
Community Potentiality in Tourism Development: A Case study of Sanan Rak Municipal, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand

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Abstract: *The purpose of this research was to study and compare the level of Sanan Rak Community Potentiality in tourism Development in terms of their domicile and gender. Quantitative research was carried out by distributing a structured questionnaire with a sample group of 380 among the total area population of 22,278 and statistical tools such as average, standard deviation and t-test were used to analyze the collected data. Thus, the outcome of the study revealed that, in overall, the Community's Potentiality for tourism development is in high level. However the study also found that comparatively, local people who live inside the Sanan Rak Municipal area have higher deliberation in tourism development than people who live outside the area with no statistical significance and also found that males' opinions in community potentiality level in tourism development by Community are higher than females in the statistical significant of .05.*

Keyword: *community potentiality; community tourism; Pathum Thani Province*

1. Origin and the Importance of Problem

Nowadays, the world has realized that Tourism Industry has become important industry to the world economic system and it is acceptable that Tourism Industrial growth is like a substantial product in the international trade system that has occurred in many countries. According to Thailand Tourism Industry, it is clearly seen that Thai Tourism Industry has been in a role of driving force throughout the past decades (Thailand Tourism Awards 2012).

Thai Government has significantly realized the importance of tourism and has crucially promoted its tourism in all kind of aspects in order to attract tourists and to educate Thai communities with the importance of sustainable tourism by promoting and supporting their own communities potentialities in becoming tourist attractions, such as, ecotourism, cultural tourism in order to spread incomes to communities, also, in order to increase more various alternative tourist attraction areas. (Nisasorn Chaiprasit and Thirachaya Maneenait, 2009). The sustainable tourism development and restoration strategies implemented by The Ministry of Tourism and Sports were less effective comparing to the expansions of tourism deteriorating Thai tourism strategies. So, the Ministry Of Tourism and Sports has directly paid attention to the importance of sustainable tourism, conservation of natural resources, improving and restoring the sustainability of tourist attractions by prohibiting the damage or destruction of natural resources, cultures and national identity by realizing about their capabilities in handling tourist attractions. In order to prevent excessive use of resources, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports made amendments to various tourist attractions regulations including possible areas that have potential in maintaining the sustainability, so that Thai tourist attractions can be both sustainable and prospective in handling the tourist demands. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2011).

Community tourism means alternative tourism that allows all stakeholders of the society to gain benefits from tourism consequently, by bringing various local resources, regardless of resources from nature, history, culture or custom, way of life and way of community's productions to use as capital or factors in managing destination. Nevertheless, it is also including community potentialities in decision making, planning and process. Thus in summary, cultural tourism emphasizes on local community prosperity by developing tourism with awareness on maintaining sustainability (SinthSarobol, 2003 P.no.12).

The physical landscape of the Sanan Rak Municipal, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province is an agricultural low land. Though the land is agricultural, the community is a mix of people having different work background such as farmers, businessmen, factory workers, employees in either private or Government sector. The Sanan Rak Municipal is considered to be an area with good potential towards community based sustainable tourism because of the geographical advantage of good soil for cultivation which can be associated for the development of many professional styles of community tourism. For example, shift of community's agriculturists to organic farming, especially growing organic tangerines has become a strong support for the community's overall economic development. With great initiatives and efforts of Thitinun Charoen-arg, Sanan Rak municipal clerk, the pioneer of the Sanan Rak Hometown Group Community Project, the concept of growing organic tangerines and organic farming was approved by the Tourism Authority of Thailand to be the community based ecotourism tourism attraction of Sanan Rak Municipal community. Hence, the project is an integration of the concepts of organic farming and community based ecotourism which developed into their unique organic farming styles and community based ecotourism tourism leading to environmental friendly sustainable farming and tourism.

With the above mentioned success of Sanan Rak Municipal community both in terms of organic farming and community based ecotourism, the researcher was intended to study the community

potentiality with more emphasis on Sanan Rak Group Project and Rak Ban Kerd Project in terms of tourist attraction areas, natural resources, community lifestyles, cultures, folk wisdoms, community organizations and tourism activities in order to measure their capabilities, readiness and tourism management in developing their destination.

2. Objectives

- ✚ To study community potentiality level in tourism development.
- ✚ To compare community potentiality level in tourism development in terms of domicile and gender.

3. Advantages

- ✚ The research outcome can be useful for the community, the local municipality and Ministry of Tourism to understand the present potentiality of the community.
- ✚ The information will be useful for other stakeholders of the community tourism to develop new concepts for further development.

4. Definitions

- Potentiality means the highest capability that a person can do.
- Development means to systematically change from one status to another better status or to make anything systematically better than it was.
- community-based ecotourism is defined as economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible visitation to local/indigenous communities to enjoy, appreciate, and simultaneously enhance conservation of their cultural and natural heritage, whose tourism resources, products and services are developed and managed with their active participation, and whose

benefits from tourism, tangible or otherwise, are collectively enjoyed by the communities (Ramesh Boonratana, 2010)

- Sanan Rak Municipal means Sanan Rak Municipal that governs 2 sub-districts. They are Bueng Sanan Sub-district and Bueng Num Rak Sub-district, Thanyaburi District, Pathum Thani Province.

5. Scope of Research

This research aimed to study the Community Potentiality in Tourism Development. Systematic structured quantitative research was carried out with a sample size of 380 respondents in 3 months phase from December 2015 to February 2016.

6. Literature Review and Related Researches

In the study of Community Potentiality in Tourism Development researchers have studied concepts, theories and the related research works as follows:

6.1 Concept about Community Potentialities.

Suwit Wibulpolprasert (2010). Community Potentiality means community that has its members firmly gathered themselves together or community that has high potentiality level of learning and having efficient community organization groups to change and associate in strengthening up community development including the ability to live together peacefully and in unity, to sustain community or local identity, cultural values by maintaining Thai identity. Chomamnad Tantisare (2003) has concluded the meaning of potentiality in the research fair in the topic of “The Local Community Potentiality in Ecotourism Development”. The Local Community Potentiality in Ecotourism Development means the actual evaluations about local community capabilities and readiness in Ecotourism Development which divided into 4 aspects. They are community tourist attraction areas, community tourism activities, community organizations aspect including natural resources management for community tourist attractions.

6.2 Concept of Community Tourism

The Community based ecotourism is the tourism Concept with more emphasis on environmental sustainable. However, community will be the one which specifies the directions on how to manage the destination effectively. In short form this can be mentioned as “by themselves and for themselves”. Apparently, community has roles and rights in managing tourism so that visitors will learn and understand about community tourism. Generally tourism relies on the 5 major business environmental aspects i.e., politics, society, economy, culture and environment aspects. But community tourism is the alternative way of tourism that can create knowledge and understanding of Community Tourism Development and mainly emphasizes on community self-reliance which is not stressing on economy.

Potjana Suansri (2003) has defined and recognized Community Tourism as environmental, societal and culturally sustainable. Thus, community will be the one which specifies the directions for managing the destination. In addition, the community will act as owners and own the rights to take care and manage tourism in order to create new experience for visitors. Nowadays community based tourism management is getting more and more popular among the communities and tourists.

The Department of Tourism (2007) has mentioned about the principle of community tourism that uses tourism as instrument for community development. The principles are as follows: 1. Community is the owner. 2. Villagers should participate in framing directions and making decisions. 3. Promote pride to ones' self. 4. Elevate quality of life level. 5. Environmental sustainable. 6. Maintain local identity and cultures. 7. Create intercultural learning. 8. Respect cultural differences and human dignity. 9. Create fair remunerations to local people. 10. Spread incomes to community and public benefits.

6.3 Relevant Research Works

Chanphornchuangchot (2010) researched the topic of “the influential factors toward the potentiality and need in tourism development by community” in Wangyao sub-district, Dan chang district, Supanburi province. The study objectives were: 1. to study the potentiality in tourism development by community. 2. To develop areas to be tourist attraction sites, and 3. The influential factors toward the potentiality and need in tourism development. The research was done with a sample group of 400 people. Thus, with the use of multiple regression analysis of statistical level of .05, the researcher found those community members’ participations and attitudes toward tourism are having both positive and negative attitudes. However, the results are based on social influence and the need to develop the area to be tourist attractions.

Supphawat Chuamuangphan (2013) in his research on “Education for Potentiality in Developing Tourism by Community” case study at Ban Rai Kong King, Nongkhai Sub-district, Hangdong District, Chiangmai Province found that after training for Potentiality Development, Ban Rai Kong King Community performed well in tourism through its outstanding community products. The research was through in-depth interviews, observations, area explorations and workshops.

Wanvimol Poonak (2015) has studied the topic of “The Community Potentiality in Tourism Management by Community: Case study of Amphawa Floating Market”. The research found that Community Potentiality in Tourism Management in environmental aspect for tourism activities are creating environmental and natural resources learning. As for politics aspect, found that it cannot be systematically processed. For economic aspect, found that community has more additional incomes and lastly, for the social and cultural aspects, have found the learning in exchange. But for participation and administrations, community lacks of continuous participations.

7. Research Methodology

Population and Sampling Group: 22,278 is the population of the research, i.e., people living in Sanan Rak Municipal, Thanyaburi District of Pathum Thani Province. The Krejcie & Morgan table is used to identify the sample size and total 380 respondents were selected using stratified random sampling technique.

Variables used in the study are:

- Independent Variable consists of domiciles and genders.
- Dependent Variable consists of the study of Community Potentiality in Tourism Development by Community which consists of 3 aspects. They are: 1) Tourist attraction areas, natural resources, community cultural lifestyles and folk wisdoms. 2) Community organization aspect. 3) Tourism activities.

Data Collection: Researchers collected primary data through survey by distributing structured questionnaire form. The questionnaire was distributed by person and received back on the same time after completion. Secondary Data was collected from various documents, relevant articles, thesis and various relevant researches in order to carry out the research.

Instrument that used in research: Structured questionnaire with reliability values equivalent to 0.916 was used to gather data.

Statistical tools used in this research: Descriptive Statistics and T-Test.

8. Study Outcomes

The research outcomes are presented in the following as 3 parts:

Part 1: Demographic Profile.

Table 1: Domiciles

Domiciles	Number of People	Percentages
Local people	309	81.3
People from outside of area	71	18.7
Total (n)	380	100

From Table 1 it is inferred that the majority of the respondents i.e., 309 (n=380) are people who live within the area which is equivalent to 81.3% of the total respondents. Remaining 71 (18.7%) live outside the area.

Table 2: Gender.

Gender	Number of people	Percentages
Male	123	32.4
Female	257	67.6
Total	380	100

From Table 2 it is inferred that the majority 257 (n=380) of the respondents are female in which equivalent to 67.6% and the remaining 123 (32.4%) are male.

Part 2: Community Potentiality

Table 3: Average, Standard Deviation and Community Potentiality Level in Tourism Development. (n=380)

Aspects	Average	S.D.	Potentiality Level
Tourist attraction areas: Natural resources, community cultural lifestyles and local folk wisdoms.	3.896	.377	High
Community organizations.	3.874	.379	High
Tourism Activities	3.912	.404	Very High
In overall for Potentiality Level in Tourism	3.894	.330	High

From Table 3, it is found that the overall Community's Potentiality Level in tourism development is in the high level. When considering with each aspect it is found that aspect such as tourist attraction areas: natural resources, community cultural lifestyles, local folk wisdoms, organizations are in high level and tourism activities are in a very high potential.

Part 3: Community Potentiality by Gender and Domicile

The Comparison of Community Potentiality Level in Tourism Development as in accordance with domiciles and gender are presented in Table 4 and 5.

Table 4: Comparison of Community Potentiality Level in Tourism Development: domiciles

Aspects	Local People (n =309)		People outside (n =71)		T	p
	Average	SD	Average	SD		
Tourist attraction areas: Natural resources, community cultural lifestyles and local folk wisdoms.	3.904	.362	3.860	.437	.788	.43
Community organizations.	3.872	.359	3.883	.459	.184	.85
Tourism Activities	3.919	.394	3.875	.448	.702	.48
In overall for Potentiality Level in Tourism	3.898	.3182	3.875	.381	.541	.58

*p< .05** p< .01

From Table 4 it is inferred that in overall there is no significant statistical difference in level of potentiality between the local people and people living outside. Likewise, when considering each aspect, local people potentiality level is higher than people who live outside the area in accordance with tourist attraction areas and tourist activities with no significant statistical difference. And for the aspect community organizations, people who live outside, the level of potentiality in tourism development is higher than local people with no statistical significant difference.

Table 5: Comparison of Community Potentiality Level in Tourism Development: Gender.

Aspects	Male (n =123)		Female(n =257)		T	p
	Average	SD	Average	SD		
Tourist attraction areas: Natural resources, community cultural lifestyles and local folk wisdoms.	3.917	.397	3.886	.367	.742	.45
Community organizations.	3.914	.394	3.856	.371	1.39	.16
Tourist Activities	4.015	.396	3.862	.398	3.49*	.00
In overall	3.948	.340	3.868	.323	2.23**	.02

*p< .05** p< .01

From Table 5, it is inferred that the level of potentiality is higher with male respondents than female respondents with a statistical significant p value greater than of .05. However, while considering each aspect, also found those males' opinions have higher value than females in the community in Tourism Development. And for tourist attraction sites and community organizations, there is no significant difference among the respondents based on gender. The variable tourist activities have significant difference among the respondents in developing potentiality of

tourism. And indicates it plays an important role in tourism development in the community. In overall, the p-value ($P < 0.01$) indicates that significant difference exists among the category of respondents.

9. Conclusion

From the research it is inferred that the Community Potentiality in Tourism Development is in high level. So, the research outcome can be used as guidelines by the Community in developing better destination image. Even though the study outcomes of community are already in the high level, but to manage Community Tourism more efficiently, Community Leaders should continually plan, coordinate, follow up and evaluate outcomes together with community members.

10. Recommendations for further research

This study is a Quantitative Research which has result in numbers, but still more statistical tools could be used in future. Further research can be conducted with both qualitative and quantitative methods by including in-depth interview and focus group discussion between community leaders, local populations including government units in order to receive more explainable information that can bring more clearly visible results.

11. References

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