Research And Development Management
Model For Eco-Tourism With Participation Of Community In Thailand

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Abstract
Thailand has become one of the world ranked tourist destination. Tourism industry is one of major sources of Thai national incomes. Apart from its national properties, impression of tourists can highly affect tourist figures. The purposes of this research were to study: 1) To study problems of local eco-tourism in the community in Thailand. 2) To develop participation management model of tourism in the local areas in Thailand. The methods of this study are mixed methods of research. The qualitative research is a major method and quantitative research method is a supplementary. In terms of qualitative research a Participatory Action Research (PAR) was employed by blending of quality such as focus group discussion (FGD), and the technical meeting of brainstorm (AIC-Appreciation Influence Control). The quantitative research tool is a questionnaire.

The results of the research were as follows:
1. The study of management problems in local tourism
   Problems of entrepreneurs: lacking of communication skills, especially English, the hosts are not able to communicate and understand. The tourists are not impressed and did not come back again in the near future
   Environmental problems: No system of waste management-particularly in tourism vicinity-has been installed to cope with the garbage collection.
   Problem of management personnel: The committee is not strong enough. They lack of knowledge and skills in tourism management and lack of communication skills with foreign tourists.
   Issues of community participation: They lack of participation in all stages of operation. Each one runs as personal style. There is no gathering as the Board of Directors.

2. The results of development of a tourism management by the community.
   In this section, brainstorming is implemented for participation meeting. The development model of tourism management in the following 4 models:
   1) A management model for tourism in the area
   2) Model of tourism management in natural resources and environmental tourism
3) Model of tourism management and travel activities
4) Model of tourism management on the participation of the community

Key Word:
eco-tourism, participation management, community participation, Management Model

Introduction
Tourism is a leisure activity for every human who needs to move away from their daily-life environment to heal fatigue, recharge battery, and refresh minds in order to return to energetic and productive normal life; an eye opening experimental event which broadens and deepens international, regional, national, local understanding of and appreciation to difference and diversity of human beings, life styles, cultures, civilizations, histories, natures, and heritages, which would contribute not only mutual understanding and respect, but also reorienting life style, philosophy and values of life for better and meaningful lives to live.

Thai people name their county as the land of smiles. Most Thai people have been known as those who are friendly and kind. Because of its richness of unique cultures, friendly people, long historical background and colorful natural resources, Thailand has been ranked as one of the foremost tourism growth destination. Tourism and its related industries can distribute both negative and positive impact to the country, but such practices always bring good national incomes. Tourism has played an important part in Thailand business. According to The Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA)’s service coupon 2005, international tourists in Thailand had been increasing dramatically from 1997-2002, it went from 1,630,060 in 1997 to 2,269,294 in 2002, and went up and down from 2003-2005. The figures were 2,177,814 in 2003, 2,688,455 in 2004, and then 1,748,103 in 2005. The decreasing number of tourists in those periods was affected from Natural disaster, and disease.

The Thai tourism industry, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), is presently ranked 18th in the world level, and the 5th in the Asian region, behind China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Malaysia. There are high numbers of both local and inbound tourists visiting Thailand all year round. However, according to TAT, based on facts and figures from World Tourism Organization, WTO (2010), it was estimated that the average growth of international tourists in 2010 would be 5.5% with 808 million international tourists. This figure was lower than those numbers in 2004, when the growth of world tourism experienced a 10% expansion. The region which was expected to grow at a higher rate was the Asia Pacific (+10%) owing to the fact that tourists paid more attention to finding new attractions in this region, especially in Cambodia, Vietnam, India and China, where there was high growth in the number of visitors. For the situation of tourism in Thailand, the tsunami disaster and disturbance in the 3 southern provinces, as well as the increased market competition in new destinations (Vietnam, China, India) and tourism product creation (Japan, Hong Kong, and Korea) were key factors of Thailand’s steady tourism growth in 2010, with 11.52 million inbound visitors, a 1.15 % decreased from the previous year. However, that slowdown has become increased. Attempts of the public and private sectors to stimulate markets and recover the attractions affected by the disaster as fast as possible have been planned to help the situation, including the enhancing of the positive attitudes and good impression of visitors towards visiting Thailand.

Ecotourism is a form of tourism in various countries currently providing a key movement towards sustainable development of the country and many nations. According to the Universal Declaration on the environmentally sustainable development, tourism will stress on priority to the educating or learning. Or it focuses on the conservation of the environment rather than serving the satisfaction of the tourists only. In contrast to traditional tourism, eco-tourism will be responsible for nature attraction. There will be managing of environment and educating visitors as a whole.
Community tourism in Thailand as in many areas have no management model of local tourism in the clear systems of many aspects such as the tourism area, environmental management, activities in tourism sites and the participation of the community—especially the waste disposal and the environment. It was found that tourists threw litter. Uncontrolled waste disposal matters in the near future could lead to the destruction of environment and area degradation. Therefore, it is necessary to seek ways to develop a model of tourism resources in the local community participation. To be able to effectively, manage benefits locally and distributes an income in the areas. Raising the quality of life and the returning to resume maintenance and tourism management will bring about ultimate development of local sustainability.

**Objectives**

1. To study problems of local eco-tourism in the community in Thailand.
2. To develop participation management model of tourism in the local areas in the community in Thailand.

**Scope of study**

The scopes of this study are as the followings.

1. A scope of content: Determination of tourism management has been classified into four areas: tourism areas, environmental management area, activities in tourism and the participation of the community.
2. A scope of the population and sample groups: They consisted of travel operators, community members, community leaders, local administration organization official as well as tourists visiting the attraction.

**Literature Review**

The current trend of tourism is Eco Tourism, this kind of tourism shows a concern for environment, culture, tradition and sustainable interest of this planet earth. Sustainable tourism must be initiated and worked out to include natural resource conservation and a creative kind of tourism. Rather than tourism for pleasure alone. The local people should participate in developing this kind of tourism and in gaining economic interest from tourism at the same time. The result of impact of tourism research in 1985 led to a new approach in tourism called "alternative tourism". An alternative we believed could be used to create economic revenue, a fair distribution of income to local people and at the same time a conservation of the environment, culture and tradition. Later the term was changed to "Ecotourism". (Thai Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association, 2011)

**Ecotourism in Thailand**

Over the last few years there has been a world-wide explosion in interest in eco-tourism. People from many walks of life have recognized eco-tourism as being one means to enjoy the benefits of a country while remaining concerned about its environment and wildlife. But what exactly is eco-tourism? Originally eco-tourism involved travel to areas of natural or ecological interest (usually under the guidance of a naturalist) to observe wildlife and learn about the environment. By its nature, eco-tourism is also ‘low-impact’ tourism – groups are small and tours include advice and guidance on how to avoid damaging the environment. Nowadays, eco-tourism has grown to encompass a range of adventure and travel activities including Bicycle Tours, Elephant Safaris, Sea Cruises, Trekking, Walking and Wildlife Tours. Clearly, Thailand has huge advantages for the eco-tourist. The country’s rapid development has not reached all parts of the country and there are pristine areas for the adventurous tourist to explore. (online, http://www.discoverythailand.com/adventure.asp)
Research Methodology
The methods of this study are mixed methods of research. The qualitative research is a major method and quantitative research method is a supplementary. In terms of qualitative research a Participatory Action Research (PAR) was employed by blending of quality such as focus group discussion (FGD), and the technical meeting of brainstorm (AIC-Appreciation Influence Control). The quantitative research tool

Results
1. The study of management problems in local eco-tourism
   Results from the depth interviews showed that there are problems in the management of eco-tourism as follows.
   **Problems of entrepreneurs:** There are problems in terms of services, for examples, lacking of communication skills, especially English. When tourists visit, the hosts are not able to communicate and understand. The tourists are not impressed and did not come back again in the near future.
   **Environmental problems:** No system of waste management-particularly in tourism vicinity- has been installed to cope with the garbage collection. The problem of environmental waste is a left behind problem in many communities.
   **Problem of management personnel:** The committee is not strong enough. They lack of knowledge and skills in tourism management and lack of communication skills with foreign tourists.
   **Area problem:** There are no problems concerning area.
   **Activity problem:** There is only one activity. That one runs as personal style. There is no gathering as the Board of Directors.

2. The results of development of management model for eco-tourism with participation of communities
   In this section, brainstorming is implemented for participation meeting. The format has been identified within the framework of ecotourism into 4 areas: tourism area, environmental management area, activities in tourism and the participation of the community. The 4 models were introduced into the four forms of action for 3 months.

   The development model of tourism management in the following 4 formats:

1) **A management model for tourism in the area**
   The area development has been done as tourist attractions as the followings.
   1) Signs, direction and development of roads and pavement
   2) Parks, gardens and flower garden plants
   3) Sum rest with the bench table
   4) Develop viewpoint for a rest and views, as well as tourists who take pictures

2) **Forms of tourism management in natural resources and environmental tourism**
   The problems about natural resources are concerned with waste and the environment, so developments are as follows.
   1.) The project of a recycling bank in the community to recycle waste to benefit the next was introduced.
   2.) Project Steering Committee established a recycling bank in the community.
   3.) Determining of regulatory environment as not to pick flowers in tourism

3) **Forms of tourism management and travel activities**
Determine to have tourist activities in the vicinity as follows.
A) Activities for health consist of the following items.
1. The health walks, cycling around the area
2. Massage
3. Drying herb
4. Tara Spa Therapy
B) Activities in the annual festival consist of these.
1. Festivals of eating fish during the month of April every year
2. Contest of car decoration-beautiful blossoms

4) Types of tourism management on the participation of the community
The study of community participation in tourism management in this section the data were collected by questionnaire. The results presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Participation in an overall and in an item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Level of Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation in the planning - analyzing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. You are involved in the planning of tourism management in the community.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. You are involved in commenting on tourism management.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. You are involved in setting rules for travel.</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You are involved in the analysis of the problems caused by tourism in the community.</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You participated in village meetings about tourism in the community.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation in the operation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You are involved in the tourism management in the community.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. You are involved in selling products such as fruits and vegetables in tourist destinations.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. You are involved in the tourism environment in the community.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. You are involved in solving problems arising from tourism in the community.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. You are involved in promoting tourism.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation in benefits</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. You are involved in the process of earning from tourism in the community.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. You are people who involved in working for money in tourism areas.</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. You are persons who have benefited in other forms such as public services.</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You are people who have received appreciation from the outside on having a beautiful tourist destination.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. You get more convenient, more comfortable when there are tourism attractions such as electricity, water and roads, etc..</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation as a whole</strong></td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 1, it was found that participation in an overall and in an item is at a low level. Therefore the development in terms of participation is as follows.

(1) Involvement in providing tourist services, including food, accommodation and attractions.
(2) Participation in the production of raw materials used in cooking such as raising chicken, fish and various vegetable crops and fruits in season.
(3) Participation in the sale of souvenirs and agricultural products.
(4) Participation in the group to get the car - sending tourists to tourism in the community.

**Recommendation**

**1. Policy recommendations**

These results made us know about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat of tourism in this area. The result of this study was to define a policy on tourism as follows.

1.1. A result of the study note that the level of participation of the community. We also see a clear picture of the lack of participation. Therefore, there should be Board of Directors, community members, community leaders and local administrators established a policy of tourism management in the community.

1.2. Sub-district Administration Organization is responsible of tourism. Then they should set regulations as concretely and clearly for the sake of environment for entrepreneurs and tourists and penalties on violation of regulations should be enforced.

**2. Suggestions on the results of research to real practice**

Findings from this research reflect the strategic importance of tourism management with participation of local communities. The application of research results will be like these.

2.1. A supervised group or committee should be set up to oversee the tourism community. The information from the data collection makes us know that people in the community would like to have the group to be responsible for taking care of the community tourism here.

2.2. Project preparation workshop to develop the potential of entrepreneurs in areas such as service quality, basic English communication skills, etc. should be launched to improve the knowledge and skills needed to manage tourism in the community which will create confidence among service providers, which can lead to the satisfaction of tourists.

2.3. Organizing projects which relates to the tourism budget presented to the relevant agencies including the Provincial Administration Organization and Tourism Authority of Thailand, etc. to get the budget to support the development of various aspects. This point is a weakness in tourism management.

2.4. Brochures and posters should be published to advertise of tourism sites or to make mechanism in the market.

**3. Recommendations for future researches**

This study is a study of tourism management with participation of the community which should have the opportunity to further study the issues as follows.

3.1. Evaluation research should be done in order to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism management.

3.2. Researches should be created a research strategy for tourism development with participation of the community to use as a way to drive the operations of tourism in each community.

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