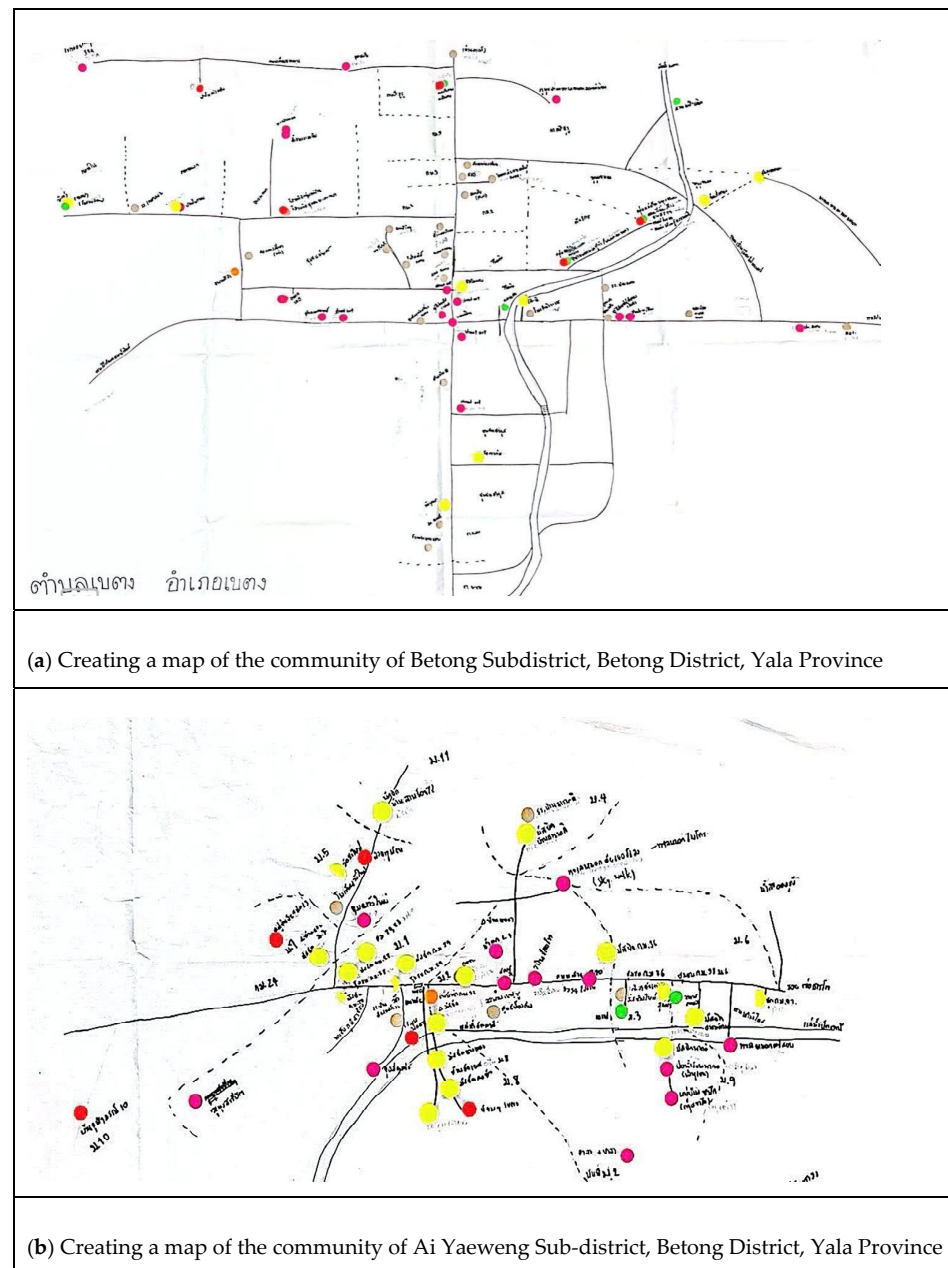


Figure 4. A community-created map identifying possible routes to cultural resources, a product of a research project.

As observed in the diagram, Betong District is strategically located to develop its potential as a cross-border cultural network. The limitations of having tourism routes lie in mitigating risks and increasing the attractiveness for those seeking novel cultural experiences. It was found that all five subdistricts had three types of capital that could be upgraded. The resource capital is the natural capital, which refers to the strengths of the area connected to the natural way of life, such as forests, the Bahala forest area, areas bordering Malaysia, and the agricultural lifestyle of the community. In addition, the cultural capital, which relates to historical sites and migration patterns for work that have been significant to the local economy, is also important. Examples include the former communist village, the hundred-year-old village, the shrine, and the ancient house, which embody the area's power in belief systems, rituals, and cultural heritage. Ref. [37] analyzes issues of connectivity, cultural heritage conservation, structural identity, participatory infrastructure, and social acceptance, extending to investment. The research highlights the unavoidable structural

problems of the city of Hale, considered a vulnerable group. Therefore, the proposed routes are not designed for a single group but must address the needs of vulnerable communities. A review by [38] examines the limitations of Goa Maria Golo Kaca and Goa Maria Rekas, similar to the case study of Betong. The key to creating convenient routes is to cater to all age groups in the area. Thus, management and participation are essential to solving logistical challenges in accessing these communities and showcasing the spirit of previously lost communities. This was also taken into consideration in the selection process for the case studies.

The calculation is based on a five-level scale. An average of 1.00–1.80 indicates the lowest potential; 1.81–2.60 indicates low potential; 2.61–3.40 indicates medium potential; 3.41–4.20 indicates high potential; and 4.21–5.00 indicates the highest potential. A score of 4.21 or higher is considered sufficient for the data to be used as a basis for evaluation [39]. Once the feasibility ranking and site selection were completed according to the scale, a focus group was conducted with the community to confirm the results, and a schedule could be finalized based on the cultural resources of all five areas in Betong, as summarized in Table 2 (see Table 2).

These aspects illustrate the long-standing human presence in the Betong area. Another type of capital is social capital, which includes economic-related aspects such as urbanization, the fact that Betong borders Malaysia, and the construction of Betong International Airport, which is a factor contributing to the growth of Betong. Interviews using open-ended questions with related organizations and the people sector found that there were interactions among them, strong in coordination with the management of different groups to have their participation in tourism activities. Cultural routes are a production to provide travel experiences. If there is a program to support tourism, it is also a tangible conservation of the area because, in another sense, it stimulates the economy and calls up the collective memory of society. The tools that have been developed can be extended with modern technology for use by the new generation. Creating jobs, occupations, and networks for the Betong District was the way to manage suggestions from the participatory forums and create a border town with economic drivers (BCG) on the Thai–Malaysia border [40]. Therefore, route development requires feasibility studies in limited areas after gathering information on their potential and strengths. This involves surveying actual areas with development opportunities, listening to community opinions and stakeholders, and sharing shared experiences. It also allows for the negotiation and clarification of flexible urban requirements [41]. Furthermore, strategies for adapting to situations arising in border areas are crucial in managing route development.

The evaluation of cultural pathway models from Table 2 above is based on the constraint framework of cultural diversity management and development, which [42] clearly indicate that the value of modeling in the study of special historical pathways requires pathway constraints related to the application of historical thought sets and diagnostics to lead to comparative evaluations for application strategies. Ref. [43] propose that the study of conditions, which are limiting factors, can be used to understand and compensate for declining natural resources, representing an empirical study of the relationship between spatial data sets in geography and history. Shared culture is, in essence, a matter of power and the role of fundamental spatial structures in crucial territorial boundaries [44,45]. Considering the important role of participation in local networks, the structural system, to create a shared tradition, is a process of collaborative management, building shared responsibility and emphasizing the elements of cultural pathways as links to common focus points. This involves social interaction with a core cultural element, spreading from small pathways to network connections. This involves a selection process where insiders have ties to the area.

Table 2. Cultural resource base, strengths, and feasibility for route planning.

Categorization	Aiyoeweng Subdistrict	Tano Maero Subdistrict	Betong Subdistrict	Than Nam Thip Subdistrict	Yarom Subdistrict
Tangible Cultural Heritage Plays an Important Role in Tourism Routes Development					
Local Culinary Specialties	Ancient Coffee/Pizza with Pla Nin Sai Nam Lai Topping/Halal Soup/Dorae Soup	Chue Wu Watercress Garden/Betong Grass Jelly (Two places)	Betong Noodles/Betong Chicken	-	-
Sources of Learning	Chulabhorn Phatthana Village 10/Chulabhorn Phatthana Village 10 Community Museum/the 1000-year tree (Chulabhorn Phatthana Village 10)	Fish farming: Raising Pla Nin (Nile Tilapias) in water from a flowing river, Pla Chin (carps) in ponds, and Pla Phluang Chomphu (Cyprinidae) in ponds	Betong Municipal Old Community Cultural Learning Center	Homestay Camping Site	
Tourism Assets	Aiyoeweng Sea of Mist/Tae Pusuchu Hanging Bridge/Gunung Silipat Viewpoint/King Rama 9	Betong Winter Flower Garden/the 1000-Year-Old Tree/Piyamit Tunnel/Inthason	The 54 A Sign (Siam Southernmost Border)/Mongkhonrit Tunnel/Street Art 1–5/the Original	Pae Kong Shrine/the Modeled Siam Southernmost Milestone 53A/Siam Southernmost Curves 54 A (Two	Naho Community (Ancient community) 2 sides/Chantharattanaram Monastery (Pae Kong Mai)/Betong
	Waterfalls/Aiyoeweng Rafting Point/Na Ko Hot Springs/Sakai Village/Hala Bala Forest	Waterfall/Betong Mu 2 Hot Springs/100-Year-Old Houses Mu 1/the 150-Year-Old Hakka Village	Mailbox/the Modeled Mailbox/the Clock Tower/Gunung Palong Sea of Mist/the City Gate/OK Betong Sign (Check-in point)/Sud Siam Park/Betong Customs House/Wat Phuttha Thiwat/Wat Phothisatto Chaomae Kuan Im/Betong Central Mosque/Charo Ganga Sea of Mist/Charo, Ayam Cave/Cjharo Ganga Viewpoint/Toni Shrine (Betong Wira Ratprasan School) Betong City Municipal Stadium	Curves)/Chap Yi Lui Sign (12 Satang Sign)/Ban Daeng Mu 4(the Red House)/Tai Tong Sea of Mist/Than Nam Thip Waterfalls (7 levels)/Bua Daeng (Red Lotus) Pond	International Airport/Ban Suan Mai 100-Year Bridge
Leisure Activities	32 Km. Tea Shop	Taiguns Shooting Range, Betong		-	-
Community Service Facilities	Ban Wang Mai/Tono Maero Subdistrict Administrative Organization School/Ban Than Mali School/Ban Mai School/Ban Aiyoeweng School/Betong Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office	Thairath Witthaya 94 School/Tano Maero Subdistrict Administrative Organization/Betong Yala International Meditation Center	Betong Post Office/Betong District Office/Betong City Municipality/Betong Hospital/Betong Immigration Checkpoint/Jongfa Foundation School	Than Nam Thip Subdistrict Administrative Organization/Border Checkpoint 4406	Yarom Subdistrict Administrative Organization/Rubber Authority of Thailand, Betong Branch/Betong Hospital

Note: This table was developed by the research team based on fieldwork results, with all authors contributing to its creation. The data summarization and analysis were performed by Sakawrat Boonwanno.

4.2. *City in the Mist: The Feasibility of Tourism Route Development*

The community that had been drawn were concluded and confirmed by the communities, and questions were asked to clarify data on important places in each subdistrict. In the community forum process, purposive sampling was conducted to select informants who were representatives from the government sector, local organizations, the people sector, and the commercial sector. Consequently, the population of the study was people who knew the points of community capital, which were the important origins of the tourism route development, as they understood the history of their communities. Additionally, the community maps helped the communities to understand their resource bases and the feasibility of tourism route development. Examples of community maps are shown as follows. In short, the operation of the development of a tourism that was jointly conducted through community forums resulted in community routes designed by the communities. Confirmation was made during the forums to identify the locations of important places in each subdistrict. After that, the data were categorized to conclude from the search results the development of tourism routes based on cultural resources. Another name for Betong is City in the Mist. Betong is included in a strategic map of the southernmost part of Thailand under the limitations of border areas, which allows it to develop a tourism model and extend it continuously. The study results from the community mapping forums which found that Betong had the potential for tourism route development in all five subdistricts.

The findings from the survey indicate that tourism development can play a significant role in revitalizing local historical narratives, integrating diverse cultural resources, and enhancing public awareness regarding the conservation of community resource bases. This is achieved through the development of practical tools that support local economic activities while improving community-level information systems. Accordingly, this research is necessary as it provides a structured framework through which communities can utilize such tools to strengthen their local economies and expand activities grounded in existing cultural capital. In this context, the development of alternative tourism routes represents an appropriate and viable strategy, as it contributes not only to tourism promotion but also to improving the quality of life among local residents. Importantly, this approach embeds tourism within the community, thereby enhancing its feasibility and long-term sustainability [46]. The development of tourism models and the assessment of feasibility for upgrading tourism routes in Betong District, Yala Province, further underscore the capacity of local communities to revitalize and adapt culture-based tourism in ways that are contextually appropriate. These outcomes are derived from iterative group processes involving idea generation, validation, and problem-solving within a research and development framework. The results suggest that the proposed model can be operationalized through systematic content evaluation at the subdistrict level, enabling communities to better recognize and articulate the value of their cultural resource bases. A critical dimension of this process lies in ensuring that tourism route development meaningfully reflects cultural assets, particularly tangible cultural objects and heritage elements [47,48]. Nevertheless, existing practices reveal important gaps in the design of tourism routes, particularly the need for clearly defined points of cultural expression supported by verifiable historical and archeological evidence. The creation of distinctive tourism identities—such as memorable events or place-based branding—requires a carefully structured process that considers both the intended purpose and the dynamics of supply and demand. This must be accompanied by a balanced management approach that integrates local governance systems and community participation. Furthermore, insights from studies on glocalization and cross-cultural communication in tourism highlight the necessity of incorporating political, economic, and social dimensions into tourism planning [22]. These factors are particularly relevant in areas with spatial and contextual constraints, where stakeholder identification

and engagement must be approached with sensitivity. In the case of Betong, as a border region characterized by multicultural diversity, issues related to international relations and cultural pluralism are especially salient. As such, these dimensions must be explicitly integrated into the criteria for tourism development and feasibility assessment to ensure context-sensitive and sustainable outcomes. Based on the findings of the feasibility study and its limitations, it is predicted that various types of tourism routes can be developed in border areas, building upon existing cultural resources. Consideration should be given to safety, flexibility, border area studies, tourism geography, migration, and the acceptance of cultural fluidity, as follows:

- Hybrid Cultural Route—Featuring diverse groups of people in the area, suitable for locations with low investment costs
- Border History Route—“Betong as a Border Town” between Thailand and Malaysia, learning about trade methods and special cross-border areas that overcome political constraints
- Community Food and Culture Route—Utilizing local ingredients that are disappearing or difficult to find elsewhere for tourism purposes
- Fruit Orchard Tourism Route—Experiencing the abundant agricultural practices of southern Thailand in Betong, suitable for trail tourism due to its mountainous geography
- Cultural + Nature Hybrid Route—Learning about both natural resources and culture, a hybrid reflecting the spirit and livelihood of the community
- Community Identity Learning Route—Betong’s multiculturalism and local history, including remnants from the Communist era. The seven routes are a product of feasibility studies conducted in five areas to explore the limitations of developing cultural resource-based routes.

5. Discussion

Limitations in border development along tourist routes require adaptive strategies to enhance competitiveness, including structural constraints such as governance, the absence of conflict in building trust in border areas, and the challenges posed by the past violence in the three southern border provinces. Therefore, border areas are not just bordering foreign countries; viewing and driving cross-border policies in Betong involves addressing structural constraints as well. Limitations such as natural disasters, pandemics, and policy uncertainties directly affecting labor [49–51] indicate that tourism routes must be career-resilience-oriented. However, gaps remain in creating long-term, sustainable routes, not just temporary ones. Research discusses establishing environmental funds through tourism taxes for area restoration. Listening to stakeholders clarifies development, presenting both opportunities and limitations requiring governance. The need to utilize NGOs to understand vulnerable groups is another challenge. This study highlights the need to address risk diversification and future budgetary planning, leveraging existing community resources. It emphasizes the application of the neo-institutional theory and resource-based (RBV) strategic management. The isomorphism in the regulation of tourism routes, particularly its role in addressing institutional pressures, necessitates a strategic approach.

This has led to the design of a research-to-impact pathway, which is for understanding the model. Storytelling was used during the upgrade of the model, and it was found that the tourism model illustrated good types of capital. According to [52,53], the determination of the influence of a resource base on society is the development of a strategy for the restoration of cultural heritage with a balance in management in the analysis of the tourism value of resource bases on joint services with specific tools. Good capital analysis requires goals to support tourism services, and additionally, the capital and establishment of the group require analysis by people in the community [54,55]. Tracking and conserving routes

requires signposting, cultural context, and location considerations. This includes important types of buildings and the determination of land use in the design of route maps. The study of the limited area emphasizes the consideration of the design of the area to adapt to the era, according to [56]. The study of the cultural industry identified the limitations of the structure of the secondary city of Brno, all of which must be reviewed at each transition point in terms of facilitating culture and activities. The risk of the area in the management of tourism must be an open system.

Regarding the feasibility of tourism route management, [57], in their study on measuring and evaluating the influence of cultural tourism development, provides a framework for developing and applying research that must be appropriately adapted to the context before implementing or using tourism tools as a goal of the destination strategy of the user. The tools are cultural assets that must be managed for cultural differences. In studying specific and sensitive cases, they stated that it was important for the local community to initially earn income for their families. The model needs the participation of the community, focusing on local wisdom among other diverse aspects, and community leaders also have a role to play in the management of various sectors. Border area management, feasibility study, cross-border development, conflict mitigation, local cultural identity, and sustainable development. This study focuses on identifying the strengths, distinctive characteristics, weaknesses, and both internal and external environmental factors relevant to border area management. It seeks to highlight the limitations and challenges inherent in border regions while considering enabling factors for policy formulation and the feasibility of development initiatives and transportation routes. The analysis encompasses key issues such as security, supportive government policies, conflict reduction, international relations, traditional resource-based areas, local cultural identity and spirituality, ways of life, and the capacity of communities to adapt to changing circumstances and emerging phenomena. Border area development is subject to greater constraints than development in general areas. As a form of bilateral or cross-border development policy, inadequate consideration of local sensitivities and contextual factors may lead to disputes and conflicts. In some cases, border regions may also become secondary priorities in national development agendas. Therefore, conducting a comprehensive feasibility study is essential. Such a study provides critical information for policy review and decision-making, helping stakeholders address necessary issues, support sustainable development, and mitigate potential sensitivities that may arise during the development process. The future scenario of Betong in its culture-based tourism as seen from the developed model is that it is a learning city where people learn together through a participative process. Furthermore, the analysis results of the main capital would help develop more diverse tourism routes that are based on outstanding natural and cultural resources. Therefore, these routes would be, for example, cultural tourism routes, social tourism routes, eco-tourism routes, creative tourism routes, and historical tourism routes. Tourism management with good results and the highest benefits needs activities for tourists as they visit places of their interest.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study results could be used as guidelines for businesses in community accommodations, local food restaurants, conference, and seminar sites, or for the development of more tourism models. The guidelines for local businesses can be used to implement the proposed model to link various stakeholders. This model could be used to link different groups to increase the ability of tourism to be distributed among different sectors, which could also be expanded to international tourism. The result of the development of the tourism model could be extended to various types of creative tourism in the Betong District, Yala Province. Support for the organization of the forums for developing the tourism model

has reflected the component that builds community relationships in the existing physical, cultural, and potential aspects, which have resulted in closer social relationships. The data from the tourism model could be further developed by applying a more concrete use of information technology for clearer community tourism routes. The existing tourism model can be enhanced by incorporating advanced information technology. Tourism cooperation with neighboring countries can lead to the development and expansion of tourism routes to connect economies and increase joint tourism activities in the future. Ref. [58] states that tourism management requires visitors to appreciate the frontier areas as challenging destinations, and to maintain loyalty to the values of the destination and the journey itself, including positive relationships with people, as these are important factors in encouraging repeat visits.

The management of social capital to drive policy and operation plans is a good driving force for group members. The reason is that they tend to manage the community continuously and are ready to accept the tourism project and more economic benefits in addition to their main income [59]. The people of Betong have a norm of trust and accept the policies of the government, people, private, and academic sectors. They are broadly aware of the data and information and know how to apply them. They also have resource capital, which is a strong point in terms of their healthy nature, fertile forests, and watersheds that can lead to tourism growth, such as seas of mists. Moreover, the communities help each other look after and conserve the resource capital by having and following rules and regulations for living together and opening to tourists. According to [60], after categorizing the routes, tourism models are categorized by their level of development and the analysis of the value they provide. These routes are unique and relatively unchanged over time. They develop, change, and strengthen over time, forming close links with the territories they pass through. Because routes are part of regional territories, these places are shaped by the routes and travelers, enabling these territories to be culturally connected through routes despite their geographical distance [61]. Engaging in activities as a participant requires internal strength and the ability to find solutions to make tourism within limited areas as effective as possible emphasizing that leaders must allow participation in decision-making.

For the Betong District, it was found that the networks could work together very well. Furthermore, the cultural capital in relation to the history of Betong has evidenced its multiculturalism as there have been various groups of people living together in Betong in the past until now. There are groups of Chinese, former Malaya communists, local Malayu people, and Buddhist Thais. These groups are local identities that still exist in Betong. Identifying potential for improving data from communities can develop network structures for expansion and adaptation to tourism, utilizing data through route analysis for optimal suitability [62–64]. Understanding rural resilience is a process of analyzing community potential to mitigate conflict. Studies using cultural intelligence as a tool in design have positive influences on reducing resilience and fostering innovation. Modeling, a scientific process, is used to predict and identify past spatial errors, providing findings for spatial application in integrating technology into unique spatial characteristics. This study does not specify limitations on development in border areas, but it reflects how development is possible in areas with limitations if there is public consultation and participatory involvement in improving the situation.

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