

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL GOODS AND SERVICES BASED ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT IN THAILAND

Atchara Sriphan ^a

^a Department of Communication, Faculty of Management and Information Sciences, Naresuan University, Thailand.

^a Corresponding author: atcharamay@hotmail.com

©Ontario International Development Agency ISSN: 1923-6654 (print)

ISSN 1923-6662 (online). Available at <http://www.ssrn.com/link/OIDA-Intl-Journal-Sustainable-Dev.html>

Abstract: This research develop knowledge management strategy for applying sustainable development concept in cultural goods and services production in Thailand. Main objective of this research is to set up knowledge transfer strategies for the production of cultural goods and services of entrepreneurs at all the World Cultural Heritage in Thailand using sustainable development concept. Specifically, the research attempts to 1) study the production of cultural goods and services industry, and 2) develop knowledge transfer strategies for the industry. Both quantitative and quality methods were used in this Participatory Action Research (PAR). The findings are as follows: 1) cultural goods and services production in Thailand are still traditional both in term of material usage and production methods. Three dimensions of sustainable development concept including economic dimension, social dimension and environmental dimension hasn't been actively applied. In fact, 55 percent of cultural goods and services producers in Thailand lack material selection and production process with environmental concerns. 2) critical knowledge (both local and global) based on sustainable development concept are knowledge of selection methods of local ecological materials, and sustainable production methods of cultural goods and services 3) appropriate knowledge transfer strategy for the production of cultural goods and services in Thailand is participatory knowledge transfer among entrepreneurs, workers, public sector personnel, business sector personnel and other important stakeholders. The model for the strategy we found

suitable for this industry is APPRECIATE Model (Attraction, Participation, Practical, Relation, Education, Culture, Integration, Activity, Technology, and Environment). Implication of this model can be divided into 4 steps: step1. start the knowledge transfer process by applying attracting and participating procedures; step 2. prepare integrative and practical knowledge to be transferred including cultural and environmental knowledge, using procedures that fit Thai lifestyle.; step 3. apply knowledge transfer process using education, and activity based learning; Step 4. utilize innovative knowledge asset and technology from involving community. However, the most success key factor of 4 step is step 2. prepare integrative and practical knowledge to be transferred including cultural and environmental knowledge, using procedures that fit Thai lifestyle, because the most obstacle of knowledge transfer in Thailand is body of knowledge that not practical knowledge. So knowledge transfer strategy is the key success factor to development of cultural goods and services based on sustainable development concept in Thailand.

Keywords: Knowledge Transfer Strategies, Sustainable Development, Cultural Products and Services, Knowledge Management, Sustainable production

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development proposes a new paradigm of decision making for all sectors of society. It entails a new perspective on present issues and challenges, and requires a better

appreciation of the complex interconnections between the economic, social and environmental aspects of current challenges. In order to attain sustainable development, 1) environmental policies need to be socially and economically feasible; 2) social policies need to be environmentally and economically feasible; 3) economic policies need to be socially and environmentally feasible (Bell, Halucha, and Hopkins, 2000). Therefore sustainable development is the world development concept as same as in Thailand.

To adopt this perspective is like looking at current problems through a new lens. The sustainable development lens focuses attention not only on the integrated of three aspects above but also on the horizons of the future as a way of seeing more desirable approaches to the problems of the present (Bell, Halucha, and Hopkins, 2000). The figure 1 shows the relationship of the three pillars of sustainable development.

Over the past quarter-century Thailand has enjoyed remarkable economic growth, making the country an economic leader and prominent development partner in the region. This growth has not come without a cost. Rapid development, urbanization, and the spread of industrial activity have had a serious impact on the country's people and ecosystems. Much of the country's forest cover has been lost, while roughly half of Thailand's rivers and lakes are classified as having poor water quality. There is overuse of land and water and a lack of planning in certain sectors. Climate change also threatens to have a major impact on Thailand, especially its low-lying central region, which is also the most fertile area of the country, and coastal areas which are prone to flooding due to rising sea levels. Consequently, energy conservation, conservation technologies and alternative energy are now some of the highest-profile issues and areas of green activity in Thailand. With a new constitution that mandates improved environmental governance, Thailand is attempting to reverse these trends while decentralizing the process of environmental decision-making (UNDP Thailand, 2012).

Government agencies and other organizations provide helps for this problems. For example, UNDP provided the sustainable development programmes such as environmental programmes that based on a partnership approach that brings in a number of stakeholders, including communities, NGOs, and local and national authorities. Their Global Environment Facility (GEF) has allocated US\$23.9 million to Thailand through 2010 in two critical focal areas: biodiversity and climate change. UNDP also manages the GEF Small Grants Program, through which over 200 small projects have been

implemented in Thailand since 1998 (UNDP Thailand, 2012).

The effects of all the projects above on the production of goods and services are still not impressive. The cultural goods and services production in Thailand is generally the same as in the past. Most of Thai entrepreneurs don't have innovative knowledge for the production of modern goods and services that reflects interconnections of economic, social and environmental aspects. This is an indication of the lack of knowledge, the most important factor of production process sustainability. In conclusion, Thailand goods and services production is not knowledge based production, and need sustainable production development supported by knowledge transfer process from both local and global sources.

Even if Thai entrepreneurs have regularly conduct knowledge transfer activities among entrepreneurs, workers, public sector personnel, business sector personnel and other important stakeholders, they are not able to develop their goods and services under sustainable development concept. There are many indications that make us believe that it's because they don't have the right strategy, especially knowledge transfer strategy. This research try to fill this gap by first analyzing their overall knowledge management practice of their production, and then searching for knowledge transfer strategy that could lead to a sustainable production process. Therefore main objective of this research is to set up knowledge transfer strategies for the production of cultural goods and services of entrepreneurs working at the World Cultural Heritage in Thailand using sustainable development concept. Later on, the results of this research could be implemented for Thai entrepreneurs in the area.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research is an effort to develop a knowledge transfer strategy for the production of cultural goods and services industry by investigating entrepreneurs around all Thailand's World Cultural Heritage sites (Historic Town of Sukhotai and Associated Historic Towns, Historic City of Ayutthaya, and Ban Chiang Archaeological Site). There are two main objectives: (a) study the production of cultural goods and services industry in Thailand. (b) develop knowledge transfer strategy for the industry based on sustainable development concept.

In pursuit of the above objective, this paper will include the following topics: conceptual framework, methodology, results and discussion, results, discussion and conclusion at the end.



Figure 1: shows the three pillars of sustainable development
Source: IUCN (2006)

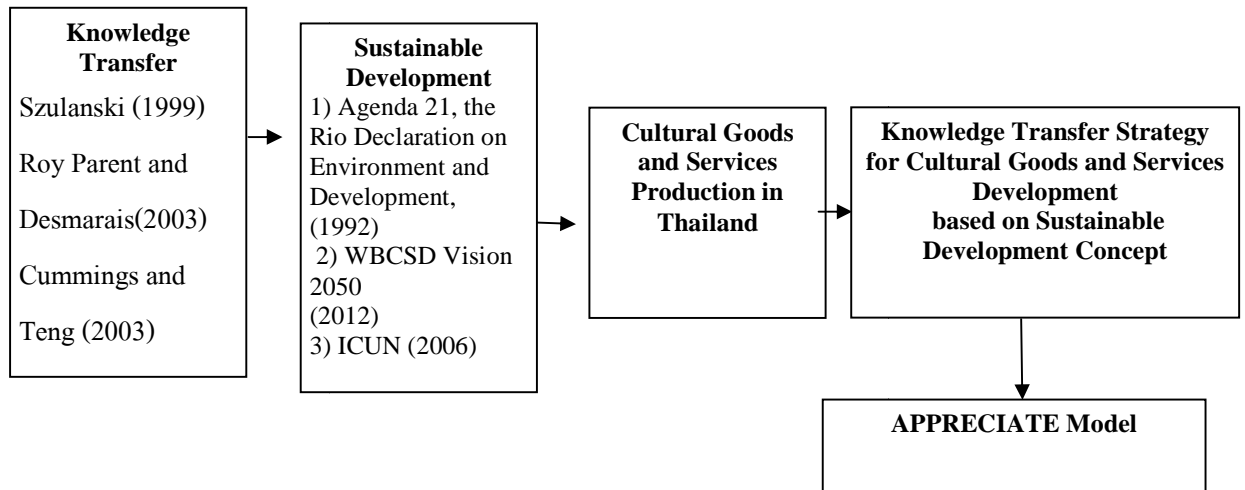


Figure 2: shows the conceptual framework

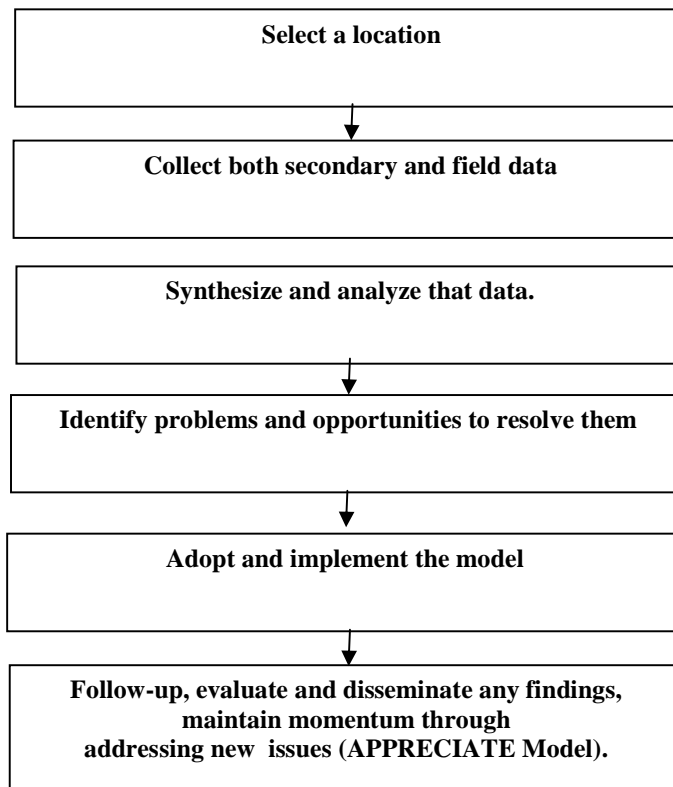


Figure 3: shows eight steps of the research

Table 1: shows the cultural goods and services production in Thailand in the present

| cultural goods and services production in Thailand | Percentage (%) N= 600 |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand are still traditional both in term of material usage and production methods | 75 |
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand are innovative knowledge both in term of material usage and production methods | 18 |
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand are individual/ family knowledge both in term of material usage and production methods | 5 |
| other | 2 |
| Total | 100 |

Table 2: shows the cultural goods and services production in Thailand based on sustainable development concept in the present

| cultural goods and services production in Thailand based on sustainable development concept | Percentage (%) N= 600 |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand lack material selection and production process with environmental concerns | 55 |
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand lack material selection and production process with social concerns | 30 |
| Cultural goods and services production in Thailand lack material selection and production process with economic concerns | 10 |
| other | 5 |
| Total | 100 |

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To reach the objectives of the research, conceptual framework shown in figure 2 below demonstrates the relationship of knowledge transfer (Szulanski (1999) Roy Parent and Desmarais(2003) Cummings and Teng (2003), sustainable development (Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992) WBCSD Vision 2050 (2012) and ICUN (2006)), the production of cultural goods and services, knowledge transfer strategy, and the model considered to be appropriate for Thailand.

METHODOLOGY

This research is Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR seeks to understand and improve the world by changing it. At its heart is collective, self reflective inquiry that researchers and participants undertake, so they can understand and improve upon the practices in which they participate and the situations in which they find themselves. The reflective process is directly linked to action, influenced by understanding of history, culture, and local context and embedded in social relationships. The process of PAR should be empowering and lead to people having increased control over their lives (Baum, MacDougall, Smith, 2006).

Research methodology is a strategy or plan of action that shapes our choice and use of methods and links them to the desired outcomes. In contrast with a decade ago, the economic and social system is getting very complex and its research requires methodological pluralism. PAR draws on the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism and may use a range of qualitative and quantitative methods. For instance a participatory needs assessment would include extensive engagement with local communities and may also include a survey of residents who are less centrally engaged in the participatory process (Baum, MacDougall, Smith, 2006).

Under present complicated economic system and unique characteristics of cultural products, this type of methodology is chosen to be our main research procedures which can be divided into 8 steps (IED and ODA, 1994): (a) Select a location and gain approval from local administrative officials and community leaders from 600 community entrepreneurs around all Thailand's World Cultural Heritage sites (Historic Town of Sukhotai and Associated Historic Towns, Historic City of Ayutthaya, and Ban Chiang Archaeological Site). (b) Collect both secondary and field data (spatial, time-related, social, environmental, economic and governance) by community survey, participatory and

non participatory observation, individual and group interviews of entrepreneur, group discussion, public opinions, and share information with selected communities. (c) Synthesize and analyze that both of quantitative and qualitative data (d) Identify problems and opportunities to resolve them with volunteered community entrepreneurs (e) Rank opportunities and prepare maps, action plans, reports and costing (including basic work plan for all members of the community). (f) Adopt and implement the knowledge transfer model. (g) Follow-up, evaluate and disseminate any findings, maintain momentum through addressing new issues.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research findings focus on three points as follows: (a) Cultural goods and services production in Thailand are still traditional both in term of material usage and production methods. Three dimensions of sustainable development concept including economic dimension, social dimension and environmental dimension hasn't been actively applied. In fact, 75 percent of cultural goods and services producers in Thailand are still traditional both in term of material usage and production methods, only 18 percent are innovative knowledge both in term of material usage and production methods and 5 percent are individual/family knowledge both in term of material usage and production methods.

Considering sustainability perspective, we found also that 55 percent of cultural goods and services producers in Thailand lack material selection and production process with environmental concerns, 30 percent of these lack material selection and production process with social concerns, and 10 percent lack material selection and production process with economic concerns (table 1 and table 2). In conclusion, Thai cultural goods and services producers precipitately need informative knowledge for the sustainable production development.

(b) Critical knowledge (both local and global) based on sustainable development concept are knowledge of selection methods of local ecological materials accounting for 40 percent of all knowledge while 25 percent are sustainable production methods of cultural goods and services, and 15 percent are creative design of products (table 3). From this finding, Thailand cultural producers tend to need many type of knowledge to move toward sustainable production

(c) Appropriate knowledge transfer strategy for the production of cultural goods and services in Thailand is participatory knowledge transfer among entrepreneurs, workers, public sector personnel,

business sector personnel and other important stakeholders. The model for the strategy we found suitable for this industry is APPRECIATE Model. The model is divided into ten elements which are: (1) Attraction is the stakeholders attraction to attend knowledge transfer program. (2) Participation is the stakeholders participation in knowledge transfer program. (3) Practical is the practical knowledge that fit and useable in real cultural production. (4) Relation is the knowledge related with stakeholders lifestyle, attitude, norm, culture, folkway, learning way, etc. (5) Education is the way to educate stakeholders by **formal education** for example teaching in school, college, university, **informal education** for example attending training courses in community knowledge centers, **non-formal education** for example searching knowledge from anywhere, anytime, any person, or receiving knowledge from mass media etc. (6) Culture is local culture used as resource for cultural goods and services production for example history, folkway, story, literature, food, clothes, etc. (7) Integration is the knowledge integration between traditional knowledge and modern knowledge. (8) Activity is the knowledge transfer activities that are suitable for the stakeholders. (9) Technology is the community technology for cultural goods and services production (10) Environment is the environmental knowledge including natural environment, social environment and economic environment.

To implement this model, one should follow these 4 steps: step1 start the knowledge transfer process by applying attracting and participating procedures for making the trust of knowledge based production and knowledge transfer inspiration for attract the the stakeholders to participate in knowledge transfer program.; step 2 prepare integrative and practical knowledge to be transferred including cultural and environmental knowledge, using procedures that fit Thai lifestyle and learning way.; step 3 apply knowledge transfer process using education, and activity based learning; and step 4 utilize innovative knowledge asset and technology from involving community.

However, the most important step that considered to be a key success factor is step 2. One of the major reasons is from what this research was discovered that the biggest obstacle of knowledge transfer in this industry is impracticality of knowledge to be transferred to community entrepreneurs. Based on one of sustainable development concept, knowledge have to be used strategically. Therefore, to develop cultural goods and services in Thailand, knowledge transfer of practical knowledge should be one of the key production activities. (Figure 4 and Figure 5).

Table 3: shows the critical knowledge based on sustainable development concept in cultural goods and services production in Thailand

| critical knowledge based on sustainable development concept in cultural goods and services production | Percentage (%) N= 600 |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Knowledge of selection methods of local ecological materials | 40 |
| Knowledge of sustainable production methods | 25 |
| Knowledge of creative design of products | 15 |
| Knowledge of new marketing | 10 |
| Knowledge of packaging design | 7 |
| other | 3 |
| Total | 100 |

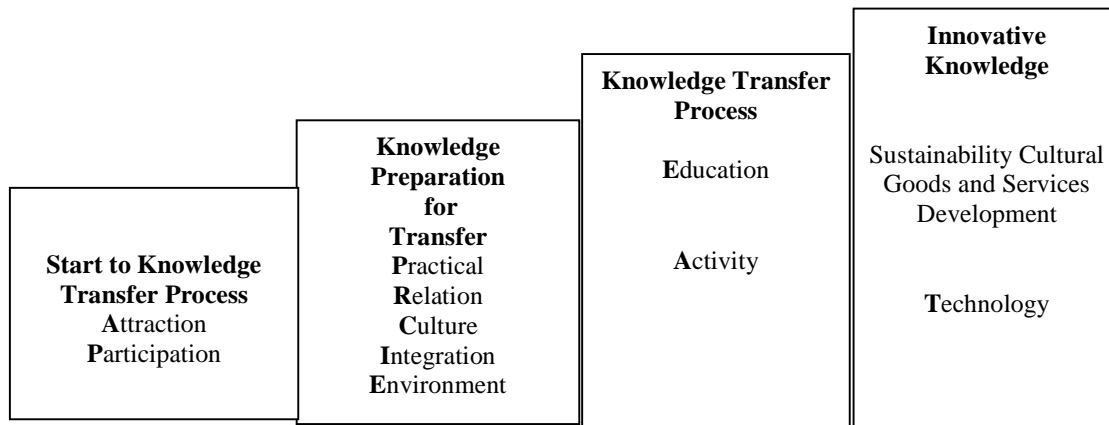


Figure 4: shows four steps of APPRECIATE Model

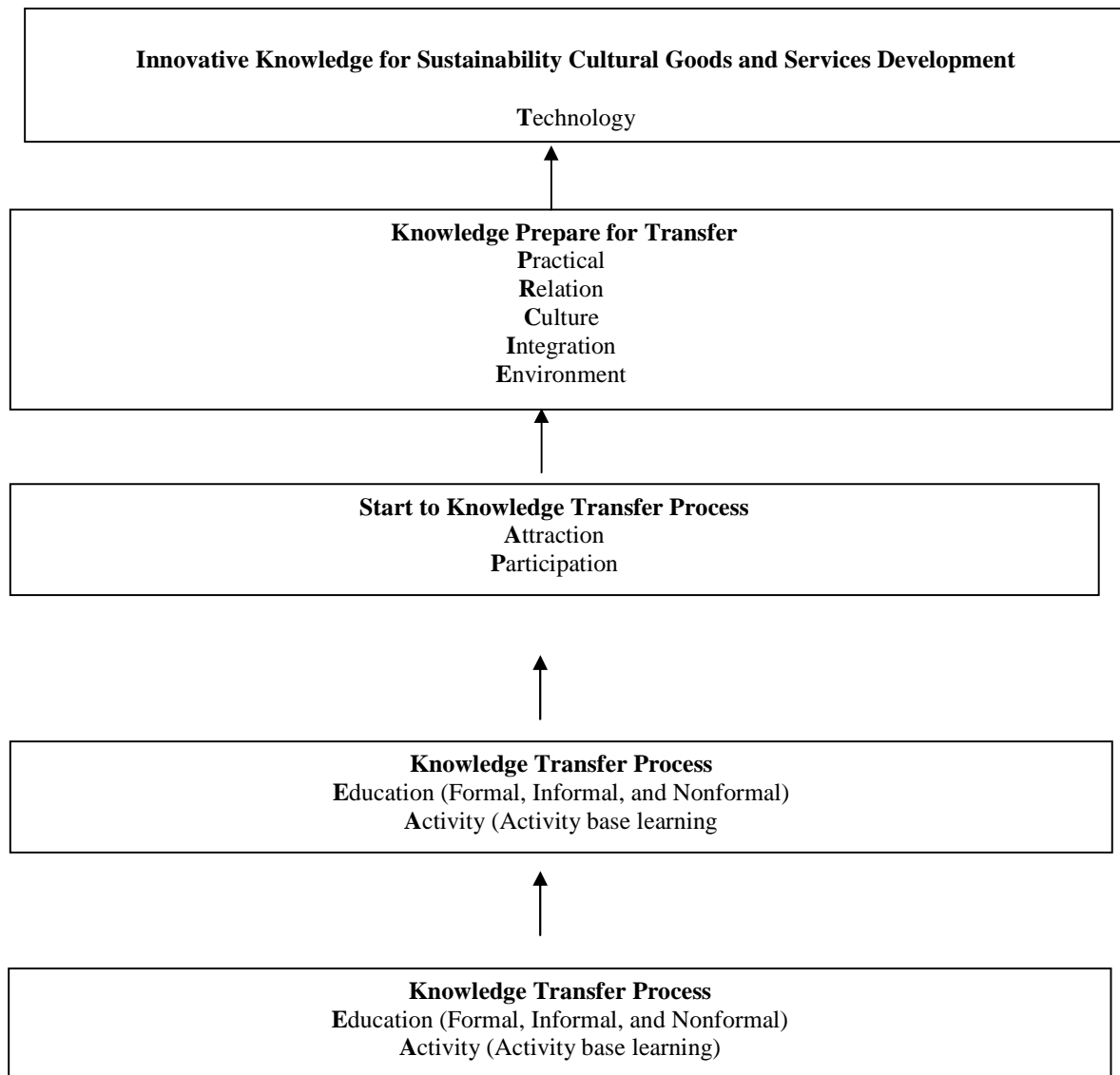


Figure 5: shows four steps of APPRECIATE Model

DISCUSSION

This study confirms the use of APPRECIATE model in the development of cultural goods and services based on sustainable development concept in Thailand. This model realizes that perceived usefulness, complexity and subjective norm which were perceptible factors adapted from the model should have significant influences on knowledge transfer adoption among entrepreneurs. To cover all the factors behind the adoption of knowledge transfer strategy and sustainability development, it also include the role of knowledge factors, environments and industrial factors, individual characteristics, learning style, organizational characteristics cultural factors, and technological factors.

In addition, we suggest that the knowledge transfer strategy would improve the development of sustainability cultural goods and services production in Thailand. Our comprehensive model above can be taken as a research model for proposition development and further empirical investigation. Further research is required to develop appropriate research hypotheses to carry on with the research. Future studies can explore deeper the exact knowledge transfer strategy in the other industry and the influence of knowledge transfer practice on organizational performance and productivity. We believe that this rather complex model can be taken as a research model to investigate knowledge transfer strategy in detail both in other industry and in its effect on organizational performance and productivity.

However to apply the model to other industry, other area and other cultural context need extensive field survey of stakeholders on both quantitative and qualitative side. In order to improve performance of an organization, we may not need all factors in APPRECIATE model depending on contextual factors of each situation. The model appears in this paper is simply treated as a general case.

CONCLUSION

Main objective of this research is to set up knowledge transfer strategies for the production of cultural goods and services of entrepreneurs at all World Cultural Heritage sites in Thailand using sustainable development concept. Specifically, the research attempts to 1) study the production of cultural goods and services industry in Thailand, and 2) develop knowledge transfer strategy for the industry. Both quantitative and quality methods were used in this Participatory Action Research (PAR).

We found that (1) cultural goods and services production in Thailand are still traditional both in term of material usage and production methods, (2)

three dimensions of sustainable development concept including economic dimension, social dimension and environmental dimension hasn't been actively applied, especially on material selection and production process with environmental concerns, (3) the important critical knowledge (both local and global) based on sustainable development concept are knowledge of selection methods of local ecological materials, and sustainable production methods of cultural goods and services and (4) appropriate knowledge transfer strategy of this industry is participatory knowledge transfer among entrepreneurs, workers, public sector personnel, business sector personnel and other important stakeholders.

The model for the strategy we found suitable for this industry is APPRECIATE Model (Attraction, Participation, Practical, Relation, Education, Culture, Integration, Activity, Technology, and Environment). Implication of this model can be divided into 4 steps: step 1 start the knowledge transfer process by applying attracting and participating procedures; step 2 prepare integrative and practical knowledge to be transferred including cultural and environmental knowledge, using procedures that fit Thai lifestyle.; step 3 apply knowledge transfer process using education, and activity based learning; Step 4 utilize innovative knowledge asset and technology from involving community. This model could be used for transferring knowledge for the development of sustainability cultural goods and services in Thailand. In the future, the author will apply this model for other sectors, and improve the model to make even more general.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bell, David Halucha, Paul and Hopkins, Mark. (2000). Sustainable Development Concept Paper. Retrieved from website: http://sustreport.org/background/sd_paper.html.
- [2] Baum, Fran MacDougall, Colin and Smith, Danielle. (2006). Participatory action research. Retrieved from http://intraserver.nurse.cmu.ac.th/mis/download/course/lec_566823_baum%20-%20Jan%2015.pdf
- [3] IIED and ODA. (1994). **Whose Eden? An overview of community approaches to wildlife management.** United Kingdom: International Institute for Environment and Development.
- [4] IUCN. (2006). The Future of Sustainability Rethinking Environment and Development in the Twenty-first Century. Retrieved from http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_future_of_sustainability.pdf.

- [5] UNDP Thailand. (2012). UNDP's work in Thailand can be divided into five broad thematic areas. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.or.th/focusareas/focusareas.html>.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Name: Atchara Sriphan

Work: Lecturer and Researcher in Knowledge Management and Development Area at Naresuan University, Thailand

Address: Faculty of Management and Information Sciences, Naresuan University, Phitsanulok, 65000, Thailand

Tel: 066872038898

Fax: 06655962097

e-mail: atcharamay@hotmail.com