

The Evaluation on Capacity Standard of the Management and the Impact of the Operation of Community Based Tourism in Samut Songkram Province, Thailand

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Abstract

Community based tourism in Thailand has gained attention from both Thai and foreign visitors for the purpose of education, business, and leisure. The CBT service and products make up substantial revenue for government and community while developing the standard of the cultural heritage and the conservation of the environment. The survey on the service quality of CBT and the research on evaluation and measures to improve CBT reflect and give rise to tourism growth in Thailand. This research has the objective to evaluate the capacity standards of the management of CBT and its impact from tourism operation in Samut Songkhram in five locations. It is discovered that the spectrum of the assessment is arranged in the respective order as for Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center obtains the highest standard followed by Baan Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise, Baan Bang Phlap Community Tourism Center, Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market, and Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise. The research report reveals that the operation of CBT in Samut Songkhram province has negative impact on the environment including the cause of wastes and disposals, while affecting the society in terms of the safety of life and property with regard to the financial status of family members.

Keywords: Evaluation, Management, Community-based Tourism.

Introduction

Tourism service is a business that generates high revenue for Thailand due to the existing natural resources in Thailand that attract attention from tourists for the positive benefit of the economic, social, and cultural gains. Therefore, Thailand has considered tourism sector as the strategic economic development of the nation that sustains the efficiency of the balance of payments. Tourism increases direct investment of the traveling business and the related businesses such as tour guide company and other, all of which expand the growth of national economy and job creation. In the present day, there are diverse types of tourism in which CBT is the form of tourism that aims to develop the well-being of community by distributing the revenue from tourism to the fundamental economy (Kampetch and Jitpakdee, 2019: 111;

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Mingsiritham and Proyrungroj, 2021: 39). It corresponds with the national sustainable development approach in which Thai Government has supported the CBT in many regions of Thailand in order to enable the self-reliance ability of the people in the local community. This promotes the building of good and participatory relations between the people in the community (Bulilan, 2014: 16; Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2018: 1).

The Community-based Tourism in Thailand extends to all regions of the country covering the North, the Central, the Northeast, the West, the East, and the South, in which each region has the distinct natural resources, geotourism, as well as social and cultural assets. The important elements are natural resources, arts, culture, local wisdom, and way of life (Ruban, 2021: 2; Sriharun and Kampetch, 2018: 118). Samut Songkhram province is situated in the Central Thailand with the size of 416.707 km² which is the smallest in the country. The area is divided into three districts comprising Mueng Samut Songkhram district, Amphawa district, and Bang Khonthi district (Samut Songkhram Office, 2014). Even though Samut Songkhram province has the smallest size of land, it has the tourism capacity to attract tourists to visit. There are four important tourist destinations added which are King Rama 2 Memorial Park, Amphawa Market, Rom Hub Market, and Chulamanee Temple. Moreover, Samut Songkhram province has motivated the local community to set up the CBT businesses; as for example, Tha Kha Floating Market, Ban Bang Phlap Community, Klong Klone Conservation Center, and Suan Luang Community. Each community has been operating for more than 10 years which greatly bring about positive impact to community (Wannaosote and Pooripakdee, 2019: 859).

The management of Community-based Tourism development towards sustainability in Samut Songkhram province operates on four important stages which are Planning, Organization Structuring, Operation, and Control. Nevertheless, a number of CBTs cannot complete all of the processing stages especially Control which requires follow-up and evaluation that lead to improvement, change, and effective development of CBT. The causes of the inefficient evaluation are the lack of education of CBT entrepreneurs on the understanding of business management due to their business negligence, and the mistaken concept of time management that fails the evaluation. Therefore, the training on the Evaluation of CBT in each community in Samut Songkhram province is essential to support and help the agency of CBT and CBT entrepreneurs in order to gain knowledge, planning, reviewing, and improvement, as well as setting direction and strategies of the CBT in Samut Songkhram province to obtain its sustainability.

Objectives

1. To evaluate the capacity standard of the management of CBT in Samut Songkram province.
2. To study the impact of the Operation of CBT in Samut Songkram

Literature review

Community Based Tourism

Community-based tourism is a form of tourism that allows communities to participate in the management and utilization of economic capital, social capital, and natural resource

capital as a means to curb poverty while strengthening the capacity and development of the community. If local communities are able to maximize the potential of community-based tourism and to meet the needs of visitors while conserving the natural resources and culture of the community, it will create a balance for the community to be sustainable (Fennell, 1999; SuanSri, 2003). Community Tourism Institute divides four aspects of community-based tourism namely (Community Tourism Institute, 2010): 1) Natural resources and culture: The community has a rich natural resource base and has a production method that relies on sustainable use of natural resources. There are cultures and traditions that are unique to the community. Original sentence: Community-based tourism is important to the conservation of natural resources and to provide tourists with the experience to value natural resources of their communities including environment and culture that is naturally local and unique (Philip and Tushman, 1990: 604). 2) Community organization: The community has a comprehensive social system that includes knowledge, skills, and expertise in presenting local culture to outsiders or tourists who are interested in added the natural resources, local culture, and the way of life of the community. 3) Management: Management is the power of authority that plans and puts forth the idea for the design and management of the area. Management also sets the rules such as rules for managing the community's natural resources of which the benefits can be distributed evenly without bias, and to ensure that the funds allocated or gained are beneficial to the economy of the community. Management must also ensure that the local people are taken care of by the community's revenue and profit from community-based tourism (Poonak, 2016: 63). 4) Learning and knowledge gaining: The nature activities of community-based tourism can create knowledge and understanding on the ways of life of the local people especially when immersed with the local culture. The learning process between villagers and tourists is crucial to human resource development that will help shape one's personality in the community. Training opportunities should also be provided to build skills, expertise, knowledge, and understanding. CBT initiatives conducted by government, ministry of tourism and sports, and tourism agencies should be approachable and accessible to CBT tourism businesses in every community. Exchange of knowledge, engagements and interaction between members in the community and visitors are carried out to promote collective well-being and positive returns to the host community.

Methodology

Population, Sample Group, and Sampling

The population and sample group used in the quantitative research are divided into two groups: the first group consists of prominent CBT businesspeople in the province of Samut Songkhram in five locations, including Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab, Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise, Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center, and Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market; purposive sampling was carried out. People over the age of 20 who reside in the vicinity of CBT places in Samut Songkhram province constitute the second group. The determination of sample size using Taro Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1973). In this study, the author obtained 400 samples by multi-stage sampling, as shown below.

This research utilized Cluster Random Sampling to acquire data from each grouping in each subdistrict that is physically located within the research area. Using the rule of three in arithmetic, the author then updated the sample of each subdistrict proportionally to the population (people aged 20 and older) in each subdistrict.

This study utilized proportionate random sampling, which permits each subdistrict to randomly acquire an equal amount of male and female participant data samples.

Research Instrument

The author utilized the standard evaluation of CBT created by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports for tourism entrepreneurs in Samut Songkhram province, as well as the questionnaire provided to residents of CBT places in Samut Songkhram province (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand, 2018; Pechmon, Sriharan, Sompan, and Muenhus, 2021: 337). The author produced the questionnaire based on a review of relevant documents and research, as well as an evaluation of the content's precision and cohesion. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was assigned a value between 0.66 and 1 for each item by three academic experts, and then the questionnaire's reliability was evaluated with 30 sample groups (Jirawatkul, 2556). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient produced an internal consistency value of 0.921% and an exterior dependability value of at least 0.915%. Before collecting 400 questionnaires, which represented a return rate of one hundred percent, the research team meticulously examined each questionnaire set, which led to the successful completion of data coding and analysis prior to data analysis.

Data collection

The author collected secondary data from documents, books, journals, and researches on community-based tourism over the past ten years (B.E. 2555–2565) and conducted research in the community to collect data between January B.E. 2565 and May B.E. 2565, for which the author requested a letter of permission to collect data from the provincial office.

In addition, before implementing this methodology, the research team received training on research ethics in human and social sciences, as well as the research survey for data collecting, and then collected data from a sample group of 400 respondents.

Before collecting 400 questionnaires, which resulted in a return rate of one hundred percent, the research team meticulously examined each questionnaire set, which led to the successful completion of data coding and analysis prior to data analysis.

Data Analysis and Statistics Used to Analyze Data

An evaluation of the capacity management of community-based tourism in Thailand focuses on the Ministry of Tourism and Sports-mandated CBT quality standard index criteria. The established benchmarks are CBT management, economic and social management and an improvement in quality of life, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, methodical and sustainable management of natural resources and environment, and services and safety. As shown below, these principles are therefore regarded as imposed indicators.

Table 1: CBT Quality Standard

Criterion	Indicators of CBT quality standard
CBT Tourism Management	Effectiveness in CBT management Effectiveness in CBT management agreement Effectiveness in tourists' imposition and practices Effectiveness in CBT management in human resource development within community Effectiveness in the support of relevant sectors Effectiveness in the participation of associations and networks Effectiveness in marketing management and public relation on sustainable CBT Effectiveness in accounting system and finance Providing opportunity to youth
Economic and social management, and good quality of life	Effectiveness in the distribution of income Effectiveness in the elevation of good quality of life Community product quality that creates opportunity to increase income from tourism An emphasis on human's rights in tourism
Cultural heritage conservation and support	Database quality on cultural heritage for tourism Effectiveness in the propagation of cultural heritage through cultural tourism Effectiveness in the conservation of local culture
Systematic and sustainable management on natural resources and environment	Effectiveness in area management for tourism Database quality on natural resource and environment Effectiveness in publicization of natural resource wisdom and environment through eco-tourism Effectiveness in the conservation of area, natural resource, and community environment Effectiveness in creating awareness of the importance of the preservation of natural resource and environment through tourism
Services and safety	Satisfaction level in the provision of service and safety on tourism Effectiveness of interpreters Quality of tourism routes and activities Quality of tourist service centers Effectiveness in management of CBT transportations Effectiveness in emergency management Effectiveness in service procurement

Source: *Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2018).*

Grading system of the evaluation form and the filtration of the assessment as according to each component, are applied to analyze standard score of the quality of CBT tourist destinations. In addition, capacity value of CBT locations in Samut Songkhram province holds the capacity standard evaluation criterion of the CBT destination quality as following:

Table 2: *Evaluation results according to each component*

No.	Standard components of CBT destination quality	Scores/Points
1	Community based tourism management	20
2	Economic and social management, and good quality of life	20
3	Cultural heritage conservation and support	20
4	Systematic and sustainable management of natural resource and environment	20
5	Services and safety	20
Total		100

Source: *Data was revised by our research team.*

The determination of CBT locations quality standard is scaled to 5 levels, it is expected to be higher than 61 points or at the quality degree of good or 3 stars level (***). Additionally, each component must acquire more than 10 points or 50 percent from the full score of 20 points (Pechmon, et al., 2021, p. 335).

Table 3: *Standard level of CBT destinations quality*

Score Range	Standard Level	Symbols
81 or higher	Excellent	*****
71 - 80	Very good	****
61 - 70	Good	***
51 - 60	Fair	**
50 or lower	Poor	*

Source: *Pechmon, et al., 2021, p. 335*

The analysis of the impact from the CBT operation in Samut Songkram uses the statistical methods including frequency, mean, and standard deviation.

Ethical Research in Humanity and Social Research

This research had been granted a permit from Human Research Ethics Committee, Institute of Research and Development, University of Technology Nakhon Ratchasima, in accordance to certificate registration no. NMCEC – 0027/2564. Moreover, this research study had been granted permission from the source of reference, and had submitted the analysis to the relevant agencies to give their consent.

Results and discussion

The evaluation of the CBT standard in Samut Songkram province in five locations ranked from the highest to lowest rate, revealed the overall profile of tourism in Samut Songkram province. The evaluation result of the tourism standards in 5 locations comprises Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center which yielded the value of 79.72, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab yielded the value of 66.18, Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise yielded the value of 63.94, Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market yielded the value of 52.68, and Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise yielded the value of 52.11. The evaluation score of the management of CBT in respective order is indicated as following; the Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab obtained the highest score of 11.94, Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center had the score of 11.44 and Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise had the score of 10.28. The evaluation of the management of economic and social improvement as well as the standard of living revealed that Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise and Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center obtained the highest score of 20.00, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab

had the score of 15.00. The conservation and the promotion of cultural heritage suggested that Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab, Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise, and Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center are evaluated for the proportionately equal score of 13.33 whereas the Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market had the score of 10.00. The systematic and sustainable management of natural resources and environment discovered that Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center had the highest score of 17.33, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab had the score of 12.00, and Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market had the score of 10.00. For the evaluation of quality service and safety, Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center had the highest respective order and the score of 17.62, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab had the score of 13.91, and Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market had the score of 11.43 (Table 4).

Table 4: *The evaluation of the CBT standard in Samut Songkram province*

No	Standard components of CBT destination quality	Scores	CBT in Samut Songkhram province				
			Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise	Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab	Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise	Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center	Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market
1	CBT Tourism Management	20	10.28	11.94	10.00	11.44	10.00
2	Economic and social management, and good quality of life	20	20.00	15.00	11.25	20.00	11.25
3	Cultural heritage conservation and support	20	13.33	13.33	13.33	13.33	10.00
4	Systematic and sustainable management on natural resources and environment	20	9.33	12.00	9.33	17.33	10.00
5	Services and safety	20	11.00	13.91	8.19	17.62	11.43
	Total	100	63.94	66.18	52.11	79.72	52.68
	Standard Level and Symbols		Good (***)	Good (***)	Medium (**)	Great (****)	Medium (**)

The study on the impact of CBT operation in Samut Songkram province revealed that the general data collection was from 48.75 percent of male respondents and 51.25 percent of female respondents. The participants' age ranges from 51-60 for 24.50 percent, 60 and above for 24.00 percent, and 41-50 for 21.75 percent. For marital status, the percent of married participants was 58.00, the single participants accounted for 41.50 percent, whereas the participants with the status of divorced and separated held the value of 0.50. For religion criteria, Buddhist participants

accounted for 99.75 percent whereas Christian participants held the value of 0.25 percent. For education factor, participants with undergraduate degree accounted for 39.75 percent, participants with primary education were 36.75 percent, whereas participants with no education were 18.50 percent. On the account of career and profession, the majority of participants came from labour sector for 30.75 percent, agricultural sector for 28.50 percent, and private sector including entrepreneurship and freelance for 18:00 percent. For the household income factor, the average income of 10,001-20,000 Baht per month was 52.00 percent, 20,001-30,000 per month was 31.00 percent, and not identified was 7.25 percent. The evaluation on the length of stay in the studied area ranges from 20 years and more with 99.25 percent, 5-7 years together with 8-10 years, and 15-17 years with 0.25 percent as examined proportionately equal. The density of the populated area in the districts of Ban Prok, Tha Kha, and Suan Luang where participants lived showed 33.75 percent, 20.25 percent, and 19.50 percent respectively.

The study on the impact of CBT operation revealed that the overall score was excellent as for the mean of 3.52 can be obtained when all factors are considered. The economic evaluation indicated that the overall condition is in the medium level with the mean of 3.20 when all assessed factors yielded the score in the medium level. The factors under the economic evaluation on which CBT operation greatly influenced are as follows: working status of the family members had the value of 3.73, living expense was 3.42, debt was 3.21, income was 3.03, and saving was 2.60. The social evaluation suggested that the overall score is at a greater level than the economic criteria. All factors in social criteria yielded high average value as listed in the following from the most effective to the least: the safety of life and property yielded 3.73, the social relation yielded 3.67, the participation of social institution yielded 3.64, and the exchange of culture yielded 3.58. The environmental evaluation depicted an overall average of 3.70. The most affective factor was waste and disposal with 3.74, sound factor was 3.73, dust and pollution factor was 3.69, and the quality of natural resources in the community per se water, forest, and mangrove forest was 3.64 (table 5).

Table 5: The Impact of the CBT Operation

The Effective Factors of CBT Operation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Translation
Economic Criteria	3.20	0.32	Medium
1.. Income	3.03	0.42	Medium
2.. Expense	3.42	0.55	Medium
3. Saving	2.60	0.77	Medium
4. Debt	3.21	0.66	Medium
5. Profession of Family members	3.73	0.56	High
Social Criteria	3.65	0.63	High
7. Community Relation	3.67	0.68	High
8. Community Involvement	3.64	0.69	High
9. Cultural Exchange	3.58	0.70	High
10. Safety of Life and Property	3.73	0.60	High
Environmental Criteria	3.70	0.49	High
12. Community Natural Resources such as water, forest, and mangrove forest	3.64	0.53	High
13. Dust and Pollution	3.69	0.53	High
14. Sound	3.73	0.52	High
15. Waste and Disposal	3.74	0.51	High
The Overall Impact of CBT	3.52	0.38	High

Conclusion and recommendations

Community based tourism in Thailand has gained a momentum progress from both Thai and foreign tourists. CBT has increased the exchange of knowledge on tourism landmarks, community culture, service, and tourism products as CBT provided revenue for the participating community. CBT is a development tool for government sectors supervising in their respective many areas such as cultural regeneration, environmental conservation, and community participation. To continuously develop sustainable CBT in Thailand, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has imposed the CBT management standards as a measurement for CBT service evaluation in Thailand.

Samut Songkhram province has the smallest land size but holds such attracting tourism potential for the reason that it is located near Bangkok. There are many tourist locations such as Amphawa Floating Market, Umbrella Market, King Rama II Memorial Park, and more locations on the coastal area of Samut Songkhram province by the Gulf of Thailand. importantly, many communities that participate in CBT operation in Samut Songkhram province are tourist locations that attract visitors.

The result of the CBT capacity under the CBT management standards and the impact from CBT operation in Samut Songkhram province ranks the five locations in respective order from the highest gained standard to the lowest: Klong Klone Mangrove Forest Conservation Center, Ban Rim Klong Homestay Community Enterprise, Agro Tourism Center Bang Plab, Women Agricultural Group Tha Ka Market, and Agro Tourism Suan Luang Community Enterprise.

However, the negative impact from the CBT in Samut Songkhram province is causes environmental problem such as waste disposals, while the social impact involves concern over the safety of life and property. For the positive impact, the improvement of the economy improves the increases financial condition of the family members.

In order to increase the tourism growth of CBT in Samut Songkhram province, the environmental concern caused by tourism wastes and disposals should be dealt with through the implementation of reusing and recycling of waste management and the selective use of eco-friendly material.

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