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Edited by Kai Heuer, Wismar University, Germany
Chayanan Kerdpitak, IBEST Conference & Publication, USA
Nitaigour Premchand Mahalik, California State University, Fresno, USA
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THE POTENTIAL OF ECO-TOURISM MANAGEMENT OF BAN HAT SOM PAEN COMMUNITY, RANONG PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the potential of Ban Hat Som Paen community in tourist attraction management using qualitative research methods, in-depth interviews, and observations. The conclusions obtained from interviews with key informants revealed that Ban Hat Som Paen integrated as a tourist attraction management group under the leadership of the new generation and later developed the committee structure into a CIV (village is considered a community) that recognizes the importance of tourism as a source of sustainable income for the community. This reflects the true participation of the community in thinking, doing, making decisions, sharing responsibility, and sharing the benefits. An important factor in management has been based on extending the way of life of the local people until it can be developed into a community with potential as a tourist attraction under the leadership of the new generation of young people.

The research findings from the observations found that the location of the ecotourism attraction was natural and suitable for the promotion and development of a sustainable tourist destination. This has facilities to provide services, including accommodation in homestays that support even if it is still not enough, The transportation by car or bus is convenient. Internet and telephone communications are convenient.

Keyword: potential, management, ecotourism, participation, new generation

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the situation around the world and Thailand has been preoccupied with the spread of COVID-19. This has severely affected people's lives in all aspects, especially the tourism industry. Ranong province was also one of the areas that was severely affected. When the government created many measures to control the spread of the disease to a certain extent, the government has announced its readiness to reopen the country within 120 days from June 2021 until it is considered that in some tourist areas it is safe to allow foreign tourists who pass medical screening to enter the country, using Phuket as a pilot project, Phuket Sandbox to revive the country's tourism. Therefore, tourism is an important factor reflecting the confidence that the government can control the spread of covid-19. At present, foreign tourists and Thai people can travel as usual. Ranong is a province that is popular with tourists because of natural attractions such as springs, mineral water, and beautiful mountains. The researcher is interested in the potential of ecotourism management of Ban Hat Som Paen Community Enterprise, Ranong Province to accommodate tourists.

THEORY & LITERATURE

The world tourism organization (www.unwto.org) has identified 3 main forms of tourism : 1) natural based tourism 2) cultural based tourism 3) tourism in special interest. Eco-tourism (Ecotourism) is a form of tourism nowadays that many countries give importance to towards the sustainable development of the country and internationally. According to the Universal Declaration of Sustainable Environmental Development, ecotourism must be responsible tourism in natural attractions. It must focus on environmental management and education of tourists. The types of eco-tourism are divided into 3 types. [1] Natural attractions or those caused by the natural environment, including climate, beautiful scenery and wildlife are regarded as successful attractions in attracting tourists. [2] Man made attractions (tourist attractions that are the opposite of natural attractions, such as big cities) can attract tourists to visit historical buildings and architecture, religious places, government buildings. [3] Cultural and lifestyle attractions. There are many groups of tourists who are interested in the glory of past civilizations or the culture or way of life of minorities, including rituals, various festive ceremonies, performing arts, music, folk songs, dances, plays, as well as handicrafts.

The potential of eco-tourism considers the condition of resources that are suitable for maintaining unique local characteristics, and emphasizes the importance of ecosystems or culture of the area and how much attractiveness there is to give different importance to each factor such as condition nature, importance of ecosystems physical strength beauty of nature.

Wiwatchai Bunyapak [1986: 40 – 42] has defined the word "potential" as ability or self-readiness of something to facilitate the development, improvement management or access to any changes, so each attraction has their own potential or importance varies. When considering the potential of a tourist attraction in different areas, it is necessary to consider the availability of attractions, whether it is appropriate to improve or develop, and which attraction comes first.

Juthamas Chaisorn [1993: 32-33] has divided the important components taken as an indicator of potential in 4 attractions: (1) the main motivating factors of tourist attractions consider the importance of location and characteristics of the tourist attraction per demand of tourists in many aspects, such as the need for peace, fun, excitement; (2) other factors include environment, climate, topography and nature landscape; (3) supporting factors and facilities; (4) infrastructure and transportation factors consider the transportation network, both land, water and air that is convenient. public services such as electricity, sewage disposal as well as telecommunication systems.

Longman [1987: 805] defines potential as power or ability that has not yet been made apparent. If there is a stimulus from a person or the environment this can release potential that was formerly restrained. Neufeldt, V. (1990: 460) defined potential as the power or power that exists in a person, which can be drawn out for use. or manifested if stimulated by external factors. It can be concluded that potential is the ability or readiness of tourist attractions and operators in various fields to support tourists who come to use the services.

Kanyanat Phokhiri [2020] studied the management of community-based tourism cooperation and conducted a case study of Ban Hat Som Paen, Ranong Province, using a quantitative research method. The study found that tourism management between relevant government agencies and the private sector has good cooperation, with community leaders initiating a plan to develop sustainable tourism along with receiving cooperation from people in the community and ready to accept changes for the benefit of the community.

Passakorn Juansang [2019] studied the assessment of the potential of the community to develop as a tourist destination, conducting an ecological and cultural case study of Ban Tha Long Community, Ubon Ratchathani Province and Ban Tha Wat Community Sakon Nakhon Province. By using a research method that combines quantitative and qualitative methods, it was found that the two areas had the potential to be developed as an ecotourism and cultural

attraction and the issues that should be improved are: encouraging people in the area to participate in more tourism activities and ensuring both local and national governments to have a clear and consistent tourism development plan.

Boonying,J., Ninaroon P.,& Vorasiha E.[2022:13-29]. Development of new tourists destination attraction for designation attachments through the moderating role of culture capital of Samut Songkram Province Thailand. For this purpose, the data was collected from 300 tourists by use convenient sampling technique. Cross sectional research design and quantitative research approach. The Partial Least Square (PLS) Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) result has shown that most of tourist destination image except access and climate. In the same vein, and also positive and significant association with destination attachment. The Indirect effect also shown that culture capital also had a positive and significant moderating effect on the relationship of culture capital and destination attachment. Along with these finding, this studied modeling effect relationship course be considered a big contribution of the study.

Boonying,J., Ninaroon P.(2022:342-357) The purpose of this research paper was to study the hygiene behavior of Community -based tourism (CBT) enterprises and the evaluation of hygiene standards of CBT enterprises in Samut Songkhram Province. This research was conducted using a mixed research methodology. It consists of quantitative research and qualitative research. The research tool was a questionnaire. and interview form. The sample group used in this research study obtained from tourism operators, community-based tourism enterprise entrepreneurs in Samut Songkhram Province and operators in community enterprise tourism establishments and stakeholders were 400 people and in-depth interviews from 20 community-based tourism The results showed that 1) The behavior of the respondent mostly female accounted for 53.75%, aged between 41-50 years representing 40.0%, marital status representing 52.50%, educational level at the bachelor's degree level accounted for 69.0%, entrepreneurial career accounted for 35.50% with monthly income of 20,001 - 30,000 baht or 48.50%. 2) The level of opinion about the hygiene of Community -based tourism (CBT) enterprises

Tanapol Kortana, Jiraporn Kespichayawattana, Ekachai Youngvanich,Somchai Lekapojpanich, (2022,1371-1380). Social Capital Structure for Sustainable Tourism of Tourism Community Enterprises in Rayong Provinc, The procedure of building and maintaining a tourism industry in a specific place is known as sustainable tourism development. At its most basic level, sustainable tourism is formulating strategies and plans to boost tourism in a certain location. The sustainable tourism could be developed from the along with social capital structure of local communities. Therefore, the current study objective was to test the impact of social capital structure on the sustainable tourism of community enterprises in in Rayong Province, Thailand. For this objective, the data was collected from 400 tourism community enterprises employees through the self-administered questionnaire. The PLS-SEM results had shown that social confidence (SC) has positive and significant relationship with sustainable tourism (ST). In addition, social participation (SP) has also positive.

RELATED & DISCUSSION

Ranong is the upper southern province. The west side is adjacent to the Andaman Sea and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. away from Bangkok Via National Highway No. 4. It is approximately 586 kilometers with an area of approximately 3,324.60 square kilometers. It is 14 percent flat and 86 percent mountainous, with a total of 62 islands in the Andaman Sea. As for the location of Ban Som Paen beach surrounded by Khao Nom Sao, starting from settling down the source of Thai-Chinese people who came to Ranong Province, most of them were Hokkien Chinese who panned tin ore in the stream, which gave this place its name of "Hat Sam Pian" which means "deep in the forest and valley." The population of Ban Hat Som Paen sub-

district according to the Department of Provincial Administration's data is 3,194 people as of 2021. Traveling from Ranong Airport to the community, a distance of 33 kilometers Travel time is about 30 minutes.

METHODS

The research on the potential of community enterprise ecotourism of Baan Hat Som Paen Community Enterprise, Ranong Province was conducted using a qualitative research methodology. method of conducting research, data collection: Key Informant: Interview with community leaders. tour operator Including related people in Ban Hat Som Phaen Subdistrict, Mueang District, Ranong Province, about 20 people, and Non-participatory observation by the research team.

RESULTS

Outstanding tourist attractions include: (1) Ranong Canyon, Village No. 1, Ban Thung Kha 2) Klong Hin Phoeng Dam, Village No. 1, Ban Thung Kha 3) Hin Phoeng Waterfall, Village No. 1, Ban Thung Kha 4) Hin Ngam Dat, Village No. 2, Ban Bang Sang Tee 5) Wat Tapotaram, Village No. 2, Ban Bang Sang Ti 6) Wat Hat Som Phaen, Village No. 3, Ban Hat Som Phaen 7) Hok Long Mine, Village No. 3, Ban Hat Som Phaen 8) Khlong Hat Som Phaen Reservoir, Mu 3. Baan Hat Som Paen.

Learning resources for tourism activities are: Village No. 1, Hat Som Paen Sub-district Occupational Promotion Center, Village No. 2, Ban Bang Sang Ti, 2) Ban Hat Som Paen Ceramic Group, Village No. 2, Ban Bang Sang Ti, 3) Flower Broom Center. Oh, Village No. 2, Ban Bang Sang Ti 4) Mineral Panning Wisdom Learning Center, Village No. 3, Ban Hat Som Paen 5) Mineral Buyer, Village No. 3, Ban Hat Som Paen 6) Kaolin Mine, Village No. 3, Ban Hat Som Paen

For facilities, there are 3 homestay accommodations that can accommodate a small number of tourists if they come in groups. And there is a service to spread the tent, camping, including having breakfast. There are also activities in rafting and hiking.

For transportation, traveling to visit Ban Hat Som Paen is considered very convenient by being able to drive a private car. There is a bus that is regarded as a unique identity, an ancient minibus around the community having fun. To get there, use the Provincial Highway No. 4005, the Ranong - Hat Som Paen route, which is the main road between Mueang Ranong District and Mueang Ranong District. Hat Som Paen Subdistrict And Hat Som Paen - Thung Kha Road is a road connecting Moo 1 Ban Thung Kha and Moo 3, Hat Som Paen Sub-district.

Communication in the area of Ban Hat Som Paen community can connect to the internet and Wi-Fi from all service providers' networks. In addition, tourists can communicate via public phones, landline phones or mobile phones. Currently, there is a network signal covering almost every area.

For utilities, Ban Hat Som Paen sub-district has electricity and water. There are 2 sub-district health promotion hospitals. There are souvenir products which are local products and souvenirs of Hat Som Paen Sub-district, mainly from the use of resources in area to be produced, products such as reed brooms, ceramics, kaolin salted eggs, mineral soap, tin souvenirs including a beauty salon for both women and men. There are shops in the community.

As for the problems with personnel having skills in introducing places or explaining stories that would persuade people to enjoy or participate in ecotourism activities, the problem with facilities is that there are not enough accommodation options for tourists to choose from. Local transportation problems found that the roads connecting many tourist attractions are damaged and narrow, including no signposts. There is a problem of helping tourists that is,

there is no unit to provide emergency assistance in the event of an unexpected event such as an accident or sudden illness. There is a problem of proactive public relations including the use of technology through online media to provide information for tourists to make decisions.

Table 1 The level of the potential of Ban Hat Som Paen community tourism service. Form high to low

potential of eco-tourism	5	4	3	2	1
Outstanding tourist attractions include Ban Hat Sompan	√				
Learning resources for tourism activities are: Village	√				
Resort Homestay			√		
transportation, traveling to visit Ban Hat Som Paen		√			
Communication in the area of Ban Hat Som Paen	√				
Utilities, Ban Hat Som Paen sub-district has electricity and water	√				

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Ban Hat Som Paen Tourism Community needs to convince the new generation to see the importance of tourism in order to learn about the community's culture and participate in tourism service activities. as well as learning a lot of local wisdom. It will be a channel for participation of people in the community at all levels of age. It also reduces the gap between ages that may have different attitudes or ideas.

Applicable Illustrations:



Figure 1: Map of Ranong Province
Source: Ranong Provincial Tourism Office.



Figure 2: High-angle shot of Ban Hat Som Paen community
Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand



Figure 3: Participation in learning activities for mineral panning and mineral sorting
Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand,



Figure 4- Handicrafts of Baan Hat Som Phaen Community Enterprise
Source: mgronline.com/smes/photo-gallery/9620000033333



Figure 5: View from the room of Natthiya Homestay
Source: mgronline.com/smes/photo-gallery/9620000033333



Figure 6: Wooden minibus 1793, the identity of Ranong province - Hat Som Paen
 Source: manager online (2019). (<https://mgronline.com/smes/detail/9620000033333>)

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