



Critical Success Factors Assessment and Event Implementation Management of CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival

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ABSTRACT

This study provides an in-depth look at the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) of the 2023 CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival in Chiang Mai to enhance its overall management and execution. Festivals are an integral part of global cultural expressions and dynamic social phenomena. This study focuses on a single event within Thailand's diverse festival landscape and examines the key factors that contributed to its success or failure. The investigation spans all angles and employs a multifaceted research approach, including comprehensive literature reviews, surveys, in-depth interviews with organizers and attendees, fieldwork, ethnographic observations and comparative case studies. Through these methods, the study strives to identify the strengths, weaknesses and CSFs of the festival. These approaches allow for a holistic exploration of the festival, gaining insights from different perspectives and experiences. However, limitations remain. The study's singular focus on one event limits its ability to generalize to the wider festival landscape, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings. In addition, external influences such as the COVID-19 pandemic or political instability may disrupt the festival environment and influence people's perceptions and behaviors, thus challenging the validity and applicability of the research findings. In essence, this study provides a comprehensive exploration of CSFs in festival management in an effort to solidify the future of the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival in Chiang Mai, while acknowledging the contextual limitations inherent in such an investigation.

Keywords: Event management; Festival; Special event; Critical success factors; Sky lantern festival; Thai studies

INTRODUCTION

Industry reports compiled by researchers indicate that the global event industry market is projected to reach US\$886.99 billion by 2020 and is expected to further grow to US \$219.44 billion by 2028. Festival events have emerged as integral components of public entertainment and cultural activities, impacting people's lives through social, economic, cultural

and educational aspects. These transformations are direct outcomes of the burgeoning festival events industry. To ensure the success of a festival event, it is crucial to identify the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) of the events that determine project success or failure, enabling the optimal allocation of limited time, human resources and financial assets to be realized. Otherwise it is a waste of money for event organizers and stakeholders. Thus, it is by

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understanding and incorporating these factors that festival event organizers can establish a valuable reference point to effectively organize successful festival events. Thus, the literature review will unfold festivals and special events, including its organization, stakeholder, management, execution and evaluation [1-5].

The present study explores the CSFs of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival. The paper selects Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival as a case because its tickets sell out every year and generate an annual income of at least 5 million baht for the locals. Thus, the present study thus holds significant importance as it explores the Chiang Mai festival event market, which serves as a bold exploration and experimentation ground for the industry's future. The present study highlights that economic growth is not solely provided by major business sectors, but also contributed by traditional culture sectors that the mainstream seems not concerned about. The aim of this study is to provide valuable insights and guidance for local festival event organizers and organizations in Chiang Mai, enabling them to explore innovative ideas and strategies in the ever-evolving festival event market.

Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) of the CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival from both the perspectives of the event organizer and participant perspectives and provide suggestions and a implementation plan for this event based on the findings of the CSFs to ensure a more rewarding experience for the event attendees and more profits for the event organizers. To be more specific, it investigates how these factors are applied during the festival event management and at the mean time and strives to find out what the drawbacks of the event management are. The study tries to gain insights into both the successful and failing aspects of this festival event organization that significantly impact its success. Combining the CSFs of other similar events and expert interviews, which will be demonstrated in the literature review section, a comprehensive CSFs can be created for this particular event. Based on this, the present research will further give advice with an implementation plan for the event that will guarantee the success of this event festival through the CSFs created to ensure the benefits of both the event organizers and the event attendees [6-8].

To achieve these aims, the research will begin by conducting a literature review addressing the CSFs of festival events in current studies and research with a thorough review of the context of event festivals and event executions. Through both quantitative and qualitative methods, namely surveying, in-depth interviews, on-site fieldwork, participant observation and examining other similar events and expert interviews, the study will discover both the successful and failing factors of the CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival in Chiang Mai. Ultimately, the study will propose a framework of CSFs for event management of this festival event and provide suggestions and an implementation plan for this particular festival event.

Conceptual Frameworks

The main conceptual framework of this study is the Critical Success Factors (CSFs), which is widely recognized as a significant approach for enhancing project delivery. CSFs are essential elements that organizations or projects require to accomplish their objectives. Consequently, CSFs serve as a strategic framework that expands the scope of process improvement, enriching the effectiveness of each implementation phase.

Inspired by this, another conceptual framework of the present study includes the four-pillar model and the event framework of Getz. In particular, the four-pillar model devised by uses the effective management of time, finance, technology and human resources as the basis for the success of an event manager. Getz has designed a framework for understanding and creating knowledge about events. This framework interrelates five components to define the event, festival research and event tourism. These are context and choice, planning and management; festival meaning and experience; outcomes and those affected; and patterns and processes.

Theoretical Frameworks

It is essential to firstly understand what a festival and special event is. defines festivals as "moments of sacred or secular celebration marked by special rituals". It is a periodically recurring social occasion that involves direct or indirect participation through multiple forms and a series of coordinated events. An event, however, once claimed that each event acts as a spatial-temporary phenomenon, subjecting to the interaction between culture, environment, people and management systems. Thus, every single event is unique and special, which gives much challenge to the event manager and the organization it belongs to.

The challenge for festival managers is to decide how to define the goals of a festival event and to find the most balanced and appropriate direction for a particular festival. According to a staged structure of the event planning process can be an effective way to use budget and effort wisely. While the event is being executed, it is necessary to continually adjust the plan to maintain control and achieve the desired event goals and outcomes. Another issue of event management is stakeholder management.

Stakeholder theory has been introduced into festival research with the development of event specialization and has attracted different stakeholders to participate. The division of relevant roles is defined as regulator, facilitator, co-producer, supplier, collaborator, audience and the impacted. This coincides with Reid's classification of event stakeholders in his research, that is, primary stakeholders: Employees, volunteers, participants and secondary stakeholders: Government, board communities, travel agencies, etc. in order to distinguish risk perception. According to Yeoman, et al., event organizers should focus on the stakeholders of the event at all times, reduce possible conflicts and manage competing interests between each other to achieve a successful event.

Careful planning, strict management and coordination and cooperation are necessary conditions for the success of festival events. Festival management is defined to include planning, leadership control, organizational administration, stakeholders, programme, visitors, entertainment, marketing, finance, human resources, operations and risk, which ensures that the goals and objectives of the festival are met. In order to ensure the progressive implementation of the above phases and to achieve the festival goals and objectives, a manager is required to coordinate with the staff and ensure the success of the festival and event.

In this case, CSFs play a pivotal role in determining the success of a project, serving as significant influences that contribute to its overall outcome. These factors act as inputs to project management practices, directly or indirectly contributing to the success of the project. Identified five variables of program performance in their study: Project management action, project procedures, human factors, external issues and project related factors. Further, the transformed team defines 6 success factors for managing project quality as a standard used to measure and guide individuals or organizations when establishing project management: A good plan, appropriate communication, managing stakeholders, good measurement, constant review and acting early. In addition, there is much more research on CSFs.

Andersen et al. not only established nine CSFs, but also studied the relationship between project success factors and actual project success. It was found that strong project commitment and early stakeholder engagement largely explained management's ability to deliver, but rich project communication supported product and individual success and gained experience. The success factors of festival and special event management can be described in various ways, but one success event has to have some element that can be described as a critical success factor and exist in the process of event production including the before, during, and after. Morgan developed a holistic prism model that integrates the main and internal elements of the festival experience and concluded that "festivals provide a space and time away from everyday life in which participants create and share intense and extraordinary experience", so a good festival and event experience is interpreted, subjective and affective and is interpreted in a broad narrative context.

In conclusion, the CSFs of a festival and special event need to create a scene or space that allows participants to have social interaction and personal experience. To this end, the organizers utilized to operationalize their management need to provide setting, participants (actors and audience) and performance and a unique and memorable experience. The criterion is the intrinsic personal satisfaction and meaning of the participants. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of other scholars such as Lee et al.

Other than the CSFs, event execution is also important to the success of festivals and events. The book *Event Management* by Bowdin et al. conducted an in-depth study of the multifaceted areas of event hosting and conducted a comprehensive exploration of the various factors that

contribute to successful event execution. The book emphasizes the significance of theming and event design, programming and venue selection, audience engagement, technical production, catering, performers and crew, hospitality and production schedule, recording the event and contingencies as foundational components in staging events.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect relevant data. Quantitative methods involved gathering feedback from visitors using questionnaires, allowing the researchers to obtain measurable data on various aspects of the festival. Whereas qualitative methods combine in-depth interviews with local communities, field observations and ethnographic research. These methods provide a deeper understanding of the festival's cultural significance, community engagement and overall impact.

This study was conducted during the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival in Chiang Mai, Thailand, scheduled for November 2022. Both domestic and international tourists will actively participate in the festival. In this study, primary data will be collected through a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed with a combination of closed and open-ended questions, including single choice, multiple choice, Likert scale and open-answer formats. The measurement variables for the questionnaire were derived from an in-depth understanding of the literature review.

Based on the number of tickets sold for the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival each year, the researcher estimates that the total number of participants in the Festival is about 3,500. Therefore, the research will apply Andrew Fisher's formula to determine the sample size of this research questionnaire. The following formula has been used with the standard deviation of 0.5, confidence interval (margin of error) of $\pm 5\%$, and 95% of confidence level. Where n is population size, $(Z\text{-score})$ is replacement/critical value for confidence level, STD is standard deviation, CI is confidence interval. The 95% confidence level, the critical value (Z) is equal to 1.96 according to the Z -score tables. Thus, the sample size in this research is estimated at 400 sets. The collected data from the questionnaire will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a widely utilized software program for statistical analysis.

For data collection, a semi-structured interview approach will be utilized. The interviews will follow a pre-designed question outline to provide structure and guidance while allowing for flexibility. The interviewer will adapt and extend the questions based on the interviewee's responses, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the topics. The interviews aim to gather specific information about the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival, including its history, cultural resources, event management process and current situation. Furthermore, the interviews will delve into the significance of event production and explore the perceptions and shortcomings of the event organizers regarding event management. By identifying weaknesses in the current management approach, the

research aims to provide valuable insights for future improvements. To ensure a targeted and accurate exchange of information, seven key individuals will be selected to participate in the in-depth interviews. The interviewees will include two event directors, one event producer, one representative from the venue provider and two key personnel from relevant government departments. This diverse composition of interviewees will provide comprehensive insights into different perspectives and roles within the festival organization.

Moreover, site observation is a qualitative research method aimed at exploring visitor behavior and the festival event production process within the context of the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival. Field research involves understanding, observing and interacting with people in their natural environment. By conducting site observation in a purposeful, planned and strategic manner, valuable data can be collected in the research context. It serves as a valuable method to supplement interviews and other qualitative approaches, providing nuanced insights into the festival's ambiance, visitor experiences and the intricacies of event production. By immersing themselves in the festival environment, the researcher gains a deeper appreciation for the festival's cultural significance and identifies potential areas for improvement in its management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

The survey results show that women account for a higher proportion, accounting for 64.81% of the sample, while men account for 31.48%. Most of the respondents are between the ages of 18-25, accounting for 61.11%. In terms of educational background, the respondents were mainly undergraduates or college students, accounting for 64.81% of the sample. In terms of marital status, singles account for the majority, accounting for 70.37%. Additionally, 55.56% of the respondents considered themselves students. When considering holiday spending, the majority of respondents (59.26% in total) indicated a budget of less than 5,000 baht.

Data collected from the public shows that people have positive reviews for the CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival in Chiang Mai. While the average score for mobile signal and WiFi service was below three, possibly due to congestion caused by the large number of participants, visitors expressed satisfaction with the festival's cultural, religious and gastronomic experiences. It is recommended that relevant staff optimize and improve mobile signals and WiFi services, such as deploying multiple WiFi networks, installing signal

boosters, etc., to improve tourist experience satisfaction in the area.

Regarding the cultural, religious and food experience of Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival, the average score in these three aspects is above 3.8 points. This shows that local staff's arrangements for cultural activities, religious ceremonies and food are in line with tourists' preferences. In summary, the data indicate that tourists have a positive perception of Chiang Mai's CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival culture and are highly satisfied with religious activities and food experiences.

From the crowd collected this time, it can be seen that the average score for the main programs of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival is above 3.5 in all aspects, indicating that the local staff's arrangements for the performance content, number of people, order, atmosphere and other aspects of the CAD Khomloy main programs are in line with the tourists. Therefore, the tourists collected this time have a high satisfaction with the experience of the main programs of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival.

From the perspective of the overall experience of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival among the collected population, the average score in all aspects is above 3.8, indicating that the arrangements made by local staff for the overall experience of CAD Khomloy are in line with the tourists, indicating that the tourists collected this time have a high satisfaction with the main program experience of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival.

In order to have a clearer understanding of the key factors that support the successful management of the Panon Dragon Festival, this article uses exploratory factor analysis to calculate their respective impact weights. In terms of measurement relationship, General management (Festival event damage the surrounding environment). When measuring CAD Khomloy Skylight Festival Management, the absolute value of the standardized load factor is $0.590 < 0.6$, indicating that the measurement relationship is weak but also within the acceptable range, indicating that the effectiveness of this confirmatory factor analysis is good.

Further, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted on a total of 4 factors and 84 analysis items. From the above table, it can be seen that the AVE values corresponding to a total of 4 factors are all greater than 0.5 and the CR values are all higher than 0.7, indicating that the data in this analysis has good aggregation (convergence) validity ([Table 1](#)).

Activity	Day 1	Day 2	Details
Opening ceremony	6:00 PM-6:30 PM	-	Inauguration by local dignitaries, introduction to the festival

Traditional Lanna performances	6:30 PM-7:30 PM	-	Dance and music showcasing Lanna culture
Lantern making workshops	7:30 PM-9:00 PM	10:00 AM-12:00 PM	Hands-on sessions for creating personal lanterns
Night market	06 PM-midnight	10:00 AM-4:00 PM	Local crafts, food and souvenirs
Cultural workshops	-	-	Cooking, crafts and more on Lanna culture
Lantern release event	-	7:00 PM-8:30 PM	Collective lantern release for peace and prosperity
Closing ceremony with fireworks	-	9:00 PM-9:30 PM	Celebratory end to the festival

From the above analysis, it can be seen that a successful management system for the Panon Dragon Festival is constructed based on CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival management, CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival culture, religion, food experience, main programs of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival and overall experience of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival. From a macro perspective, CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival management, CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival culture, religion, food experience and main programs of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival are considered the overall experience of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival has a significant impact on the success of the Panon Dragon Festival, with weights of 0.619, 0.826, 0.838 and 0.769, respectively. This indicates that the main programs of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival, as well as the cultural, religious and culinary experiences of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival, have a greater impact on the success of the Panon Dragon Festival than the management and overall experience of CAD Khomloy Lantern Festival. This indicates that if you want to hold a more successful Panon Dragon Festival, it is possible to adjust the order of its four dimensions, so that the overall experience satisfaction of tourists can be improved faster. From a small perspective, the impact weight of I feel Lanna culture authentication on the success of the Panon Dragon Festival is 0.975 and the impact weight of Increase my knowledge about Lanna culture on the success of the Panon Dragon Festival is 0.972, indicating that managers can quickly improve the impact of tourists on the success of the Panon Dragon Festival from these two aspects.

Analysis of the Open-Ended Inquiries

The management of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival is similar to last year. The festival mainly consists of sky lantern releases ceremony and supporting activities, including live performances, art markets, food corners, etc. Among them, tourists are picked up and dropped off by different types of vehicles. The organizers of this festival have a clear theme-Lanna culture and aim to spread and preserve this culture. The organizers intend to provide guests participating in the festival with a rich cultural experience and sufficient happiness.

People participating in this festival include locals and foreigners, with the majority being foreigners. Organizers hope to expand the festival while maintaining crowd limits.

There are some problems and obstacles in the management of this festival; for example, the organizers want more local people to participate, but they are more interested in diversifying the content of the festival. Every year the organizers have more complete plans than the previous year, but unexpected situations inevitably occur, such as fires. The main program of this festival is the sky release ceremony. Therefore, the other activities are secondary activities and can vary from year to year. The festival's main supporting programs and activities include local performances, enjoying local food and visiting the art market. These activities provide customers with an immersive lanna cultural experience, allowing tourists to better understand Lanna culture and deepen their understanding of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival.

Although emergencies such as fires have occurred during the festival, this does not allow the organizers to modify the main event of the festival, so the organizers' attention is mainly focused on the prevention of fires or other emergencies. International tourists are the main group of this festival. They come from different countries. There were some people from other parts of Thailand inside. A small number of participants were from local Thailand.

The organizers of the festival hope to spread Lanna culture to people who appreciate it in the form of different festival activities.

Basically, the current situation of the Chiang Mai CAD Khomloy Sky Lanterns Festival is in development, which means that it is not a mature festival event. However, all event organizers have faith and confidence for the upcoming challenges and are prepared to solve any problems that will occur during managing this festival event. Maintaining a positive relationship with the local government, including having similar visions and objectives as the local government, is one of the critical factors for this festival event to be successful.

Analysis of the Fieldwork Data

According to the observation of the overall management of the Chiang Mai factors CAD Khomloy Sky Lantern Festival, it was found that there is a lack of overall supervision and regulation of the preparation process. For instance, there

were no procedures or agenda during meetings. Most of the time in a meeting, we chatted casually. However, it was within this open and casual environment that creative ideas could be conceived. People were relaxed during meetings and this is where creativity comes from. This should be regarded as one of the CSFs of this event. Secondly, all materials and arts in this event were handmade by the locals. This emphasizes the cultural authenticity and originality of this event. It was this authenticity that drew tourists from all over the world to come to this event to have this immersive cultural experience. In this case, the aim of this event and the aim of tourists are both achieved. Each local worked hard to make gadgets, arts and cultural products such as thatched house, bamboo bridges to sell at the event. This does not only guarantee an immersive experience for the visitors', but also guarantees an income to the locals.

Arguably, because the event brings economic growth to the local, local government is supportive of this event. When the event managers went to the police station to register for the event, it was incredibly smooth. Everything was finished within half an hour. Therefore, the local government's support should be another CSF of this event. It should be pointed out that the team only had one big mobilization meeting together with every department. There was not much communication between various departments, and each department is only responsible for its own part. The lack of a general person in charge to supervise each department results in a lack of integrity in the activities of each department.

On the event day, all departments did their jobs according to the scheduled agenda. What was unexpected was that the main stage caught on fire as one of the four workers on stage failed to hit away the lantern floating on it. The fire got big within 3 minutes. While the stage was burning, staff led visitors to the gate and the fire truck was blocked at the gate. As a result, the fire distinguished itself. Fortunately, no one was harmed. After the incident, the stage was fixed shortly and no one was harmed. The fire truck drove up to the side of the stage and was tested the next day. It was interesting to note that while the fire was burning, some visitors were cheering and were still lighting new lanterns. It does not affect their mood but lightens their emotions more. Afterwards, the team talked about whether to light the main stage up in every subsequent year. From this analysis, it is clear from a professionals' perspective that a strong project commitment, rich communications and project execution flexibility are needed for the success of the event, just as Andersen et al. claimed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from various data, a new framework of critical success factors are as follows: thorough preparation, technological sensibility, unforgettable memories and experiences, clear communication, transportation management, physical environment management, safety management, diversity management, engagement and passion, environment concerns, community management, festival and culture, feedback mechanism, profitable, ensure

good internal management, and a passionate crew. Recommendations and new execution plans should be derived from these perspectives. In addition, event planning should be considered in terms of pre-event preparation, mid-event execution, and post-event evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION

Further research can look at the sustainability of this festival and its impact on social development and the environment. In this way, researchers can gain a better understanding of the environmental impact and the economic benefits of events. It also enables researchers to develop strategies to ensure the festival's long-term success and positive contribution to the community and environment. In addition, further studies can also focus on the critical successful factors of a sustainable sky lantern festival, striving to plan strategies regarding a profitable and sustainable festival event.

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