



A Guideline on Sustainable Management of Creative Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand

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Abstracts

The study of “A Guideline on Sustainable Management of Creative Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand” is a mixed methodology research in which both qualitative and quantitative research methods were employed. The objectives the research were to study the circumstances in creative tourism destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand as well as to analyze the sustainability of the economy, social culture, and also the environment of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. Furthermore, the idea is to propose a guideline on sustainable management of creative Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province to the local government agencies and community. In respect to the quantitative aspect, the research population were the tourists who visited Nakhon Sri Thammarat during April - September 2018. The results of the analysis revealed that the respondents’ opinion toward the circumstance of a creative tourist destination was at a high level. The management of tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat province was partly consistent with the sustainable creative tourism in terms of economic sustainability but required more development. The respondents’ opinions toward social cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat was found to be at a high level. The researcher proposed guidelines for sustainable creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat. For instance, the government agencies should set up plans that respond to the needs of the tourists; the government agencies and tourism entrepreneurs should make an effort to attract more tourists to participate in the organized activities; the government agencies and the stakeholders should cooperate in solving the waste problem as well as in concerted efforts to lessen the huge amount of waste that exists.

Keywords: Nakhon Si Thammarat, creative tourism, tourism management, sustainable tourism, sustainability.

Introduction

Tourism generates the highest income for the service industry in the world (Hrubalová & Palenčíková, 2017; Jordan, 2012; Klint, 2012; Maria, 2016) and the industry is growing fast (Baker, 2013; Yazdi, 2012). The major concept of tourism development in Thailand was initiated because of the need to upgrade Thai products and services to an international level as well as to increase tourism revenues for the community. In order to accomplish that goal, the tourism in the community has been promoted with the introduction of a variety of tourism activities in response to the demand of both domestic and international tourists Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2017). The identical lifestyles of local people have been recognized,



encouraged, and promoted, as the selling point of each community (Patuelli, Mussoni, & Candela, 2013).

Presently, tourists have placed importance on travelling for experiences rather than for entertainment and fun. Hence, tourism's characteristics needed to be adjusted to respond to the changes in tourist demands and behaviors (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2017). "Creative tourism" is a type of tourism which allows tourists to learn about history, culture, lifestyle, and the unique identity of local communities (Carvalho, Ferreira, & Figueira, 2016; Richards & Raymond, 2000; Wisudthiluck, Saiphan, Teparakul, & Sindecharak, 2017). This type of tourism has become more popular since it provides an opportunity for the tourists and the local people to exchange their experiences through participation in tourism activities (Svetasreni, 2012). Response to the requirement and behavior of new generation tourists is essential.

Nakhon Si Thammarat is an ancient city with one of the longest histories when compared to other cities in Southeast Asia. (Nakhon Si Thammarat Administration Office, 2017) This city has been recognized for its significance in terms of religion, economy, social, politics, and tourism. As a center of Buddhism, Nakhon Si Thammarat has many ancient Buddhist heritage sites, such as, an ancient temple "Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan" which has been registered as a tentative on the list of world heritage sites (United Nations, 2013). Currently, about 1000-2000 tourists come to this temple to pay respect to the Buddha's ashes which have been kept in a pagoda called "Phra Borommathat Chedi Nakhon Si Thammarat". Moreover, due to its tourism capital, such as, the unique lifestyle, splendid culture, special traditions, and rich natural resources, this city can provide a variety of tourism activities in response to the demand of the new generation of tourists which is emerging.

Despite Nakhon Si Thammarat's potential in tourism, this city is not yet a popular tourist destination, therefore development and change is needed to be implemented so that the city and the community can obtain benefits from tourism. Creative tourism allows tourists to learn about history, culture, lifestyle, and uniqueness of community (Carvalho et al., 2016; Richards & Raymond, 2000; Wisudthiluck et al., 2017). This new trend of tourism has become more and more popular these days, and the concept of creative tourism might be the solution for promoting sustainable tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat. Recognizing the importance of developing tourism management in this city, as well as the significance and benefits of creative tourism, the researchers' would like to conduct a study on "A Guideline on Sustainable Management of Creative Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province" which will be useful for promoting the cooperation of the stakeholders of the tourism sector in Nakhon Si Thammarat leading to developing sustainable creative tourism management that leads to sustainable development of the community and province in general.

Review of literature

Definition of Creative tourism

Creative tourism refers to a new trend of tourism which aims to encourage the tourists to obtain direct experience from a tourist destination (Lindroth, Ritalahti & Soisalon-Soininen, 2007; Richards & Raymond, 2000; UNESCO, 2008). The tourists will hopefully feel more committed to the community through the experiences they have from their diverse travels (Wisudthiluck et al., 2017).



Characteristics of creative tourism

The characteristics of creative tourism are that it provides opportunity for the tourists to develop their potential and creativity by participating in knowledge exchange between them and a host. The creative activities were initiated based on local wisdom through the tourists' imagination. Whereas, the tourists becomes the participants and not just mere observers. This type of tourism also encourages the tourists to be able to apply the knowledge gained from travelling to use in their daily lives (DASTA, 2012).

Classification of creative tourism

There are 4 classifications of creative tourism which are promoted in Thailand (DASTA, 2012; TAT, 2014) by detail below:

- Cultural heritage: refers to a type of creative tourism that is involved with culture, tradition, society, belief, history and archaeology.
- Artistic: refers to a type of creative tourism that is involved with art culture.
- Lifestyle: refers to a type of creative tourism that involves the life and lifestyles of local people.
- Functional creation: refers to a type of creative tourism that aims to respond to the many and different demands of the tourists.

Sustainable creative tourism management

Presently, the concept of creative tourism has been used in sustainable development of the communities. Therefore, the model of sustainable creative tourism was developed based upon the sustainability of three dimensions, (Chirilă, Chirilă, & Sîrbulescu, 2018; Thongsamak, Jitpakdee, & Aujirapongpan, 2013; Todorov & Marinova, 2011) which are:

Economic Sustainability

Creative economy is based upon education knowledge creative work and the utilization of intelligent properties that relates to culture, social knowledge, innovation and technology (Perederenko, 2015; Stipanović & Rudan, 2014). Sustainable creative tourism can be an effective tool in promoting the growth of the economy, employment, and social development (Vellecco & Mancino, 2010).

Cultural sustainability

Creative tourism is associated with culture (Zadel & Bogdan, 2013), as it focuses on conservation of cultural heritage (Puvanewaran et al., 2017), and aims to present unique tourism resources, traditions and cultures, and social variation. Conservation of cultures should be done based upon three dimensions, which are: aesthetic, social culture, and nature. However, conservation and tourism should be done with the idea that it provides benefit to both tourists and the local community. The uniqueness of culture and lifestyle should be conserved, while an adequate number of tourists should be encouraged to enhance revenue and income distribution in the community (Greenberger & Levitz, 2013).

Environmental sustainability

Creative tourism is a new trend of global tourism which obviously promotes conservation of cultural and natural heritage since it creates conservation consciousness amongst the tourists and the people in community, and it also encourages them to collaborate in maintaining the balance in eco-system of the community (DASTA, 2012).



Therefore, planning sustainable tourism should consider the conservation of the environment before making decisions on any development (Katerina & Gabriela, 2012). Moreover, entrepreneurs, should place greater importance on environmental sustainability. They should be willing to pay for the improvement of the environment. While, the government agencies, should support a policy of “environment friendly” in order to evoke the feeling of a conserving consciousness among the people in the community (Vellecco & Mancino, 2010).

Research Objectives

Within the framework of the study of sustainability in creative tourism, the research reported in this paper has the following objectives:

1. To study the circumstance of creative tourism destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province;
2. To analyze the sustainability of economy, social culture, and environment of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province; and
3. To propose a guideline on sustainable management of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province to the local government agencies and community.

Research methodology

This research approach was to use a mixed methodology in which both qualitative and quantitative research methods were implemented. The qualitative data was obtained through documentary research, in-depth interviews, and observation. While the quantitative data was collected directly from the respondents who were tourists in Nakhon Si Thammarat through the questionnaires, as detailed below.

Population, sample and key informants

In respect to the quantitative part, the research population were the tourists who visited Nakhon Si Thammarat during April - September 2018. The sample size was 400 respondents. Regarding the qualitative part, 60 of the tourism stakeholders, such as leaders of the community, Thai and international tourists, and local people were interviewed. While 50 of the creative tourism entrepreneurs were asked to voluntarily fill out a questionnaire. They were not given any incentives and could withdraw any time they chose to do so.

Research Instruments

A self-administrative questionnaire was employed as a research tool for the quantitative part. It was developed through a Delphi technique. Thus 21 experts were asked to rate their opinions on the indices of 3 dimensions of the sustainable creative tourism, which were, economy sustainability, social culture sustainability and environmental sustainability. The questionnaire was pre-tested for its content validity using an index of item objective congruence (IOC's criterion) by 5 experts. A constructional in-depth interview script and observation sheet were employed as the research tool to collect qualitative data in this study.



Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed through an SPSS computer program, using statistics, such as, percentages, mean, standard deviation, median, mode, and range between quartiles. While the qualitative data was analyzed via a content analysis technique.

Research results

Table 1. Indices of creative tourism' sustainability delivered through Delphi technique

| Indices | Results and interpretation | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----|------|------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | M | MO | Mo-M | IQR | Expert's opinions | Congruence |
| Economic sustainability | | | | | | |
| 1.Tourism revenue | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 0.00 | mostly agree | very high congruence |
| 2.Income distribution | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 0.00 | mostly agree | very high congruent |
| 3.Employment opportunity for local labor | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 0.50 | mostly agree | very high congruent |
| Social culture sustainability | | | | | | |
| 1. Conservation of tradition and culture | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |
| 2. Exchange of knowledge and skill | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |
| 3. Public safety | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |
| 4. Satisfaction of the tourists and community | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 0.00 | mostly agree | very high congruent |
| Environmental sustainability | | | | | | |
| 1. Water supply adequacy and conservation | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |
| 2. Waste management | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |
| 3 Water supply adequacy and conservation | 5.00 | 5 | 0.00 | 1.00 | mostly agree | high congruent |

The indices that had passed the following criterions; median ≥ 3.50 , range between quartiles (IQR) ≤ 1.50 and the difference between mode and median ≤ 1.00 were considered as congruence with each dimension of sustainability of creative tourism. And therefore, can be used in the questionnaire development (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Hai et al., 2014; Kezar & Maxey, 2016). Table 1 presents the indices that passed the criterions as classified by each dimension of creative tourism sustainability which were:

Economic sustainability: (1) Tourism revenue (2) Income distribution (3) Employment opportunity for local labor.

Social culture sustainability: (1) Conservation of tradition and culture (2) Exchange of knowledge and skill (3) Public safety (4) Satisfaction of the tourists and community

Environmental sustainability: (1) Water supply adequacy and conservation. (2) Waste management. (3) Landscape management



Table 2. Creative tourism’s circumstances in Nakhon Si Thammarat

| Circumstances | \bar{x} | S.D. | Meaning |
|---|-----------|------|------------|
| Knowledge and understanding of Creative tourism | 4.41 | 1.27 | moderation |
| Want to participate in Creative tourism’s activities | 4.84 | 1.31 | quite high |
| Creative tourism’s activities are interesting | 5.08 | 1.25 | quite high |
| Nakhon Si Thammarat has been interested for its natural resource and cultural heritages | 5.56 | 1.19 | high |
| Community’s creative tourism activities should be promoted | 5.69 | 1.34 | high |
| The tourists were attracted by the identity of local community lifestyles | 5.60 | 1.16 | high |
| Local communities has good hospitality and were helpful | 5.31 | 1.21 | high |
| Creative tourism’s destinations are well known in general | 5.02 | 1.30 | quite high |
| Creative tourism’s activities have been widely promoted and publicized | 4.91 | 1.27 | quite high |
| Total | 5.16 | 0.93 | quite high |

The samples opinion toward creative tourism’s circumstances in Nakhon Si Thammarat province was at a high level, with a mean = 5.16 (S. D. = 0.93. In details, the item “Community’s creative tourism activities should be promoted” had the highest (mean = 5.69 (S.D. = 1.34)

Sustainability of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat province

The outcome reveals that the management of tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat province was partly consistent with the creative tourism in terms of economic sustainability and required more development. According to the tourist’opinions, the social cultural sustainability, as well as environmental sustainability of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat was quite high; mean = 5.25 (S.D. = 0.99) and mean = 4.59 (S.D. =1.20), respectively, as presented in table 3

Table 3 Sustainability of Creative Tourism Destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat province

| Sustainability dimensions | \bar{X} | S.D. | meaning |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Economic sustainability | | | |
| Tourism revenue | - | - | * |
| Income distribution | - | - | * |
| Employment’s opportunity for local labor | - | - | * |
| Social culture sustainability | 5.25 | 0.99 | quite high |
| Conservation of traditions and cultures | 5.58 | 1.00 | high |
| Exchanging of skill and knowledge | 5.35 | 1.00 | high |
| Public safety | 4.95 | 1.00 | quite high |
| Satisfaction of the tourists and community | 5.13 | 0.95 | quite high |
| Environmental sustainability | 4.59 | 1.20 | quite high |
| Adequacy of water supply and conservation | 4.64 | 1.21 | quite high |
| Waste management | 4.36 | 1.32 | moderate |
| Tourist destination’s landscape management | 4.77 | 1.08 | quite high |

Note * the management of tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat province was partly consistent with the creative tourism in terms of economic sustainability and required more development.



Economic Sustainability

Tourism revenue

The result of qualitative analysis revealed that, travel agencies had the highest income at 1,400 baht per person per day. Some tourism entrepreneurs obtained indirect income from participating in the creative tourism activities, such as selling of souvenir products, foods, and services. Some tourists had taken part in creating revenue for tourist destinations and community by donating some money to the community.

Income distribution

The result of qualitative analysis revealed that tourists had important roles in income distribution, in terms of using services and buying products from each community. Tourist destinations had taken part in income distribution by providing jobs for local people, as well as purchasing materials and services from people in the community. The equalization of income distribution will hopefully eventually lead to the community's sustainable growth.

Employment opportunity for local labor.

The result of documentary research found that all tourism entrepreneurs were local people (100%). The businesses which provided the largest number of jobs were restaurants, souvenir shops, tourist agencies and transportation businesses. The local people's average income obtained from tourism was 182,400.00 baht per year. The oldest travel agency in the community has been operating for about 14 years.

Social culture sustainability

Conservation of tradition and culture

The result of qualitative analysis revealed that the distinctive point of Nakhon Si Thammarat were the unique culture, tradition, and lifestyle of the local people. Creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat has integrated the outstanding points, such as, cultural heritage, history, ancient literature, folk arts, as well as the historical heritage sites to become its tourism capital.

Exchange of knowledge and skill

The result of qualitative analysis revealed that learning and knowledge were important factors of creative tourism. The community can transfer knowledge and local wisdom to the tourists via travel experiences and by inviting tourists to participate in the learning activities demonstrated by the local wisdom people. As for the development of tourism management knowledge and skill of the local people, the government has provided training programs for the people in the community to help them to successfully manage tourism businesses in the long run.

Public safety

The result of the qualitative analysis revealed that the tourists felt safe while visiting the tourist destinations. They had received warm welcomes and hospitality from the local people. They also got good facilitation and were taken good care of by the people. "Brotherhood" was considered to be the local culture in Nakhon Si Thammarat. Local people looked after the



tourists safety. They provided the tourists with information before they participated in any activities. However, there were some tourist destinations that had seasonal limitations for travel, due to dangers caused by natural disasters.

Satisfaction of the tourists and community

The result of the qualitative analysis revealed that the satisfaction or dissatisfaction among people in the community might be due to a number of factors such as: Inequality of income distribution; Inequality of benefits from tourism; Lack of knowledge and understanding about the changes which led to fear of changing; Lack of listening to the stakeholders' opinions; Ambiguous budgeting and funding; and uncertainty of tourist numbers. Although the community's expectation was to obtain a better quality life, it still has insufficient tourism facilities and needed effective tourism development.

Environmental sustainability

Adequacy of water supply and conservation

The qualitative analysis result revealed that Nakhon Si Thammarat province had the largest irrigable area compared to other provinces in the southern part of Thailand. Its irrigable area covered 827,661 rai, accounting for, 26.04% (Nakhon Si Thammarat Administration Office, 2017). But the people in Nakhon Si Thammarat still faced the problems of flooding, acid soil and inadequacy of fresh water. Moreover, there was still the problem of water shortages in the summer months. Apart from that, some districts outside of the city did not have tap water and the people in the community had to use ground water instead. The local government has tried to remedy the problem so that it would not affect tourism by facilitating the tourists to buy bottled drinking water from retailers or convenience stores in the community.

Waste management

The qualitative analysis results revealed that in the year 2017, the accumulative amount of waste in Nakhon Si Thammarat province had reached 1,135,119.84 tons. This means the province generated 1,763.17 tons per day. Whereas, only 29% of it had been recycled and utilized (Nakhon Si Thammarat Administration Office, 2017). In order to sustainably solve the waste problem in Nakhon Si Thammarat, the local government had promoted waste separation among households in the community. Additionally, the recycling business was also supported and promoted so that more waste can be utilized. The amount of waste that needed disposal would be lessened which leads to sustainability in waste management.

Landscape Management

From the qualitative analysis, it was evident that the creative tourism destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat have good management of landscapes so that they can attract the tourists to visit them. However, some of tourist destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat were not well known to the tourists, and also lacked direction signage and destination information which were considered to be the urgent problems that the government needs to solve.



Analysis of Creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat

The outcome obtained from conducting in-depth interviews and observations revealed that, most of the tourist destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat had medium levels of sustainable creative tourist destination items. Since, some of them provided workshops and crowdsourcing by which the tourists would obtain experiences through activities organized by the host (Rungpipatpong, 2014).

Discussion

In this part the result of the study is discussed below in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Circumstance of creative tourist destination in Nakhon Si Thammarat

Referring to the research results, the respondents' opinion toward the circumstance of creative tourist destination was at a quite high level. This result implies that creative tourism should be promoted. Since people in Nakhon Si Thammarat have their own tourism capital, such as a splendid culture and unique lifestyle. Moreover, this city also has rich natural resources and local cultural heritage. As for the creative tourism activities, the respondents found them interesting and wanted to participate in those activities, however, they lacked the knowledge and understanding about creative tourism. This result is consistent with the outcome of the respondents' self -assessment which indicated that their creative tourist characteristics were at a moderate level. This result is also congruent with the study of (Wisudhiluck et al., 2017), which found that the tourists did not have much understanding about creative tourism. Despite their tourism capital, the creative tourism entrepreneurs in Nakhon Si Thammarat had expectations on economic benefits more than on conservation. Moreover, their skill in knowledge transferrance was not good enough to attract the tourists to participate in the activities. Therefore, the tourists were more interested in shopping and sightseeing than joining the creative the tourism activities.

Overall, tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat has its own identity and uniqueness. Though their cultures do not significantly reflect Southern culture, the local cultures were considered to be interesting and diverse. This outstanding potential has made Nakhon Si Thammarat a city that can be developed into a creative tourist destination city in Thailand (Gnamsirijit, 2014).

Sustainability of economy, social culture, and environment of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province

Economical sustainability

The outcome revealed that the income (baht per person per day) in the transportation business was the lowest, followed by food shops and restaurants. Therefore, tourism and its marketing strategy should be set up to encourage the tourists to spend more money on transportation and the local food business. Regarding the employment rate, the study found that entertainment business provided the lowest employment, followed by accommodation business. Therefore, the employer's demand should be taken into consideration when planning training or development courses for the people in the community.



In respect to usage of local material, it was found that the souvenir shops had the lowest usage of local material. Therefore, local government should encourage the utilization of local material among local people, manufacturers, and entrepreneurs in order to widely distribute income and increase employment in the community.

The lowest wages the labor obtained was from accommodation business, which was 360.55 baht per day. Though, it was higher than the standard lowest wage of the country which was 310 baht per day (Royal Thai Government Gazette 2018). However, this wage should be raised to enhance the employees' morale, so that they can work more efficiently. The growth of business and the improved quality of the employee's life should go together to enable sustainable growth in the community.

Social culture sustainability

The outstanding points of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat were, culture, tradition, and unique local lifestyle. The creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat had used the strength of its culture and traditions as the tourism capital of the city. For instance, Hae Pha Khuen That Festival, The tenth Month Sart Day Festival, etc. were critical. Learning and exchanging experiences were major factors in creative tourism. The community would transfer knowledge and local wisdom to the tourists who were willing to learn and be interested in participating in activities. Whereas, the host would transfer their knowledge to the tourists through their direct experiences by means of discussion, demonstration, and practicing, which led to improvement and development. With the "Brotherhood" culture, the tourists felt safe while visiting the tourist destinations. They received warm welcomes, hospitality, and facilitation from people in the community. However, while the tourist destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat had public safety, some of them had seasonal limitations due to danger caused by natural events, such as floods. Regarding their satisfaction, some tourists and some communities were not satisfied with the changes of the community due to tourism. This might be due to lack of knowledge and understanding about the development of a creative tourism destination, lack of opinion-sharing among the stakeholders or even a lack of clear and transparent budgeting.

Environmental sustainability

Even though, Nakhon Si Thammarat province had the largest irrigable area compared to other provinces in southern part of Thailand. Its irrigable area covered 827,661 rai, accounting for, 26.04% (Nakhon Si Thammarat Administration Office, 2017), the people in Nakhon Si Thammarat still faced the problems of flooding, acid soil and inadequacy of fresh water. Moreover, there was still the problem of water shortages in the summer. Apart from that, some districts outside of the city did not have tap water and the people in the community had to use ground water. However, the local government tried to solve these problems by facilitating the tourists to purchase drinking water at any retail shops, convenience stores, and food shops in the community.

Regarding waste management, Nakhon Si Thammarat province had generated 1,763.17 ton per day of waste, in 2017. Of this amount, only 29% of it had been recycled and utilized (Nakhon Si Thammarat Administration Office, 2017). In order to sustainably solve the waste problem in Nakhon Si Thammarat, the local government had promoted waste separation among households in the community. Additionally, the recycling business was also supported



and promoted so that more waste can be utilized and the amount of waste that needed to be disposed would thus be lessened.

Though, the creative tourism destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat had good management of landscape but some of the tourist destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat were not well known to the tourists, and there was a lack of suitable signage, and also destination information. These were the urgent problems that the government needs to fix if it wishes to facilitate the travelling of tourists.

Proposing guidelines on the sustainable management of Creative Tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province to the local government agencies and community

Apart from its splendid culture and unique lifestyle, Nakhon Si Thammarat is also rich in natural and cultural heritage. These outstanding points had enabled the development of the creative tourism in the city. However, in an effort to achieve sustainable development, a “guideline on sustainable management of creative tourism in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province” is required.

Referring to the finding that, the tourists were satisfied with their travelling and wanted to participate in the local activities, but were lacking in knowledge and understanding about creative tourism, this was also consistent with the result of the sample self-assessment which came showed that their creative tourists’ characteristics were considered to be at a moderate level. This result is consistent with the study of Sindaecharuk and Saengsanid (2013) which stated that there were gaps between activities’ hosts and the tourists in respect to need, support, and readiness to participate. A balance of three dimensions, which are, economic sustainability, social cultural sustainability, and environment sustainability are required in conducting sustainable creative tourism. This result is consistent with the study of Dejoudom (2003) who stated that if the tourists’ destination gave more importance to money or benefits, by welcoming too many tourists, they might neglect natural conservation, which consequently affects lives of people in the community and leads to the destruction of a destination. On the other hand, if the community focus on conserving social culture did not attract adequate numbers of tourists, the community might not gain sufficient income to use for its development. Creative tourism is a new alternative for the tourists and a sustainable development initiative for the community. The study of Ong Puay (2017) revealed that, the major problem of management and development was the lack of officer’s instruction and the scant participation of the community.

Recommendations from the research findings

1. Apart from being a tourist destination, the government agencies, should place an importance on attracting other tourism segments, such as educational seminars, conference, job observation, and excursions.
2. The government agencies should also promote and creative activities to attract more tourists in order to stimulate the economy and better distribute income to the community.
3. The government agencies should encourage more use of local public transportation in order to increase business income.
4. The government agencies should encourage people in Nakhon Si Thammarat to be good hosts by providing them with needed information and training.
5. The government agencies should set up plans that respond to the needs of the tourists.



6. The government agencies and tourism entrepreneurs should make an effort to attract more tourists to participate in the organized activities. By improving the activities that be able to draw attention from the tourists at all ages and genders. Or add more activities so that the tourists have more choices to participate in.
7. The government agencies should conduct better public relations exercises about creative tourism so that the people in the community and the tourists can understand its meaning.
8. The government agencies and the stakeholders should strive to cooperate in solving the waste problem as well as make efforts to lessen the amount of waste through educational drives.
9. The government agencies and tourism entrepreneurs should pay greater attention to aged and handicapped tourists.
10. In order to avoid the problem of labour migration, tourism entrepreneurs should pay fair wages according to the law.
11. The government agencies should enhance the tourism potential of the community so that the community better utilize their tourism resources.
12. The government agencies should develop tourist destinations in Nakhon Si Thammarat by improving the infrastructure and facilities and upgrade them to suitable tourism standards.
13. Government agencies should develop and train the people in the community so that they are knowledgeable and ready to give effective service to tourists.
14. Tourism entrepreneurs should select their target customers consistent with the tourism destination.
15. Tourism entrepreneurs should consider the appropriate price and value for the experience the tourists have received so that this it will create positive word of mouth among the tourists.
16. Tourism entrepreneurs should listen to the tourists' opinions and comments so that they can improve their service to respond to the needs of the tourists.

Recommendation from the stakeholders

1. More signage in Thai and English should be set.
2. Tourist Brochures or flyers should be launched effectively.
3. Increase the number of public toilets at the tourist attractions.
4. Provide adequate parking space for the tourists are required.
5. Add more public relations channels.
6. Maintenance of the roads to tourist attractions should be carried out on a regular basis.
7. The stakeholders should help in keeping the tourist attractions clean.
8. The stakeholders should help to conserve local identity.
9. The community infrastructure should be developed to align with needs.
10. Fair price of products and services are essential.
11. The government agencies should monitor the standard of tourism in the community.
12. Guides are required to give instruction to the tourists and should thus be well-trained.

Recommendations for future research

1. Future research should clearly classify the proportion of Thai and international tourists.
2. Future research should collect data from a variety of tourist destinations and cover several areas of the province.
3. Future research should also relate creative tourism destinations with culture tourism destinations eco-tourism destinations, and community tourism destinations.



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