

Title: Creative Tourism Management for Sustainable Development of the Chiang Khan's Local Identities in Loei Province

Researcher : Wantakhan Seemarorit

Affiliation : Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Mahasarakham University

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Abstract

This study explored tourists' perception on how the Chiang Khan's local identities should be promoted as creative tourism. It aimed to 1) build the community engagement for the creative tourism at Chiang Khan Community; 2) identify public relation medias in promoting creative tourism of Chiang Khan; 3) define the community's mutual agreement for the management of Chiang Khan's creative tourism; and 4) to promote the local identities as the creative tourism destination.

To achieve the aims, the researcher used questionnaire survey developed based on the review of literatures and preliminary data collection with local members of Chiang Khan. Then the questionnaires were distributed to 200 tourists in Chiang Khan Community. These questionnaires were statistically analyzed by descriptive analysis. The researcher also conducted structured in-depth interviews and focused groups with a total of 30 people who purposively selected from different groups of Chiang Khan community including community leaders, hotel business owners, restaurant owners, souvenir shop owners, Thai massage house owners, the Buddhist monks, local philosophers, and elders people.

The findings identifies that the majority of tourist were females (21-30 years old) and their education background were mostly under bachelor degree. They were from the central part of Thailand and visited Chiang Khan for the first time. Most tourists highly agreed that all of the local identities should be promoted as creative tourism, and the first five local identities were Classic Wooden House, Local Friendliness, Sticky-Rice Merit Making, Street Market, and Ma Prao Kaew (Sugar-Coated Sliced Coconut) respectively.

The qualitative study identified that the cooperation of different Chiang Khan's community group members was needed to integrate creative tourism with for example a nine temple tour route including Wat Phu Chang Noi Temple, Wat Santiwanaram Temple, Wat Ponchai Temple, Wat Srikhunmuang Temple (Wat Yai), Wat Ta Krok Temple, Wat Sripanommas Temple, Wat Pa Tai Temple, Wat Matchimaram Temple (Wat Pa Klang), and Wat Maha That Temple. In addition, different media channels, for example Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, website, and magazine were identified as useful tools helping promote the creative tourism of Chiang Khan Community.

The community's mutual agreement for the guidelines of Chiang Khan's creative tourism management was underlined the following issues: 1) General Provisions; 2) Tourist Attraction Modification, Transformation, and Renovation; 3) Tourist Attraction Management; 4) Tourist Attraction Quality Retention and Environmental Care; 5) A Variety of Creative Tourism Activity; 6) Good Practice for Tourist Attraction Management; 7) Tourism Staff's Performance Improvement; 8) Tourism Knowledge Generation and Education; 9) Tourism Product Creation; and 10) Tourist's and Community's Security and Safety.

The current research recommends that Classic Wooden House, Local Friendliness, Sticky-Rice Merit Making, Street Market, Ma Prao Kaew, and Cottoned Quilt or Blanket can be promoted for future development of tourism at Chiang Khan.