

## Research Article

### Tourism Management Guidelines for The Khu Mueang Kao Market at Ban Sri Than Ancient City

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#### Abstract

The objectives of this research are the following: 1) To interrogate the community needs for developing the Khu Mueang Kao floating market, 2) To survey the tourism management potential and, 3) To propose management guidelines for the Khu Mueang Kao floating market at Ban Sri Than Ancient City in Khon Kaen Province. This is qualitative and quantitative research. Data was collected from twelve community leaders, entrepreneurs, and 400 people using an interview form and using questionnaires as tools for data collection. The statistics used for data analysis were mean and standard deviation. The results of the research were as follows: 1) Most of the people have a desire to manage the Khu Mueang Kao floating market. They are interested in bringing products for retail and needed facilities to the floating market. The community wanted to organize health activities, followed by food activities and shopping activities, respectively. 2) Potential management of tourist attractions pricewise is suitable for the quality of the product. It is followed by other people in the community having interests in community tourism and are willing to provide services and products and whereby the community has interesting products and standards. 3) From the research results, it was found that the management of the Khu Mueang Kao floating market via the community would develop tourism management potentials in relation to online distribution and advertising support participation in determining the use of natural resources of the community. Furthermore, it promotes the organization of activities according to the needs of cultural tourists.

**Keywords:** community development, tourism management, tourism potential

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## 1. Introduction

Thailand is a unique country with its own culture, art, and international reputation. Each province in Thailand has its own local arts and culture that clearly reflects their social image and ethnicity. Nowadays the tourism industry has grown to become a main industry. This rapid growth of the international economy is a catalyst for economic expansion. It provides employment, career creation, and abundant income distribution into the nation leading to success and improvement in the quality of life of Thai people. Khon Kaen is a large and densely populated province in the Isan region with a very strategic location in the center of the northeastern region. The province is also the center of education and technology in the region.

Cultural tourism is the study of areas with important historical and cultural characteristics. The story of social and human development is expressed throughout history as it relates to culture. Knowledge and values of a society are also reflected well in the conditions of life and well-being of people in each era. Therefore, valuable historical architecture and natural environment expressing the beauty and benefits from nature must be both preserved, whether it is economic, social or customs and traditions in the current era. Ratanasuwongchai (2011) explained that competition in the world market has given importance to bringing culture to be part one of the products or services that show the differentiation from competitors.

Khon Kaen Province has interesting tourist attractions such as Ban Sri Than Ancient City which is in Sri Than Moo 1 and Moo 4, Mueang District, Khon Kaen Province. There are other important tourist attractions. Isan Biz (2018) has presented that the Chom Sri Temple is more than 100 years old at Ban Sri Than Ancient City can be used as a reference. Another is the 500 years old King Kao tree at Chom Sri Temple, also known as the bat tree. It has a diameter larger than 6 people holding hands side by side. There are sacred places of worship in the community that people regularly visit for religious purposes such as the Shrine of Grandfather Ya Khu Jad. Another is the Naga Pond with water gushing out all the time and never dries up.

Consequently, to preserve the cultures and to provide public attractions the researchers have chosen to study the tourism management of Ban Sri Than Ancient City, Muang District, Khon Kaen Province. It has a unique culture with the Khu Mueang Kao having a small canal in the community. It has not been used for a long time, which adds more value by managing it to becoming a floating market. This potential has not yet been developed by any organizing body

or agency responsible for providing the necessary tourism support. The researcher recognizes the importance points of Ban Sri Than Ancient City and that there are interesting resources available affirming the potential for managing this area to be a tourist attraction in Khon Kaen Province. Therefore, it is necessary to study the potential of tourist attractions at Ban Sri Than Ancient City, craft tourism management guidelines and to propose the said guidelines for developing the Khu Mueang Kao floating market.

## 2. Research Objectives

- 1) To study the community needs for developing the Khu Mueang Kao floating market in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.
- 2) To study the tourism management potential in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.
- 3) To suggest management guidelines for the Khu Mueang Kao floating market in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.

## 3. Literature Review

### **Tourism management**

Tourism management must rely on local resources such as tourist attractions, people in the community, facilities, and local culture. In addition, it must rely on local culture and traditions to make tourists interested in traveling and learning. The development of tourism potential will affect community members through job creation, increased income, and local development initiatives undertaken by the government to support tourism (Tatyanantakul, 2021). Tourism promotion in ancient sites is creating value for the history of the community. The transmission of the history of the community through cultural inheritance creates a great spiritual value (Suvannin et al., 2014). Moreover, Chantapakul and Sungrugsā (2013) illuminated that the success of tourism management depends on the development of tourism potential in terms of planning, landscape improvement, providing complete service facilities, personnel development, and public relations news.

### Tourism potential

Tourism management potential is the ability to manage various aspects. Tourism Promotion can be compared to selling products to customers. Therefore, Likitsarun et al. (2018) showed that the tourism management potential can use the marketing mix to assess the community capacity which consists of product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. Additionally, Sukanthasirikul (2017) demonstrated that increasing productivity and quality also means the ability to attract tourists to visit and revisit, facility support, and value of the visit. Potential evaluation of tourist attractions found that the community lacks the budget to develop the landscape, facilities, and knowledge in tourism management also lacks leadership to promote activities (Khongthong et al., 2018).

## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Population and Sample of the study

**Qualitative Research:** The population of Ban Sri Than Ancient City comprises four communities: Ban Sri Than Moo 1, Ban Sri Than Moo 2, Ban Sri Than Moo 3, and Ban Sri Than Moo 4. The number of community entrepreneurs in the area is 25.

Sample was selected by using purposive sampling (non-probability sampling) for community leaders and quota sampling for commercials. This research utilized 4 community leaders as informants. The 8 entrepreneurs included in the study were the Fak-Khaw soap shop, herbal shop, Thai massage shop, organic vegetables, and Isan food shop (Mum shop, Naem shop, beef sun dried shop, and Jaew-Bong shop; make with Para).

**Quantitative Research:** The population of Mueang District, Khon Kaen Province was at 416,285 people in 2020 (Khon Kean Provincial Administrative Organization, Social and Government, 2020). The samples were selected by using the Taro Yamane on 0.05 of tolerance (Pruitthiphan, 2014). This study collected data from 400 respondents at Central Plaza Khon Kaen, Ton Tann Green Market, and Khon Kaen Bus Terminal.

## 4.2 Research instruments

The qualitative research was done using an interview with open-ended questions and interviewing 12 community leaders and entrepreneurs, giving the interviewees an opportunity to explain their ideas. The questions were related to the tourism management approach. The questionnaire in quantitative part of this research was potential of tourism management concerned on the 8 P's: product, price, place, promotion, people, process, physical evidence, and productivity and quality.

## 4.3 Data Analysis

Interview information was analyzed by content analysis. Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation were used for analyzing questionnaire data. The research assistants' team who responsible for collecting data are Pichanika Asanok, Prawanya Uppa, and Thanyarat Charoentaveesub.

# 5. Findings

## 5.1 Qualitative Results

Data collections were derived from 12 community leaders and commercials. The purpose of the interview is to obtain the point of view about community needs for developing the Khu Mueang Kao floating market at Ban Sri Than Ancient City. The results obtained from the informants are as follows:

1) Do you need to manage the Khu Mueang Kao floating market? The informant's opinions are as follows: Most of the people have a desire to manage the Khu Mueang Kao floating market, but there is still a lack of resource development. The community needs and wants to have an agency or government organization for assistance, attention, and to promote the area to encourage and attract tourists. People at Ban Sri Than would like to establish a floating market as a community attraction and brand it as a tourist attraction that is attractive and interesting. In addition, the community will get more income. Khon Kaen Province has no tourism attractions as a floating market. It should be very popular in the future.

2) If a floating market is established, are you interested in doing some small business at the floating market such as selling local products? Most of the informants have the following opinions: they are interested in bringing their products or local produce to retail at the floating market to generate more income in the community. The generation of income for people in the community means job opportunities for those who are unemployed and provides an opportunity to develop their products to be sold at the floating market.

3) Do you need facilities to establish the floating market? The perspective has shown that there is a need for additional facilities such as clean public toilets and convenient parking space/service that is not crowded. A public relations center/ service is also needed to publicize and invite tourists to purchase community products and to make the floating market popular.

4) What activities are the community interested in organizing at the floating market? The community wanted to organize health activities the most, followed by food activities and shopping activities, respectively. Most of health activities ideas concerned with herbal medicine activities, therapeutic activities for health, Thai massage, herbal compress, making Fak-Khaw soap, followed by food activities and checking local product, such as cooking from organic vegetables, teaching how to make sun dried beef, Mum, Naem, and Jaew-Bong.

## 5.2 Quantitative Results

The questionnaires were gathered from 400 respondents at Central Plaza Khon Kaen, Ton Tann Green Market, and Khon Kaen Bus Terminal. The determination is to study tourism management potential at Ban Sri Than Ancient City. Figure 1 shows the tourists' opinions towards the tourist attractions' potential. The results of tourism management potential are the following:

**1) Product potential:** The tourists focus on the community having interesting community products with an average of 4.33, followed by a quality of community product with an average of 4.25, and the last is community product standard with an average of 3.91.

**2) Suitable price:** Most tourists have the idea that the product has reasonable prices for quality with an average of 4.33, followed by products that are worth the price and the price are suitable for the quantity; mean was 4.25.

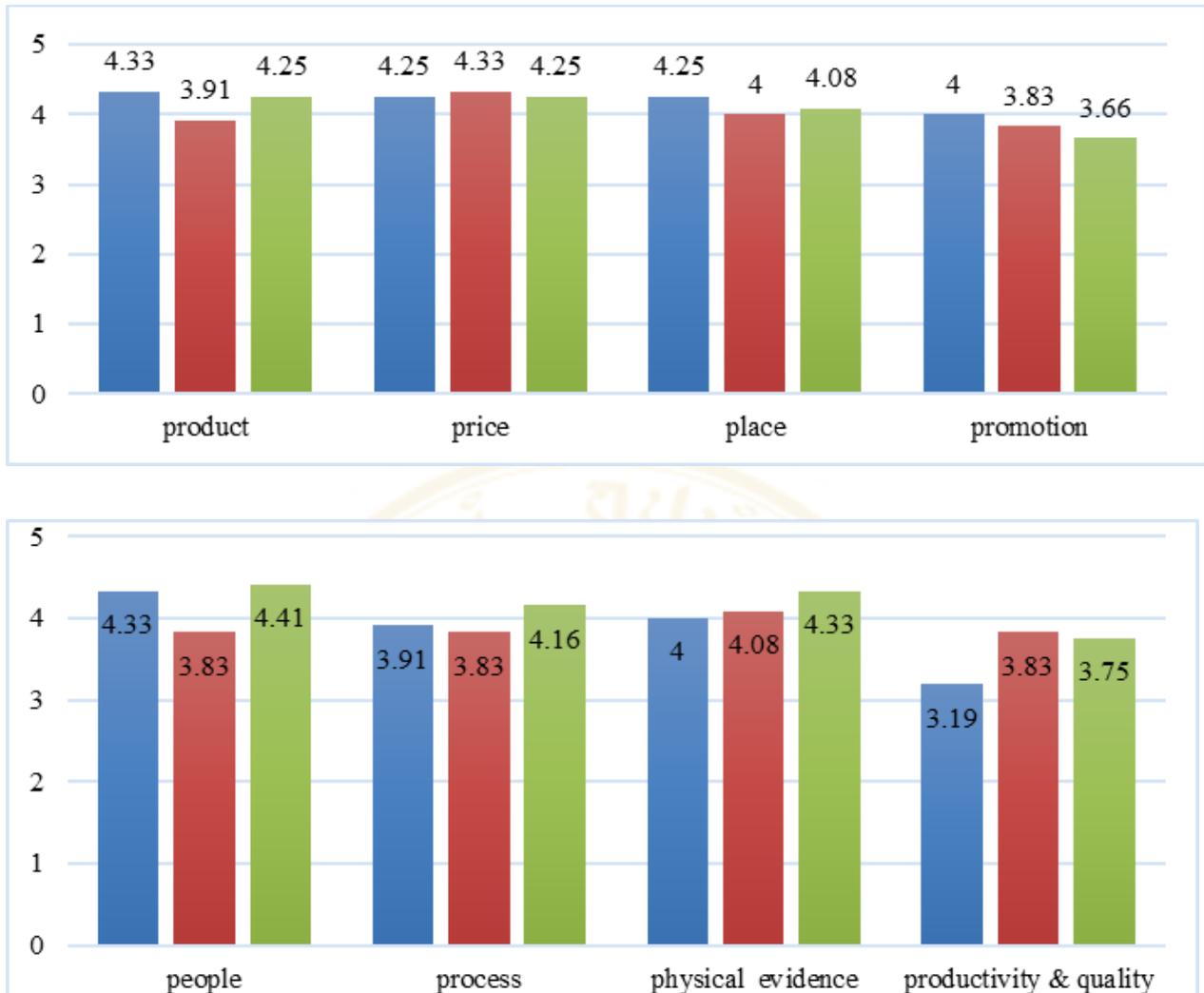
**3) Place and locations:** The community locations were ready to be tourism attractions with an average of 4.25, followed by convenience to getting there and easy to access with an average of 4.08, and the last has an average of 4.00 on most of the places are interesting attractions.

**4) Marketing promotion:** The community potential has the most public relations about tourism marketing campaigns with an average of 4.00, followed by the community product advertised or notified in the news and through various media with an average of 3.83, and the last was that the community had an online distribution via Facebook, and similar website with an average of 3.66.

**5) People:** Most communities are interested in bringing products to be sold with an average of 4.41, followed by people in the community interested in making a tourism community, the mean was 4.33 and the last was people were polite and willing to assist in tourism having a mean was 3.83. Process; most of tourists reflect that the community will prepare for community tourism as much as possible with an average of 4.16, followed by there is a tourism service center with the mean of 3.91 and the last order is the community has the Department of Health to screen for hygiene products at 3.83.

**6) Physical evidence:** Most of those in the community are ready to accommodate tourists at 4.33, followed by the community environment is suitable for developing as tourist attractions having a mean of 4.08 and the last order was there are natural resources in community with an average of 4.00.

**7) Productivity and quality:** The most is the community's ability to welcome tourists as much as possible with an average of 3.83, followed by community trade leading to a better quality of life, at 3.75 and the last order was community tourism effect in increasing quality of life with an average of 3.19.



*Figure 1.* Tourism management potential in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.

## 6. Discussions

The qualitative research results have found that the community wanted to manage the Khu Mueang Kao floating market, but they lack the knowledge to develop the attraction in their community. They would appreciate having an outside organization to support and help them to develop tourism. Moreover, the results have shown that the community is interested in selling the products at the floating market; to gain more income which is consistent with the study of cultural tourism at the U-Thong ancient city have been restored, conserved, and developed as tourist attractions (Patphan, 2019). There are government agencies and special area development organizations for tourism and assist in the implementation of the master plan and action plan.

Next, Local Administrative Organizations should support cultural knowledge management. Also, the Provincial Administrative Organization provides cultural knowledge, local wisdom, budget for developing wisdom products, and create added value on income generation by focusing on promoting participation in tourism development.

In addition, the community desired to provide health activities and food activities such as around herbal medicine activities, therapeutic activities for health, Thai massage, herbal compress, making Fak-Khaw soap, cooking with organic vegetables, teaching how to make sun dried beef, Mum (Isan liver sausage), Naem (sour pork), and chili Jaew-Bong. The results concerning the study of travel's objective in cultural attractions is to learn about the lifestyle and to take a rest. There are activities promoting health, such as body rejuvenation, therapy, massage, herbal compress, and meditation practice to relieve stress (Ratanasuwongchai, 2011). Additionally, indicates the history of society and the local culture of different countries. Therefore, food tourism is one activity that helps attract tourists to travel to various localities. This leads to the expansion of tourism. The effects of food tourism will also benefit both directly and indirectly to the community economy such as causing the distribution of income to the local, food tourism is driven by the growth of technology and online media playing an important role in promoting food tourism (Suanpleng et al., 2016). Tourists usually search for tourist information, travel routes, tasting food, looking for original food production sources, restaurants, and being introduced to local menus (Yokkhun et al., 2020).

The quantitative research results revealed that the community is ready to be an attraction with inclusive cultural resources and effort to manage tourism. Tourist attractions that facilitate the development of tourist attractions accommodate tourism such as improvement, changes, and the community interest (Praprutkit, 2010). The Ancient City of Ban Sri Than has enough to attract tourists and leads to tourists deciding to travel to the Ancient City.

The results have revealed the tourism management potential in terms of online distribution and advertisement that have lower average and should be developed. This is due to the community's lack of advertisement or information on the products through various media. Market promotion is a tool in marketing communication between sellers and consumers to inform and attract customer behavior to buy a product or provide a certain service (Dokbunnak & Thongkhamnuch, 2013).

However, the community still lacks the ability to welcome tourists, lack of knowledge and understanding of management (Traibun, 2014). Tourism development should be supported with knowledge by training and participation such as observations, follow-up, allowing people to participate in the inspection and control will have a positive effect on tourism operation (Yokjinda, 2014). Additionally, people are polite and willing to provide tourism on a low average, which reveals that the community still lacks understanding of the benefits of tourism. Entrepreneurial participation remains very low. The community lacks a clear understanding of the benefits they may receive from tourism, which has resulted in limited interest in tourism development; however, some community members recognize the importance of tourism (Sertsri, 2014). There is an important component in tourism management potential, which is the community, especially the community with a well-understood social system. There is learning about raising awareness of the natural resources' conservation and the culture (Tancharoen, 2018).

Nevertheless, Ban Sri Than Ancient City also has the complete cultural resources to become a tourist attraction. There is convenient to get there and people in the community are willing to participate in floating market management and agree with the importance of tourism as the way to generate income for their family. If the Khu Mueang Kao can be developed, it can become one of the famous floating market attractions in Khon Kaen. Lastly, to develop the area of the Khu Mueang Kao to become a floating market tourism attraction, the community must be more participatory and with indispensable assistance by the respective government agencies.

## 7. Recommendations

This survey of tourism management potential focuses on urgently needed issues for development. Since Ban Sri Than Ancient City is a city community where most of the people have regular jobs. Community needs and wants are extra income but still lack knowledge and understanding of tourism management. However, this study only partially suggests ways to manage the potential. Participation and tourism activities studies are still needed in future. Including developing the community's potential to be able to organize activities as tourists want.

The suggested tourism management guidelines are 1) the urgent need to develop tourism potential, and 2) sustainable development as presented in Figures 2 and 3.

1) The urgent need to develop tourism management potential means the need for quick development as shown in Figure 2, the tourism management potential is relatively low in some aspects. The guidelines to manage Khu Mueang Kao to become a floating market are as follows.

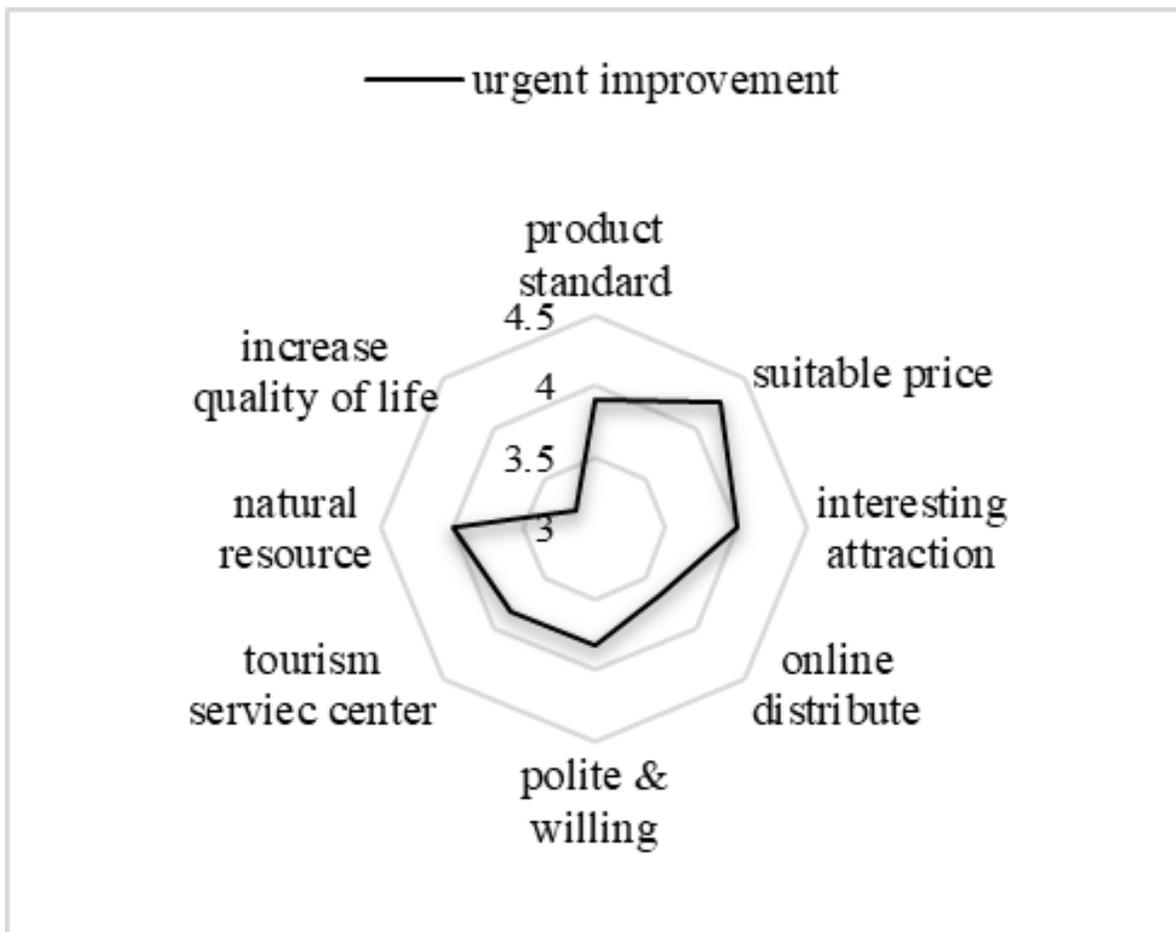


Figure 2. The urgent need to develop tourism management potential in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.

**1.1) Product:** Improving the standard of community products to meet the tourists' needs because they are the ones who judge the product quality. If the community sells products that do not have the accept standards, it could damage the community's reputation. The standardization of community products at Baan Sri Than are related to the development of

packaging, cleanliness, keeping food from spoiling and because most of the products are food products.

**1.2) Price:** Creating the value of products should be worth the price and the price must be suitable for the quantity. Because the community is around Mueang Khon Kaen; the production of products must have a unique identity that is traditional for Ban Sri Than, which cannot be bought anywhere. In this section, it is necessary to maintain the knowledge of the production of food products such as food recipes, herbal compress recipes, and massage tactics, in order not to be lost and forgotten by the people. It is the value of local wisdom that resides in a person. The community leader must lead people to transfer their knowledge from older generations to new generations by preserving it as a text or image. The next generation can inherit knowledge for their career in the future.

**1.3) Place:** Developing certain tourist attractions such as the Naga Pond, where it should be renovated to be clean and not deserted. There is a need to create a new community travel route. The community should raise awareness of the importance of the place in the community and to show the value of the culture and how to generate income for the community. Even with the presence of the Khu Mueang Kao floating market in the community, others tourist attractions in the community should be improved as well.

**1.4) Promotion:** Promoting citizens' awareness in social media platforms such as Facebook and Line applications should be open to create interactions with tourists. A new generation of 'admin operator group' to be administrators of Facebook pages or answer messages in Line group must be created and organized. Promotions such as a Line sticker contest to create awareness of the community can be organized. In addition, community websites should be developed to send news to tourists not only in Khon Kaen but also in the whole of Thailand.

**1.5) People:** Encouraging people to be more polite and the willingness to provide tourism services; the community leaders should organize training to build knowledge of tourism and understanding of tourism floating market management for the community to accommodate tourists, welcome tourists, create satisfaction for tourist's management. Engagement of awareness in tourism management and creating participation in floating market management opinions will lead the community to generate more income in the future.

**1.6) Process:** Inspecting food quality by governmental agencies to build tourists' confidence by including food safety in food retail shops.

**1.7) Physical evidence:** The community has natural resources that are ready to be a tourist attraction. Therefore, the community should have a campaign to preserve the environment, to always have a good environment and prompt to welcome tourists.

**1.8) Productivity and quality:** Community tourism can improve the quality of life, trade leading to better life, and community ability. All productivity and quality items should be urgently improved. The community does not always have the knowledge to use tourism as a tool to improve their quality of life. Therefore, the community must have knowledge and ability to manage the floating market in accordance with their needs and to improve the quality of life.

2) Sustainable development means the tourism management potential should remain unchanged and managed better as shown in Figure 3, the community has the potential to manage tourism effectively in some aspects. The guidelines to manage Khu Mueang Kao to become a floating market are to keep the quality of the products attractive, maintaining production costs to a reasonable price. Ban Sri Than is ready to be a tourist attraction; therefore, it should invite the community and tourists to help maintain these natural resources for a good environment and preserve the culture of the community. Various media must be utilized to promote the tourism information of Khon Kaen Province. Although the community is interested in tourism and interested in selling local products, it still lacks tourism knowledge, especially in the understanding of tourist attraction management. Therefore, knowledge in being able to manage the floating market of a community must be made accessible and as an instrument to increase the community-level quality of life.



*Figure 3.* The sustainable development for tourism management potential in Ban Sri Than Ancient City.

## 8. Limitation and Future Research

A limitation of this study is that the community's traditional festivals did not coincide with the data collection period. Additionally, most communities have full-time jobs on Monday through Friday. They come to do tourist activities only on holidays. Data collection was based on individual interviews. Therefore, future research should examine community participation in tourism management by using focus group methods to discuss the community's capacity and evaluate activities during traditional festivals.

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