

TITLE Guidelines of Tourist Development in Mahasarakham Province.
AUTHOR Dr. Linjong Pocharee
UNIVERSITY Mahasarakham University **DATE** 2016

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to select popular tourist attractions in Mahasarakham, study tourism behavior and interest of tourists who come to Mahasarakham, study conditions, potential and limitations of people in tourist attraction areas, study tourism aspects which create incomes for people in the areas, study activities and stories in tourist attractions, study connecting tourism routes within Mahasarakham to other provinces and find the ways to upgrade tourist attraction potential to increase tourism value and worth of Mahasarakham.

Quantitative research methodology was 400 questionnaires for Thai tourists; 200 for tourists who made a first visit, the other 200 for tourists who had visited before. The questionnaires were distributed to 5 most popular tourist attractions. The questions covered information about tourists' tourism behavior, interest, and satisfaction toward the tourist attractions. Qualitative research methodology was structured interviews and meetings for brain storming. Seventy-nine of tourism related people, business owners, and tour guides were interviewed to select 5 most popular tourist attractions. Also, 30 first-time visitors and 30 not first-time comers, who visited Mahasarakham were interviewed about their tourism behavior, interest, and satisfaction toward their tourism in Mahasarakham. Then, there were meetings in small groups for brain storming. The participants were people who were related to the 5 most popular tourist attractions, people in the related areas, and related people from government and private sectors.

The study revealed that most tourists came to Mahasarakham to visit cultural sites. They spent money as they had expected before the trip around 1,000-2,000 baht. Most of their expenses were on food and drinks and souvenirs respectively. The tourist attraction that tourists had the most interest was Pha Tad Nadoon.

From the study about potential, conditions, and limitations of people in the areas of 5 most popular tourist attractions, it was found that the 5 tourist attractions

were famous and there were authorities who supervised them. However, most people in the areas did not participate fully in the activities of tourist attractions as they should do. They only took part in some activities occasionally.

From the study about tourism aspects which create incomes for people in the areas of 5 most popular tourist attractions, it was found that, mostly, people had incomes from food and drinks. However, in some tourist attractions, shops for selling products could not be placed throughout the areas. Besides, people in the areas lacked of knowledge in processing agricultural products. Therefore, the selling products were not various.

From the study about activities and stories in 5 most popular tourist attractions, it was found that most stories based on cultural information and religious background. Most activities were cultural tourism which conformed to characteristic of the tourist attractions.

For upgrading tourist attraction potential to increase tourism value and aesthetic of Mahasarakham, the following guidelines were suggested.

1. Promote and develop local products to be souvenirs.
2. Promote tourism for youths in Mahasarakham
3. Promote religious tourism such as meditation and dharma study.
4. Strengthen private sectors and other related parties.
5. Create tourism activities in the province for Thai tourists.
6. Promote good images of Mahasarakham through Thai spouses.
7. Create management mechanism to increase efficiency in administering tourism in local and provincial level.

Keywords : Tourism Behavior, Conditions, Potential and Limitations of Tourist Attraction, Activities and Story Line in Tourist Attractions.

คำหลัก :