

Human Capital in the Exploration Stage of Community-Based Homestay Nawatwithi

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The Community Development Department of Thailand launched the Homestay Nawatwithi project in 2018. This innovation is considered to be in the exploration stage of the tourism life cycle with the study of human capital (HC) for CBT at this stage in Thailand limited. This study employs a qualitative research method to explore generic and specific human capital of homestay Nawatwithi in Phayao, Thailand and to evaluate the relationships between HC and homestay Nawatwithi performance. In-depth interviews were conducted with 18 members of homestay Nawatwithi from 4 villages. Further to observing their operations, this research highlights generic HC, such as the seniority and interpersonal competency as essential capital supporting the homestay operation in a highly collective society such as Thailand. Furthermore, two types of specific HC, namely service-related and business-related HC are explored. At the exploration stage of CBT homestay, most homestay Nawatwithi members obtain high service related HC, as characteristic of their inherited way of life, local wisdom and culture. However, a lack of business related HC was found as a result of the limited experience in welcoming visitors. This paper also provides recommendations for both academics and practitioners for their further HC development and study.

Key words: *Generic Human capital, Specific human capital, The exploration stage, Community-based Homestay, OTOP Nawatwithi.*

Introduction

The Community Development Department (CDD) of Thailand set out the Nawatwithi: innovative life, OTOP Community Tourism project in 2018. The CDD aims to use the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) brand to develop tourism in rural and lesser-known areas. The CDD has been working in collaboration with the private sector to achieve the vision of stability, prosperity and sustainability. They are working under the concept of Demand Driven Local Economy and this can be achieved through turning local charm, wisdom, creativity, culture and way of life, into income by highlighting the worth of tourist visits. Therefore, as a part of the project, the OTOP Nawatwithi villages are required to organize community-based Homestay Nawatwithi for tourists visiting their villages (CDD, 2018). Accordingly, 3,273 community-based Homestay Nawatwithi across Thailand have initiated since 2018 (OTOP Nawatwithi, 2019) and they are considered to be at the exploration/initial stage of the tourist area life cycle model (TALC) (Butler, 1980). The exploration stage of TALC is typified by a small number of adventurous tourists visiting sites with little infrastructure or public facilities (Butler, 1980). In terms of the local people, they have limited tourism and management knowledge and skills and lack tourism management experiences and trained human resources (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017).

Previous studies on human capital for community-based tourism in developing countries, such as in India (Bhan and Singh's, 2014), Laos (Kim et al., 2014) and Malaysia (Hussin, 2008; Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017), highlight the limitations of local people human capital. Low level of education, lack of knowledge, skills and experiences in tourism could affect the development of community-based Homestay tourism and this contributes to unsustainable tourism (Hussin, 2008; Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017). Moreover, the literature on human capital in small and medium sized- organizations (Thomas et al., 2013; Ployhart et al., 2014; McCracken et al, 2017) suggests a positive relationship between the development of human capital and the performance of both individual and organizational levels. In response to these concerns, there is a growing body of literature exploring ways to develop human capital for community-based tourism as well (Razzaqa, 2013; Bailee et al, 2015 Jiramahapoka, 2017). However, the majority of previous studies have been undertaken in community-based homestay tourism in other stages of TALC and, therefore, the understanding of human capital in the exploration stage of community based- homestay tourism, particularly in Thailand, is limited.

Much of the research on community-based tourism human capital in Thailand focuses on specific human capital: skills and knowledge that have productive value in one particular organization (Hashimoto, M., 1981) and further, provide suggestions to develop that specific human capital (Bailee et al, 2015 Jiramahapoka, 2017; Srithong, Suthitakon, and Karnjanakit, 2019). We argue that there are 2 types of human capital, including generic and specific human

capital (Onkelinx et al, 2012; Jerbashian et al, 2015). Therefore, understanding only specific human capital is inadequate to explain and suggest ways to strengthen local people human capital in community-based homestay tourism particularly at the exploration stage.

Therefore, this study seeks to make two contributions to the literature on human capital for community based-homestay tourism by 1) focusing on the exploration of human capital both general and specific to homestay Nawatwithi's members, and 2) evaluating the relationship between general and specific human capital and homestay Nawatwithi performance at the exploration stage.

Literature Review

Definitions of Human Capital (HC)

A review of the literature on HC reveals two main perspectives employed to define the term "Human Capital": the individual and unit – level perspectives. The original definition of HC by Schultz (1961) defines HC as the knowledge, skills and abilities of people employed in an organization. Later, Becker (1993) adds health of individual as another component of HC and states that human capital consists of knowledge, ideas, information, skills and the health of individual. In 1999, Dess and Picken pointed out that apart from individual capabilities, knowledge, skills and health, individual experience is considered as human capital also. Individuals can develop their human capital base through learning (Dess and Picken, 1999). Similarly, Vejayanon (2008) states that human capital is an individual resource including an individual's qualifications and characteristics, such as knowledge, skills, and abilities. These qualifications could be generated either from birth or later through the learning process, not just school learning but also in the form of professional and life experience, migration, health care and information retrieval (Jermsittiparsert & Sriyakul, 2014). Thomas et al (2013) state that individual knowledge, skills and abilities can be developed over time. Therefore, HC refers to the people within organizations and further, to their performance and potential (Thomas et al., 2013).

The unit-level perspective views HC in the context of unit or organizational-outcomes. For example, Ployhart et al. (2014) considered human capital as the vital organizational resource. They call HC human resource capital (HRC), and HRC is widely recognized as enhancing organizational performance to achieve competitive advantage. Viseshsak (2009) states that HC consists of the knowledge, skills, competencies, and working behavior of employees that align with and foster organizational goals. Luephong (2012) adds that since the human resource is considered as the important factor of an organization's success, the development of human capital would ultimately enhance the competitive capacity of the organization. Therefore, HCR refers to individual or team capacities based on knowledge, skills, abilities and opportunities that are accessible for unit-relevant purposes (Ployhart et al., 2014).

Furthermore, Onkelinx et al. (2012) distinguish HC into 2 types, namely generic and specific HC. The term generic HC refers to education, knowledge and skills which are acquired through formal education. This type of HC is applicable to different contexts and across jobs within an organization. On the other hand, specific HC can be used within the context of a specific job or a specific firm and has less value to other jobs or organizations. Specific HC is generated through, such as mechanisms as on-the-job- training, job experience and knowledge sharing among employees and with customers (Onkelinx et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2015).

It can be seen that human capital refers to the characteristics, knowledge, skills and abilities of the respective individuals and it consists of generic and specific HC (Onkelinx et al., 2012). HC is generated from either ones' genetically inherited characteristics or their learning processes (VeJayanon, 2008; Schultz, 1961 and Dess and Picken, 1999). Once individual human capital is aligned with and fosters organizational strategies, it is recognized as human resource capital at unit or organizational- levels and enables an organization to achieve a competitive advantage (Ployhart et al, 2014).

Human Capital in Community-Based Homestay in Thailand

The majority of previous studies on the human capital on Thai CBT homestay, for example the qualitative study of Jiramahaphoka (2004), focus on the development of human capital in CBT at the development stage. The study investigated the human capital potential of CBT homestay villages in Chiang Saen District, Chiang Rai Province. Interviews and discussion with the community leaders, homestay owners, food shop owners, agricultural products sellers, local academics and senior citizens reveal the limitations of human capital of the local people. They demonstrate lack of communication and language skills, particularly English and Central Thai. They also adopt local ways of life to operate and manage the Homestay, which is inappropriate in the longer term. Jiramahaphoka (2004) suggests that the local community members are expected to have good interpersonal competency and a willingness to share community information with visitors in a proper manner, characteristic of their way of life. Her suggestions are in accordance with the handbook of "Being a Good Host" provided by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2012) and these qualifications are considered as the specific human capital needed to deliver impressive services to their guests as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Specific Human Capital of Homestay’s Hosts

Knowledge	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Background of the homestay - Reception procedures and practices - Registration - Hygiene and cleanliness - Tourist activities planning - Marketing and sales promotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills and understanding of reception procedures - Cooking and culinary techniques - First aid - English for Tourism - Communication skills

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand (2012)

Human capital of community-based tourism at the exploration stage

According to Butler’s (1980) description of the Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC), there are 6 stages of the cycle: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline /rejuvenation. The exploration stage is typified by the presence of a few adventurous tourists visiting sites where there are few public facilities. In terms of the local people, at the exploration stage, they generally lack knowledge, skills and awareness of tourism management (Butler, 1980).

A lower level of human capital is considered as the major problem and limitation during the exploration stage of community-based tourism, such as evidenced in the Homestay Nawatwithi of Muang Phayao District (Phayao community development office, 2018) and other developing countries, such as India, Laos and Malaysia. Bhan and Singh’s (2014) study on community involvement in Indian tourism development reveals the challenges in CBT development, which they determined as the insufficiency of human resource in both quantity and quality. They found a lack of human capital specifically: skills, knowledge, awareness in cultural conservation and marketing promotion activities. In addition, Kim et al. (2014) explored community participation in tourism development in Huay Kaeng Community, Laos P.D.R. They highlight that the obstacles of the community –based tourism development are the low level of educational background, insufficient tourism knowledge, lack of time for the participation of tourism development activities and the uncertainty of the revenue expected to be generated by the tourism industry.

This is similar to the human capital of CBT in Malaysia, such as Sabah Lower Kinabatangan (Hussin, 2008), Bum Bum Island, Sabah Bum Bum Island, Semporna, Sabah (Kunjuraman et al., 2015) and Dagat Village (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017). The studies indicate the barriers to sustainable CBT development in Malaysia, including a lack of well-trained human resource, insufficient knowledge, skills and experiences in tourism and marketing management, and the low level of communication skills of local people participating in CBT. (Hussin, 2008; Kunjuraman et al., 2015; Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017). These are all considered as the key

obstacles and limitations to the development of homestay tourism in the exploration stage and, in turn, lead to unsustainability in long term CBT (Hussin, 2008; Bhan and Singh, 2014; Kim et al., 2014; Kunjuraman et al., 2015; Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017)

Research Methodology

The location of Phayao Province in northern Thailand makes a convenient resting spot to break up overland journeys between surrounding famous tourist destinations such as Chiang Mai, Ching Rai, Nan and Lampang. However, Phayao is not as well-known as its neighbors despite her rich cultural and historical background, her friendly people, and the location of the second biggest lake in Thailand, ‘Kwan Phayao’ which boasts the refection of a beautiful mountain view. Phayao is one among the 55 secondary tourism destination cities in Thailand which is also designated as a target city of OTOP Nawatwithi Community Tourism project organized by CDD (CDD, 2018). In this province, there are 36 OTOP Nawatwithi villages and 5 of those are located in Muang Phayao district. However, only 4 villages participated in this study as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: information of the 4 case studies of OTOP Nawatwithi villages

Items	Case 1: Toongkew	Case 2: Toontia1	Case 3: Toontia7	Case 4: Ngewtia
Age of the case (year)	2	2	2	2
No. of house	5	5	5	4
No. of members	5	4	3	5
Head of homestay operation	Head of the village (not a member)	None	None	Head of OTOP group (not a member)

Source: collated by researcher (2019)

The literature on employee human capital (Onkelinx et al, 2012; McCracken et al, 2017) suggests that to understand employee human capital, human resource managers or practitioners should have talk or discuss as well as observe employees’ performances which Creswell (2014) recognizes as a qualitative research approach. In order to contribute to the contextual richness in understanding human capital of community based-homestay Nawatwithi at the exploration stage, this study applies qualitative research to explore the general and specific human capital and evaluate the relationship between human capital and homestay Nawatwithi performance in Muang Phayao District, Phayao Province.

As mentioned previously, there are 4 OTOP Nawatwithi Villages who participated with this study. Each of 4 the case studies have different characteristics and context and, as a result, the

data is difficult to generalize from one case to another (Yin, 2014). Thus, this study employs multiple case studies to illustrate homestay member human capital and their performance from several examples (Stake, 2006) and replicates the procedures for each case study to generate new knowledge. This strategy is recognized by Yin (2014) as more compelling and robust than when data is collected from a single case study (all of 4 OTOP villages is as one case study).

Therefore, this study employs an inductive qualitative and multiple case study approach involving multiple sources of data including relevant documentation, non-participant observation and face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 17 homestay members from 4 OTOP Nawatwithi Villages in Muang Phayao, Thailand during December 2018 to February 2019. The collated data was manually analyzed by using a thematic analysis technique involving two steps, an individual case analysis and then a cross-case analysis. The findings were categorized into generic human capital and specific human capital affecting homestay operations and performances.

Results and Discussion

Generic Human Capital and Homestay Nawatwithi operations

The findings reveals two groups of generic HC of the Homestay Nawatwithi from 4 communities in Muang Phayao District as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: General Human Capital of Homestay Nawatwithi in Muang Phayao District

	General Human capital	Populations	Reasons of participating with Homestay project
Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elder (more than 60) - Part-time workers and farmers - Low level of education with low income 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of free time - Feeling of lonely - Monetary - Having a house and room available for tourists
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working-age (36-60 years old) - Full-time workers (government officers) - Entrepreneurs - Higher education - Medium to high income - Having travelling experiences 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceiving sense of community - The willingness of community economy and quality of life enhancement - Having a house and room available for tourists

Source: Researcher (2019)

Table 2 indicates that these two generic HC groups affect the participation in Homestay Nawatwithi at the exploration stage. Group 1 of homestay members, who are elderly people with medium – low income, are employed in the agricultural profession and or are housewives, are willing to participate in Homestay Nawatwithi project for several reasons including available free time, loneliness, vacant rooms in their house. One of informants said *“The leader of Ban Toongkew Tourism Group convince me to participate the homestay activity [...] I finally decided to participate this activity because I have much free time and some vacant rooms at my house”* (Toongkew1). Some informants participate in the activity for monetary reasons as captured from Toongkew 4 *“I have vacant rooms and free time, offering my rooms for the homestay group would help me earning some money after the agricultural season”*.

While Group 2 of homestay members: government officers with travel experience and sufficient income (without extra work) participate in the Homestay Nawatwithi project due to their sense of community and the willingness to help developing that community as evidenced by Toon 1/3, Toon 7/3, Ngewtai 3 and Ngewtai 4 *“As a government officer, I have less free time but I would like to open my antique house to the outsider guests. Therefore, our village could welcome more tourists...”* (Toon1/3).

Furthermore, the relationship between generic HC and the acceptance for being the leader of Homestay Nawatwithi at the exploration stage is evident. This study found that the members who have the higher education, naturally perform within their intellectual competency and this promotes them to be a group leader (As noted in case 3: Toontai 7). Two informants mentioned that *“we choose that wise person as our leader due to his highly education background, well interpersonal competency and she has abilities to manage out team’* (Toon 7/1 and 7/5). This finding supports the work of Phoowithayaphan (2008) who notes that the essential human capital in tourism and hospitality consists of Technical Competency, Interpersonal Competency, Intellectual Competency and Business Competency.

The evidence also indicates that individual generic human capital, such as seniority and interpersonal competency, are considered as the key qualifications for selection as the leader of the Homestay Nawatwithi of Muang Phayao District during the exploration stage (As noted in case 2 : Toontai 1). This may be due to Thai societal values with respect to seniority in terms of age, profession, educational background and social rank (Hofstede, 1984). The value of collectivism is considered as the reason for high dependency and societal awareness and belonging in terms of both mental and material aspects in Thailand (Treesuphaphkul, 2011). Therefore, the higher the qualifications of seniority and interpersonal competency, the greater the influence on acceptance as a leader of Homestay Nawatwithi in Muang Phayao District.

In short, this study supports Onkelinx et al. (2012) who assert that the generic HC of each individual; education background, knowledge and skills are considered useful for organizational operation and performance. This paper adds to the literature on HC in CBT homestay which finds that seniority and interpersonal competency are key generic HC characteristics required for leadership at the exploration stage of Homestay Nawatwithi in Muang Phayao District where the social setting is underpinned by collectivism.

Specific Human Capital and Homestay Nawatwithi operations

There are 2 types of specific human capital of Homestay Nawatwithi in Muang Phayao District. First is the service related HC, including accommodation service, food service and communication competency). Second is business related HC, such as management and marketing competencies as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Specific Human Capital of Homestay Nawatwithi in Muang Phayao District

Sources	Service related HC			Business related HC	
	Accommodation	Food service	Communication and Human	Management	Marketing
Local wisdom, Culture and Ways of life	√	√	√	-	-
Trainings and observation program	√	√	√	√	√
Travelling experiences	√	√	√	-	√
Occupations	-	-	√	√	√

Source: Researcher (2019)

Table 3 illustrates types of specific HC and their sources. The evidence shows that service related-HC is mainly inherited from local wisdom, culture and ways of life. While business related-HC is developed by training and observation programs as discussed below

Service related HC

The findings reveal that the majority of Homestay Nawatwithi members are able to provide and deliver impressive services, in terms of accommodation and food services. This satisfies their guests as captured from several respondents “*I see they (guests) enjoyed eating and asked for more food [...] they said the foods are delicious and healthy*” (Toongkew 2, Toon 1/3, and

Ngewtia 5). When considering the sources of service related HC, this study reveals that local wisdom and Thai culture are the main influencers. A member of Toongkew homestay referred to her inherited service competencies in the context of local culinary wisdom and her traditional practices in welcoming her guests and relatives by saying that *“In order to welcome my guests, I clean my house, bedding and mattress, prepare good food...as good as those for my relatives, like what my parents taught since I was young...”* (Toongkew 3). The finding that service related HC is inherited from local wisdom and ways of life, is consistent with the study of Khittasangkha et al. (2013). They explored ways to enhance HC in the tourism industry in the upper region of northern Thailand and highlight the local wisdom influencing human capital in tourism. Likely, Jiramahaphokha (2017) examines HC in CBT of Esaan- Lanna Village, Chiang Saen District, Chiang Rai Province and notes that the locals have successfully applied local wisdom to tourism services, in particular, the preparation of impressive culinary and local recipes.

The study also found that as a result of continual development incentives with the purpose of CDD, homestay Nawatwithi’ members have gradually developed their service related HC, for example, their knowledge in accommodation management and food hygiene. Evidence of this statement is captured from Toon1/2 and Ngewtai 5 *“ [...] Since I attended ‘a good host’ lesson and visited other best practice homestays (supported by government), I know more about accommodation and food hygiene ”*.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that service related HC, particularly related to accommodation and food, is predominantly inherited from local wisdom and culture and embedded in homestay Nawatwithi members. When trained, these members can then deliver appropriate service to meet guest expectations.

Business related HC

It is evident that the majority of respondents demonstrated a low level of business related HC, such as tourism business and marketing management. The findings show that, although most respondents are familiar with the reservation system, organization structure, business and marketing plans, they do not know how to create and organize those instruments. Several respondents mention that, although, they have participated in several training programs regarding homestay management, hosted by government officers, they still lack management knowledge and skills. Toongkew 2 and 3 and Ngewtai 4 similarly noted the lack of business related HC by stating that *“Since we attended ‘a good host’ lesson, we understand that we have to plan our business, set out the organizational structure and so on but we do not how to, we have a lower educational background and less experiences ”* The finding of lack of business homestay members’ related HC during the exploration stage in Muang Phayao is consistent

with the previous studies undertaken in other developing countries in Asia (Hussin, 2008; Bhan and Singh, 2014; Kim et al., 2014; Kunjuraman et al., 2015; Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2017).

These studies indicate the barriers to sustainable CBT development including a lack of well-trained human resource, insufficient knowledge skills and experience in tourism and marketing management and low level of local people's communication skills. One of the reasons for limited business related HC may be due to less experience in welcoming visitors. The evidence shows that since homestay Nawatwithi has been operating, there have been few guests visiting the Homestay. The members of Toongkew and Ngewtia homestay mentioned that they are only responsible for accommodation and food service. In terms of reservations, house allocation and even financial concerns, these are all the responsibility of the the head of the village. This means they do not have opportunity to develop their business related HC, in practice, post their training as organized by the government.

However, some informants describe their abilities to organize the booking system and talk about marketing strategies and mention that these abilities are derived by their *experiences* "I have been opening my house and welcoming many visitors before joining the Homestay project[...] To me, there is no problem to manage and organize the homestay" said Toon 7/3. This is another example emphasizing business related HC developed from experiences regarding welcoming the visitors. This finding is also significant in the work of Razzaga et al. (2013) who investigated the development of human capital in CBT in Malaysia. Their finding is that learning experience has positive relation to CBT development. This finding also supports the concept of skills development and that continual practice, in context and through application, enhances one's skills (Luephong, 2012 and Phanasuphon, 2013).

Implementations for academics

This study reveals the differences in human capital from 4 case studies regarding different management of the Homestay Nawatwithi. The study shows that the case studies with higher human resource capital (higher education and tourism management) as noted in Toontai 1 and Toontai 7 are able to operate and manage their homestay independently. In contrast, the case studies with limited human resource capital (lower education and less experiences), as noted in Toongkew and Ngewtai, have key performers from outside their teams as their leaders and managers. This is an interesting issue for academics to explore and compare the advantages and disadvantages of both types of homestay operation. This would lead to the promotion and development of the homestay human capital at the exploration stage and further stages.

Due to the limitation of the research methodology, the case study approach utilized in this study, the results may be difficult to generalize or extend to represent all homestay in Nawatwithi as a specific sector. This is because this study was conducted only in one district

of Phayao province which may have different context and sub-culture to other provinces. Therefore, further research needs to be conducted across province and countries. However, it may be difficult to conduct qualitative research with wider samples and therefore a mixed research methodology might be more appropriate (Creswell and Plano, 2011). The findings from the current study could be used to develop appropriate quantitative instruments (survey and questionnaire) to examine wider samples of HC in Homestay Nawatwithi across Phayao province or even the entire country of Thailand. This would provide more specific measures and statistical analysis to establish research quality and then the results could be generalized to HC in homestay Nawatwithi during the exploration stage in Thailand.

The implementations for practitioners

Even though the development of homestay member human capital would create impressive services to guests, it is generally accepted that all members obtain different levels of human capital. Therefore, the human capital developers should analyze and categorize the existing level (of human capital) in order to create an appropriate and continually developing program. An Experiential Learning Approach is one available method for this development.

It is difficult to develop human capital without any background, in particular in this study context, management and marketing background. This study shows that 2/3 of the homestay member participants do not possess the required human capital. Therefore, human capital developers should carefully select members who demonstrate appropriate human capital and or intellectual competency to participate in the development of the program during the exploration stage of Homestay Nawatwithi. The trained members are expected to knowledge transfer the required knowledge to their peers afterwards. This practice was identified in Case 3: Toontai 7. A member with appropriate generic human capital would also possess the specific human capital required, in this case, especially the management skills. These members could perform a significant role as the leader of the group in terms of knowledge sharing. This finding is consistent with that of Onkelinx et al (2012) who assert that talented employees can effectively transfer their knowledge and skills to others through utilization of their existing human capital which consists of education background, competency and experience.

Conclusion

During the exploration stage, Homestay Nawatwithi are not well-known to the general tourism public and their operations are limited due to insufficient local knowledge and skills (Butler, 1980). Therefore, a further study on human capital at this stage of homestay is suggested as crucial to the sustainability and development of operations in this context (Wisetsak, 2009). A review of literature on HC enhances understanding and knowledge about the importance of human capital in the development of CBT. However there has been limited study of the



exploration stage on CBT homestay and most academics have focused on the specific HC rather than generic HC. This research fills the gaps in the literature on human capital for community based-homestay tourism by 1) focusing on the exploration of human capital both general and specific to homestay Nawatwithi's members, and 2) evaluating the relationship between general and specific human capital and homestay Nawatwithi performance during the exploration stage.

This study applies an inductive qualitative and multiple case study approach involving multiple sources of data which includes relevant documentation, non-participant observation and face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 17 homestay members from 4 OTOP Nawatwithi Villages in Muang Phayao. This study seeks to make a contribution to the literature on human capital for community based-homestay tourism. Further, the study highlights that generic HC embodied in each individual, has significant influence on their performance and organization. In addition, seniority and interpersonal competency of the respective individual are considered the reason for the members' acceptance of appointed leaders. Of most importance is that interpersonal competency is considered the key competency which supports homestay operation in the highly collective society found in Thailand and other Asian nations.

In conclusion, this paper suggests two types of specific HC during the exploration stage of CBT homestay, service related and business related HC. The members of homestay Nawatwithi demonstrate high service related HC, such as accommodation and food service, as inherited from their way of life, local wisdom and culture. Alternately, they lack business related HC, such as management and marketing knowledge and skills and this may be due to their limited experience in welcoming visitors as a result of their development being at the exploration stage. It is significant that although the literature review gaps have been addressed, there are limitations to this study. Therefore, this paper provides recommendations for both academics and practitioners for their further HC implementation.

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