

Development Guidelines for the Promotion of Community-Based Tourism in Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province

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Abstract

This research aims at studying contexts of community-based tourism of Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province, by analyzing both internal and external tourism contexts in order to propose community-based tourism guidelines for the community. Qualitative approach was done by site visit, interview, and focus group discussion, with 15 informants as purposive sampling. It was found that there were four aspects for community-based tourism of Sanlomjoy Community. 1) The community possessed its natural and cultural tourism resources. 2) The community was able to manage tourism by organizing Tourism Promotion Club. 3) The community prepared tourism activities through learning for tourists. 4) The community provided opportunities for members to propose ideas, plan, make decisions, proceed, and practice, as well as sharing profits. Internal contexts were the strengths and weaknesses while external contexts were opportunities and threats. In other words, natural and cultural resources were the strengths of the community whereas lack of public relations and budget for facilities were weaknesses. In terms of opportunities, tourism policies were prepared, so the community was supported by the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization). The threat for the community was the COVID-19 then number of tourists decreased. In order to propose community-based tourism guidelines, attraction development, accessibility to the site, amenities, tourism activities, and marketing should be prioritized.

Keywords: Development; Community-based Tourism; Tourism Promotion; Chiang Mai Province

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Introduction

The 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023-2027), which is compatible with the National Strategy (2018-2037), is the master plan to develop the country along with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aiming at every stakeholder in order to drive Thai citizen to be “stable, prosperous, and sustainable”. In addition, the 13th Plan also aims to beat all challenges to drive the country to be the developed one, with sufficiency economy of the 12th plan, as one of the guidelines. The Tourism Issues of the National Strategy’s key roles are at efficient tourists, conservation of traditions, culture, Thai identity, as well as nature and environments (Office of National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022).

Tourism industry has been developed to meet tourists’ needs, with community-based tourism to enhance communities’ competencies and economic status. That is, higher value of tourism products must be created, with higher income to be generated, then the locals will have better living conditions in a long term. Creative economy, green tourism, cultural tourism, and hospitality must be highlighted on cultural and local wisdom basis. These will lead to high-value service. Community-based tourism focuses on culture and history of the destination, where visitors can have experiences and can participate in the site. They can share ideas with the locals via conversation, and perceive how the locals think and feel, then they will understand the site, where cultures and lifestyles of the locals are understood, and they finally feel that they are a part of the community. Relationship between the locals and tourists, with community as a tool, will bring about the strength in conserving tourism resources, including nature, environments, and culture. In addition, importance of conservation, with pride of identity, also lead to real understanding of community compositions (Ministry of Tourism and Sports and Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization), 2016).

Chiang Mai Province has been considered tourism center of the Northern region of Thailand, due to high competency and diversity of tourist destinations, comprising natural and cultural resources, local identities, and lifestyles of different areas, which are all charming and attract tourists. Sanlomjoy Community in Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, is a big community whose resources are interesting. It is the only community which has been located in urban area, near Wat Umong Temple. Residences have been scattered nearby the forest, and “sufficiency economy” principle has been applied by the locals. Products from organic farming are good examples of souvenirs. Moreover, their traditions related to forests, costumes, language, local wisdom, and foods are strong identity, with examples like handicrafts, basketry, whistle made of earthenware, including learning center in sufficiency economy (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization), 2018). However, community-based tourism of Sanlomjoy Community needs to be improved with solutions for some existing problems, with more channels and platforms of public relations to attract more tourists.

As mentioned above, guidelines for promoting community-based tourism in Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province is essential as they will play roles in developing the community, with tourism as the main aspect to help conserve local identity and culture, moreover, economic aspect will also be strengthened, in other words income will be generated, reaching to sustainability in a long term.

Objectives

1. To figure out community-based tourism contexts of Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province
2. To analyze both internal and external states of tourism in Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province
3. To propose development guidelines to promote community-based tourism for Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province

Literature Review

Concepts of Community-based Tourism

Community-based tourism has been considered one of the tools to improve people and develop communities in terms of life quality and economic status so that the locals can participate in related roles connecting to other stakeholders. This also leads to pride and concern in conserving their identity and culture. When tourists visit their communities, conservation of culture and traditions will be provoked, and bring about sharing of differences in order to understand each other. Community management will automatically be considered, comprising social, cultural, economic, and environment aspects, so that impacts, especially negative ones, do not distort the existing conditions. In order to reach ultimate goal, the locals must play the most important roles. Suansri (2003) defined community-based tourism as specific type of tourism because tourism will be important part to help develop the community. That is, the community is the central part to operate tourist activities. They are not only the owners of the areas, but also the ones to manage what and how tourists should get from the visit. However, environment and culture must not be ignored. Rocharungsat (2010) also explained that related organizations need to understand what and how each community is, along with participation from the locals in every step. Impression must be stimulated, then spread via words of mouth, as it is considered the most effective tool which caused no cost at all. However, identity of each community, which is different, must not be distorted, and income must be generated equally among members. In addition, principles of community-based tourism, by the Department of Tourism (2007), are that 1) the community must be owned by the locals; 2) the locals must be able to set guidelines and make decision; 3) pride must be stimulated; 4) life quality must be improved; 5) environment sustainability must be stimulated; 6) local identity and culture must be conserved; 7) learning among different cultures must be recognized; 8) different cultures and human dignity must be respected; 9) fair income must be realized; and 10) income must be generated to public assets of the community. As a result, the locals must play the most important roles, and at the same time, must be supplied with bodies of knowledge, and supported to be strong and ready to exchange activities with tourists, along with concepts of conservation of surroundings.

Concepts of Cultural Tourism

Jittangwattana and Sriksampha (2014) mentioned that 1) cultural tourism must be about learning of history of resources in the area so that tourists will be supplied with valuable experiences and, at the same time, pride in cultural heritage will be stimulated; 2) cultural tourism must stimulate conscience of the locals to preserve their community by participating in tourism management, and, moreover, employment and income will be returned, through services, souvenirs, etc.; 3) knowledge will be distributed to tourists so that they understand the culture and then awareness in conserving both nature and culture in the site will be raised; and 4) culture and dignity of the locals will be respected.

In addition, nine aspects of cultural tourism are as follows: 1) cultural tourism must focus on history of ancient and archeological sites so that the present and future generations

will be informed; 2) economic and social sustainability must be provoked, while impacts are lessened; 3) lifestyles, especially economic status and culture, must lead to learning of differences; 4) all stakeholders must learn and get experiences in culture and surroundings; 5) locals must participate and get income from tourism activities; 6) service and its marketing plans must not ignore conservation of culture and environment; and 7) tourists' satisfaction through experiences must lead to the revisit to the site; 8) carrying capacity and cleanliness must be considered; and 9) safety of tourists must also be prioritized. From the aforementioned, cultural tourism will lead tourists to new experiences through cultural value, architecture, ancient sites, lifestyles, language and dialect, costumes, consumption, beliefs, etc. Participation of all stakeholders are required so that sense of belongings will be stimulated and lead to respect in differences. Hence, this concept can be applied to Sanlomjoy Community, with proposed guidelines

Compositions of Tourist Attractions and Sites

Good tourist attractions should obsess competencies, as mentioned by many academia. Jittangwattana (2006) explained that 3As must be considered for good attraction, which are 1) attraction which convinces tourists to visit and which should impress tourists, depending on each individual tourist; 2) accessibility which is very important, comprising routes or transportation, with safety and convenience; and 3) amenity which brings comfort to tourists, and can bring about revisit. Dickman (1996, as cited in Koatcharee, 2012) categorized compositions of attractions into five categories: 1) attraction e.g. natural and man-made attractions, MICE activities, or cultural attractions; 2) activities that tourists can do or participate in the site; however, they should be various and match tourists' interests e.g. trekking, light and sound, etc.; 3) access, mostly transportation and logistics that need to be convenient and proper time spent; 4) amenities which means basic services in the attraction e.g. restaurants, entertainment, electricity, water, health services, police stations, souvenir shops, hair salons, information centers, rental cars, etc.; and 5) accommodation which must be sufficient with variety of price and should not be too far from the attraction e.g. hotels, guesthouses, resorts, bungalows etc. For this study, attraction compositions for Sanlomjoy community consist of 1) attractions; 2) accessibilities; and 3) amenities.

Concepts for Analysis of Internal and External Contexts

SWOT Analysis is the tool to assess contexts in order to find out internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. In other words, strength is the positive contexts that can lead organizations to success; weakness is the negative contexts that obstruct organizations; opportunity is external circumstances that can help organizations reach better output; and threat is external obstacles or risks to organizations. SWOT analysis has been applied to analyze both inside (through strengths and weaknesses) and outside (through opportunities and threats) contexts, so that the organizations can reach ultimate goal (Cheewatrakoolkit, 2007; Namsirikul, 2007; Waranonwanich, 2013; Wongsanga, 2007). In short, SWOT analysis is always selected to evaluate and prepare guidelines for corporate development.

Research Methodology

This qualitative research selected population via Purposive Sampling, 15 people who gave information were those who well understood tourism contexts of the community, consisting of six locals in Sanlomjoy Community, five people from business sectors which were accommodation, restaurant, souvenir shop, and other services, and three government officials, and one person who was the main informant. Primary data was collected through the observation, interview, and focus group discussion, and secondary data was collected through

documents, academic materials, research results, and academic articles. Then all information and tourism contexts were analyzed, with SWOT analysis as one of the aspects to prepare tourism development guidelines of Sanlomjoy community. Content analysis was applied (Bodhisita, 2011) in order to verify validity of the content derived from the interview and focus group. Content analysis was then concluded so as to prepare SWOT analysis with community-based tourism guidelines.

Research Findings

According to the contexts of the community and SWOT analysis, it was found as follows.

1. Community- based tourism contexts of Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province

In terms of *areas*, Sanlomjoy Community possesses cultural value and tourism activities such as trekking in the forest as part of Doi Suthep-Pui National Park, but it is in urban area. Total area of Sanlomjoy Community is 0.642 Sq.Km. In 1993, the community was separated from Pong Noi Community. The northern part is attached to Huay Sai Community, the eastern part is attached to Pong Noi Community, the western part is attached to Doi Suthep-Pui National Park, and the southern part is attached to Huay Sai Community. Tourism resources of this community are various, with the national park, the reservoir, the Center for Wildlife Conservation, Phra That Sang Chandra, an archaeological site, Pong Noi Temple, Ram Poeng Temple, Umong Temple, and there are also cultural attractions related to local lifestyles, for example traditional Songkran Festival, Yee Peng Festival, Lisu Hill Tribe traditions, Lahu Hill Tribe traditions, traditional dancing, and making merit to the forests. In order to access the community, tourists can use the road along the irrigation canal to the back of Chiang Mai University, then drove along to Wat Umong Temple, then they can reach the community easily. There have been facilities to support community-based tourism, for example free wifi service, tram for transportation from and to Suthep Municipality, with stops at Wat Pong Noi Temple, Wat Ram Poeng Temple, Wat Umong Temple, and Wat Padang Temple, there are also a local market, a Walking Street on Mondays, 3-9 pm, and these were supported by the Municipality. In terms of *management*, there is a CBT Club for tourism activities, with positions which are the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, Transportation and Service Staff, Security Guards, Interpretation Staff, Food and Beverage Staff, PR Staff, Receptionist, Product and Souvenir Team, and the Treasurer. In terms of *activities and learning*, the CBT Club provides tourism activities with learning process, such as sufficiency economy, ethnic lifestyles, and natural trekking route, as a day trip or half-day trip, and also tailor-made routes for specific needs of tourists. Most tourists come as a group of 10-20 people or 21-30 people, so they need to inform in advance so that the staff can prepare the tour programme. The most preferable one-day programme costs 1150 baht for one tourist, from 8.30 am-6 pm. The day starts at Sufficiency Economy Center, they will visit and experience lifestyles of the locals, and join activities, such as creating their own key chains, trying weaving baskets, then having local lunch. In the afternoon, a tour leader will take them to Wat Phra That Doi Suthep Temple, and visit Hmong Village on Doi Pui Mountain, the Head of that community will take them around to observe lifestyles, visit a museum, buy souvenirs, and have local dinner as reception. For a half-day trip, it costs 540 baht for one tourist. They will meet at Sufficiency Economy Center, have a break, and get a tool kit for trekking, and experience different types of forests, rocks, anthills, banyan trees, bamboos, and plant trees. At noon, tourists will have chance to try cooking easy meals like grilled eggs, local chicken sausages, and chili paste, with seasonal fruits. In terms of *participation*, the locals play important roles in expressing ideas, planning, and making decisions in managing their resources. Community-based Tourism Support Club

is the hub for operating activities. Moreover, all income will be distributed fairly to all related parts like accommodation, restaurants, and souvenir shops. This also reflects that the locals have jobs, which means their income will be increased, and life quality will get better. Moreover, the locals will cooperate one another, and pride towards their community will be realized. Also, resources, both nature and culture, will be considered, and this will bring sustainability to community. In addition, regulations and rules are also considered and respected as tourists will be informed before entering the site, for example no alcohol drinks and drugs, no gambling and loud noise, and waste management. Carrying capacity is also one main issue to be considered by the locals.

2. Internal and external states of tourism in Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province

SWOT analysis of the community was done as follows.

1) Strengths: The internal states as strengths of Sanlomjoy Community are natural resources, and according to the data collected and analysis, trekking routes, Sufficiency Economy Center, organic foods and products as souvenirs have attracted tourists. In addition, cultural resources also played important roles, such as preservation of unique traditions, ritual, costumes, language, local wisdom, and local foods have been considered cultural assets of the community.

2) Weaknesses: The internal states as weaknesses of Sanlomjoy Community are lacks of proper tools for Public Relations and continual marketing. Proper interpretation tools, young tourist guides, entrepreneur networks, and budget to improve facilities, such as toilets, are urgently needed. Moreover, accommodations and parking lots for big bus need to be considered.

3) Opportunities: External states as opportunities of Sanlomjoy Community which affect tourism are support from the Government, in other words, policies to support tourism are parts of the national Master Plan, comprising conservation of cultures, traditions, and identities, as well as nature. Sanlomjoy Community also has its own tourism plan and policies, with strategic plans concerning traditions, local wisdom, and tourism. DASTA has also been supporting Sanlomjoy Community by emphasizing on the locals in order to strengthen overall competencies.

4) Threats: External states as threats of Sanlomjoy Community which affect tourism are the effects from the COVID-19, and this has been resulting in the number of visitors to the community.

3. Guidelines to promote community-based tourism for Sanlomjoy Community, Suthep Subdistrict, Muang District, Chiang Mai Province

1) Attraction Development: Understanding and awareness in conservation of tourism resources, both nature and culture, should be emphasized. For example, there can be activities to stimulate importance of natural conservation, with collaboration with stakeholders; however, cultural aspects should also be focused. The locals should have opportunities to visit other communities whose community-based tourism activities can be considered best practices and lead to guidelines for Sanlomjoy Community. Moreover, sense of belonging should also be stimulated, and one potential way is to encourage the youth through activities, such as young tourist guide training courses, Kid's Day, and other activities so that concepts of conservation, of both the nature and culture, will be absorbed, with pride.

2) Accessibility Development: There should be management of all roads and routes to the community, as, at present, the roads are complicated and lack interpretation signs.

Traffic signs should be prepared for safety reasons. This leads to preparation and support of budget. In addition, there should be concern about transportation into and inside the community which causes less effects and low carbon, such as bike and walking routes, in order to be environmentally sustainable.

3) Amenities Development: Amenities for tourists and visitors should be developed, for example interpretation signs, toilets, parking lots, information center, and CCTV. In addition, security issues have to be concerned too, for example dangerous areas, including Dos and Don'ts suggested for both tourists and the locals, like how to dress properly for activities or do not make loud noise at night.

4) Tourist Activities Development: Creative tourist activities should be promoted so tourists can learn the local wisdom, for example local herbs and plants for local dishes, trails to explore natural resources, conducted routes with local guides. Such activities can stimulate learning and experiences for tourists.

5) Tourism Marketing Development: Channels for public relations activities need to be promoted, both online such as websites, Facebook fan pages, and offline such as pamphlets, brochures, community-based manuals, as well as tourism routes and related programmes, which can link to other communities.

Discussion

According to the findings and analyses, development guidelines can be discussed as follows.

1) Attractions: The locals should be stimulated to learn and realize the value of resources of the community, their traditions, ways of life, and cultural aspects, along with nature, and this supports the principle of community-based tourism by the Department of Tourism (2007) that the locals should provide activities that can stimulate learning and perception of the locals' roles in conservation. This also goes compatibly with Jittangwattana and Srikhampha (2014) that cultural tourism should raise awareness of the locals who should play important role in managing their resources, and, at the same time, tourists can learn and enjoy cultural activities. This also supports Wongkham (2019) about community-based tourism management of Baan Hua Khua in Kae Dum Subdistrict, Kaedum District, Maha Sarakham Province that success of this community is the body of knowledge which was created along with the locals' understanding and realization in significance of attractions in their community through activities, such as field trips to other communities, then they better understood their roles, with sense of belonging. This also harmonizes with Sangkhakorn et al. (2014) that creative community plan should consist of stakeholders of different parts in order to manage, plan, and prepare creative activities, such as field trips, so that the locals can gain new experiences which will be helpful for further activities in their communities.

2) Accessibility: Roads, with traffic signs, to the community should be managed, and safety must be concerned, due to the fact that they are complicated at present, and this supports Jittangwattana (2006) that accessibility is one of the main factors, with convenience, safety, and short period of time to reach the attractions. Furthermore, anticipated problems must also be concerned, such as parking lots, loud noise, and traffic jam. This also goes with Deepholphan and Boonsiri (2022) that development guidelines for community-based tourism in Ban Phai Huchang Community, Banglen District, Nakhon Pathom Province that convenience to the attractions with traffic signs must be concerned.

3) Amenities: Amenities, such as toilets, parking lots, information center, and CCTV should be provided sufficiently in Sanlomjoy Community, and this supports Phuwanartwijit (2015) about development guidelines for Thoong Faa Bot Market in Sanpatong District,

Chiang Mai Province that attractions should be supplied with information center, rest areas, and ATM, and this also goes with suggestions for community-based tourism in Khanom District, Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province, made by Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017), that ATM, information center, parking lots, and first-aid kits must be prepared for tourists' safety. This is compatible with the research done by Na Thalang et al. (2020) about management of community-based tourism of Baan Chak Ngaeo Chinese Market in Bang Lamung District, Chonburi Province, where parking lots and free toilets, as well as security and safety were provided for tourists.

4) Tourist Activities: Creative activities should be designed so that tourists can learn and experience the local wisdom related to natural and cultural resources, like Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) (2015) mentioned that tourists can participate and share experiences with the locals, and this shares some aspects in common with Wisutthirak et al. (2015) that creative tourism should lead to cross-cultural learning, then the bond with tourists and the host occurred, leading to good impression, like the research result of Prasongthan (2013) that the bond between tourists and the host occurred through creative activities, which can be developed such as cooking with the locals who are Tai Phuan, then local ways of life have been absorbed by visitors, too.

5) Tourism Marketing: Online media should be more prepared, and this is the same as analysis made by Pimonsompong (2013) that marketing promotion plan should specify the goals and marketing tools include advertising media. This also supports the study by Udomsilp (2012) about ecotourism promotion for sustainable development in Khlong Khloan Community in Samutsongkhram Province that regular public relations activities should be done, and provincial offices should take some actions, like Choibamroong (2009) addressed that provincial offices should play important roles in tourism marketing, especially for advertising and public relations to attract visitors, moreover, tourist service center should be prepared, like research result by Wongtip et al. (2020) that management guidelines to promote tourism in Baan Mae Soon Noi, Fang District, Chiang Mai Province include information center and tourism routes with programmes related to other communities nearby, and this leads to the study by Juansang (2020) about community potential assessment of Baan Tha Long Community in Ubonratchathani Province and Baan Tha Wat Community in Sakonnakhon Province that tourism routes should be created so that they can be promoted in regional scale, which will lead to promotion of cultures through stories about ways of life along the Mekhong River, and ecotourism and cultural tourism will then be developed as well.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study can be advantageous for community-based tourism of Sanlomjoi Community; however, there are also recommendations which can be guidelines as follows.

1. For Communities

- There should be policies and plans to promote tourism potential in order to follow and evaluate, with guidelines for the locals to follow. The locals should play important roles in participating every process, with stakeholders, especially the government offices. In addition, the elderly and children in community should have chances to plan, ask, and take actions in activities, so that ideas and experiences will then be exchanged.

- There should be collaboration among government offices and non-government ones to develop competencies of tourism in the community as this will affect the local themselves. Offices and institutes in the community can cooperate, such as education institutes that can share bodies of knowledge in developing community-based tourism, sustainable development, good host and practices, English for tourism, etc.

- There should be activities to stimulate creative tourism, based on cultures, traditions, and ways of life, because this will lead to pride and sense of belonging. Examples of activities can be promotion of traditions that both the locals and tourists can take part. Moreover, local wisdom and awareness in conservation of resources can be stimulated, along with income which will be generated to the locals.

- There should be marketing and public relations promotion, collaboratively done by the locals and both government and non-government parts, for example bodies of knowledge in media for community should be trained to the locals who prepare content related to their identity and a content calendar for social media that highlights seasonal events and local traditions should be created. However, the content must be up-to-date and can be reached by visitors. Media with foreign languages should also be concerned and prepared.

2. For Further Studies

- Tourist behaviors need to be realized, as there are both Thai and foreigner visiting the community, this will lead to proper activities designed and prepared for different groups of tourists.

- Different contexts of community-based tourism of other communities should be studied, learned, and shared in order to be well-prepared and prevent problems that have been occurring in other communities.

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