

**Title: The Community Participation and the Sustainable Development of
The Tourism Thai Rice Route (Phrase 1: Boon Berk Fah Mahasatakham)**

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ABSTRACT

Tourism has been regarded as the industry that has grown continuously, and at a fast pace, too. Evidently, the industry has become a major source of income as well as helping to create a number of jobs in many countries. When it comes to the 'Thainess' in terms of food and gastronomy, 'rice' has often been mentioned as a top of the table. It has been found that 'rice' has been regarded as a staple food among the people in the Greater Mekong Sub-region countries since the ancient times. According to the existing study, such relationship has often been expressed in the form of custom beliefs and rituals. Isaan people believe that they should organise and participate in the local traditions in every month of the year. This 12-month festival has been known as 'Heet Sip Song' in the native language.

The objectives of the study are: 1) to study tourism and Thainess and the community participation in sustainable tourism development; 2) to study the relationship between rice, beliefs, lifestyle, culture and tradition of the Isaan people, particularly in the context of Mahasatakham Province; and 3) to plan and develop the unique Thai Rice Tourism Route for Mahasatakham Province. Qualitative approach has been adopted for this study. The data collection and the analysis process have been carried out simultaneously. In addition to this, coding and analysis by Strauss and Corbin (1990) has been adopted and utilized to analyze the data. The findings from the study suggested that the government and the key stakeholders, such as municipal and the Sub-District Administration Organization, often lend out their hands to help with the communities' festivals. Evidently, helps could be coming in forms of providing knowledge and education as well as financial support. As per regards the 'Heet Sip Song' and the beliefs of the Isaan people, the study reveals that the beliefs, the traditions and the rituals of the Isaan people are often associated with rice. In every month of the year, there will be an event that takes place virtually in every area of the province.

Key words: Tourism and Thainess, Community-Based Tourism