แนวทางการปฏิบัติที่ดีของการท่องเที่ยวแบบโฮมสเตย์ภายใต้แนวคิดของความยั่งยืน

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บทคัดย่อ

ในขณะที่รัฐบาลไทยให้ความสำคัญกับการขยายตัวทางเศรษฐกิจนั้น พบว่ากิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยวนับเป็นกิจกรรมหนึ่งที่ได้รับการผลักดันเพื่อเป็นตัวเร่งให้เกิดการเติบโตทางด้านเศรษฐกิจและการกระจายรายได้ภายในประเทศ จากการที่หลายชุมชนในพื้นที่ต่างๆ ทั่วประเทศมีความพยายามดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวให้มาท่องเที่ยวในท้องถิ่นของตนเองมากขึ้น เพราะเขาเชื่อว่ากิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยวสามารถพัฒนาคุณภาพชีวิตของคนในชุมชนให้ดีขึ้นได้ การท่องเที่ยวแบบโฮมสเตย์ในชุมชนจึงกลายเป็นหนึ่งกิจกรรมของรูปแบบการท่องเที่ยวที่เป็นที่นิยมในปัจจุบัน อย่างไรก็ตามหากเราขาดความเข้าใจที่ถูกต้องเกี่ยวกับการท่องเที่ยวแบบโฮมสเตย์อย่างยั่งยืนแล้ว อาจนำไปสู่ผลกระทบทางลบต่อชุมชนและนักท่องเที่ยวได้ในที่สุด ดังนั้น จึง

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ความสำคัญกับแนวทางการปฏิบัติที่ดีของการท่องเที่ยว
แบบโฮมสเตย์เพื่อชุมชนสามารถนำไปเป็นแบบอย่าง
ในการปฏิบัติอย่างเหมาะสมต่อไปได้ บทความนี้รวบรวม
5 แนวทางในการวางแผนการจัดการ การท่องเที่ยวแบบ
โฮมสเตย์ภายใต้แนวคิดของความยั่งยืน ดังนี้
1) การกระตุ้นการมีส่วนร่วมของชุมชน การสร้าง
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3) การจัดการและพัฒนาพื้นที่ให้เหมาะสมกับ
ระบบนิเวศชุมชน 4) การเผยแพร่และทำนุบำรุง
ศิลปวัฒนธรรมและขนบธรรมเนียมประเพณีท้องถิ่น
5) ความสามารถในการรองรับการท่องเที่ยว และ
นอกจากนี้ บทความนี้ยังได้นำเสนอกรณีศึกษา
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Sustainable Principle: "Good Practices for Homestay Tourism in Thailand"

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Abstract

While focusing on economic expansion, the Thai government has promoted tourism activities as a catalyst for economic growth and income generation throughout the country. Significantly, many local communities in Thailand have tried to attract more tourists into their regions to boost the quality of local people's lives. Homestay tourism has been evidently introduced into numerous localities. Nevertheless, lack of understanding of the actual concept of homestay tourism, based on the principle of sustainability, can lead to contrary impact on local communities and tourists alike. Good practices are greatly needed for local communities to conduct homestay tourism effectively. This study collates appropriate approaches by which homestay tourism should be planned utilizing further theories of sustainable development. The author summarizes five potential approaches for successful planning of homestay under the concept of sustainability: 1) Encouraging

local community participation, acceptance and building leadership 2) Creating relationships between host and stakeholders into a collaborative process 3) Managing and developing the area compatible with local ecologies 4) Promoting and maintaining local culture and traditions, and 5) Capability in supporting tourism. Additionally, major case studies of homestay tourism in Thailand are highlighted.

Keywords: community, homestay tourism, sustainable principles

Introduction

In the Thai government's national economic and social development plan, the tourism industry has explicitly been recorded as a significant economic component. Even though Thailand has faced economic crises, domestic political uncertainty and natural disasters, tourism is still considered an important industry for Thailand's recovery and for the improved quality of life of the citizens. Thailand's national tourism development master plan 2012-2016 has targeted the country to become one of the top 5 destinations in Asia (Thailand Board of Investment, 2011) identifying for further development the following tourism segments: health tourism, sports tourism, adventure tourism, agro-tourism, cultural tourism and MICE tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2011). There were 15.9 million inbound tourists for the first 9 months in 2012, showing an 8.6% rise while hotels and restaurant sectors growth reported a 7.0% increment (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board NESDB, 2012). Thanks to the efforts of the Thai tourism and travel industry, the Tourism Authority of Thailand Newsroom (2013) reported that in 2012 over 22 million tourists were recorded. Considerably, the tourism industry has been claimed in The Tourism Authority of Thailand Newsroom (2013) has claimed that the tourism industry is the leading industry in Thailand for distribution of income, job creation and cultural and heritage preservation. More visitors coming into the kingdom means more development spreading throughout the country; from the capital to the regions, to the provinces, to the cities and lastly to other localities.

A critical subject debated widely in tourism development sustainability is tourism environmental, economic and social impact

(Breugel, 2013) (see table 1). Mass tourism, for instance, has had, in some places, much negative environmental and socio-cultural impact (Breugel, 2013). Nevertheless, community-based tourism (CBT) is an impeccable example of sustainable and alternative tourism in Thailand, as primarily participation from the grassroots and local communities have been less harmful to the socio-cultural environment and have had positive economic benefits for large parts of the community

The Principle of Sustainability in Tourism

This perception of sustainability is not a new-fangled inclination of the 20th century. Hunter (1997) describes sustainable tourism as 'a set of principles, policy prescriptions, and management methods which chart a path for tourism development such that a destination areas' environmental resource base (including natural, built, and cultural features) is protected for future development'(claimed at Breugel, 2013). According to the Report of The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED): Our Common Future (1987) organized by the United Nations addressed the sustainable development theory in the Brundland Report of 1987 "a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to their own needs". Yet, awareness of environmental and natural conservation in relatively new alternative tourism, like homestay tourism, was mentioned in the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and Local Agenda 21(LA 21), especially Chapter 28 which promotes the perspective of sustainability of the future of tourism (WCED, 1987). The Brundland Report emphasized how to satisfy the basic needs of human beings to have a better life and ensure equitable

Table 1 Potential Impacts of Tourism Development

Impacts	Positive	Negative
Economic Impacts	• Income generation • Labour intensive including low level of skills (Bull, 1995)	• Inflation, like land and housing might become more expensive and result into a relative drop of purchasing power for the local community • High levels of leakage, like foreign ownership of tourism businesses (Telfer & Wall, 2000; Torres, 2003; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008)
Socio-Cultural Impacts	• Improvement of infrastructure, the physical environment, and facilities such as hospitals • Connections and experiences from the outside world • Employment and cultural connections especially women or indigenous people (Scheyvens, 2002) • Preservation of cultural traits as perception of its interesting and pride	• Loss of cultural traits influenced by the amount and type of visitors, the pace of tourism development and so on (Lea, 1988; Hall & Lew, 2009) • Degradation of sacred places or rituals • Increase of crime (Hall & Lew, 2009) • Sex tourism (Hall & Lew, 2009)

Table 1 Potential Impacts of Tourism Development (Continued)

Impacts	Positive	Negative
Natural Environmental Impacts		• Degradation of the natural environment, like diving activities destroys to coral reef. • Pollution by irresponsible tourists, such as litter on the beach or in forests • Visibility pollution the degradation of environment in the eyes of locals reflected from the construction of resorts and other tourist facilities • Noise and Air pollution, it is caused by the increased use of transportation.

Summarized from Breugel, L. V. (2013). Community-based tourism: Local participation and perceived impacts: A comparative study between two communities in Thailand. Master Thesis, Radboud University Nijmegen. Retrieved 25 April, 2014, From ww.ru.nl/publish/pages/657546/thesis_liedewij_van_breugel_scs.pdf

resource allocation to each generation. Furthermore, the environment, the economy, and society are highlighted in the Brundland Report as the primary components of sustainable development (WCED, 1987). Additionally, Drexhage and Murphy (2010) discussed the implementation of sustainable practices and the consequences of economic, social and environmental impact.

From the Final Report of World Ecotourism Summit at Quebec City in Canada, the sustainability challenge in ecotourism policy and planning had been denoted as one of the four main discussion themes for the International Year of Ecotourism and for the Summit (World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, 2002). Likewise, Pakdeepinit (2007) mentioned three facets of the sustainability concept: resources and environment conservation, benefits to local people, and local needs and participation. He also stated in his paper that the trend towards global sustainable development has influenced tourism development and shifted from a quantitative to qualitative perspective.

Responding to consumer demand results in economic benefits and the appeal in tourist destinations can be a determining factor for holidaymakers (Page, 2011). While tourism consumes the environmental resources of each destination, Page (2011) mentioned the challenge of balancing tourism demand and supply, and the future effects from unplanned tourism. Hence, he remarked that sustainability should be considered in terms of tourism and planning. George, Mair and Reid (2009) noted that tourism in rural areas should be in small scale enterprises compatible with the nature, heritage, and traditions (cited in Siparcha, W. and Hannam, K, 2011).

While the issue of sustainability has been discussed for over 20 years, progress in implementation of some practices has been found inadequate: for instance, exploitation of natural resources, threatened local biodiversity, and proper political stewardship. Likewise, not only has the awareness of suitable resource utilization been mentioned under the principle of sustainability, but also the significance of involvement of local authorities is highlighted in Local Agenda 21 policy on sustainable development in tourism practice (Jackson and Morpeth, 1999).   Sustainability is seen not just as a reactive response in the drive towards tourism development; rather, it can be considered as a proactive approach to generate advantages for society and the economy, and to reduce the impact on nature, culture and the environment. Its aim is not to stop or limit tourism growth; rather, to find an appropriate balance between development and conservation. In Thailand, some places are destinations of mass tourism while other areas have planned to avoid mass visitation and to remain sustainable destinations.

Homestay Tourism in Thailand

Homestay tourism has been implemented to reduce the poverty of local people while catering to a number of tourists in this niche market. Kontogeorgopoulos et al. (2013) state that the meaning of homestay is the process of commercializing one's home in order to utilize resident space for profitable purpose. Likewise, Lynch (2003, p.30) mentions that 'homestay is a type of accommodation where visitors or guests pay directly to stay in private homes, where interaction takes place to a greater or lesser degree with a host and/or family

who usually live upon the premises and with whom public space is shared to a greater and lesser degree" (cited in Siparcha and Hannam, n.d.). Scope of this type of tourism is not just in the operation of accommodation but also is the interaction with the local people, environment and culture. Experiencing and learning traditional lifestyles through close interaction and exchange with the host family includes partaking in some of the host family's daily activities are opportunities available to the visitors in the homestay experience (Boonratana, 2010)

The Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) placed "people" at the center of Thailand's national development plan, and was continued into the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016), even more challenging for the development of Thailand given global changes and internal fluctuations. Thus, this plan focuses on "balanced development" in all aspects, especially the importance of the role of local community by contributing and creating income continuously within the community (National Economic and Social Development Board, 2012). Furthermore, with the strenuous efforts of the Thai government and TAT, various tourism forms and marketing activities in the local communities have been promoted, for example, Community-based Tourism (CBT) promoted by the Amazing Thailand Campaign during 1998-1999, including homestay, under the "The Long Stay, Home Stay" project, jointly developed by the Ministry of Tourism and Sport (MOTS) and Ministry of Interior, which was launched in December 2005 to encourage visitors to prolong their stay in Thailand (Satarat, 2010).

Since 2004, homestays in Thailand have become commonplace

in the tourism industry, and the number of standard homestays have been continuously increasing from 98 villages in 2004-2009 (Anonymous, 2007 cited in Seubsamarn, 2009). Evidently, approximately 400 communities in Thailand have offered homestay accommodation (Sararat, 2010) while only 151 had received official MOTS Homestay certification by 2011 with the amount of THB 85,432 or $2,916 per year income (Suansri & Richards, 2013 claimed in Kontogeorgopoulos et al, 2013).

In the Thai Press Release, by 2015 ASEAN countries will implement a road map to achieve tourism goals of the ASEAN Economic Community, including the setting up of the ASEAN Homestay Standard. Consequently, the Department of Tourism (DOT) needs to oversee and further develop the homestay standard in Thailand responding to the larger number of tourists travelling to ASEAN countries estimated to be around 120 million people in 2015 (Thai Press Release, 2013).

Conversely, some issues remain a challenge as to homestays in Thailand can reach the established ASEAN Homestay Standard. For example, the many negative consequences that are pointed out indicate a lack of understanding of the concept of homestay (Siparcha and Hannam, n.d.) while safety and security are mentioned as the most influential factors for the decision to visit a particular homestay (Saraithong & Chancharoenchai, 2010). In Thailand, many communities carry out tourism planning but some do not. While rooms for visitors or tourists are provided through homestays, greater involvement is greatly needed from the bottom level to the highest level of administration. In addition, homestays are managed in various

communities in diverse environments, cultures and values and follow different development plans. Therefore, how homestay tourism in Thailand applies principles of sustainability and contribute towards community development should receive closer attention.

<div align="center">**Good practices in Homestay Tourism**</div>

As noted by Thaochalee, Laoakkha, and Panthachai (2011), some unsuccessful villages have failed due to various aspects, such as providing poor facilities, a lack of adequate service, a lack of organizational structure, poor personnel management, and a lack of publicity for the program. Consequently, few tourists visit such communities. Therefore, five good practices will be cited in this paper to suggest how to foster greater sustainability in homestay tourism sustainability:

1. Encouraging local community participation, acceptance and building leadership

The importance of the local community in taking part in the tourism framework is obviously acknowledged. The 1992 Rio Earth Summit which focuses on Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) policy, particularly Chapter 28, emphasizes the participatory processes in the tourism industry involving the local communities (Jackson and Morpeth, 1999). Lo, Songan, and Mohamad (2013) cited that local community participation, involvement and sharing opinion are critical elements for rural tourism development at each destination. Likewish, Gu and Wong (n.d.) acknowledged community participation for success in tourism planning. In addition, Samala (2007) highlighted the importance of homestay management of both leadership in such communities and

community participation. Moreover, Pakdeepinit (2007) summed up a participatory model of tourism management of four dimensions° decision making, implementation, benefit sharing, and evaluation.

In the past, Thai tourism management was top down. Plans and policies were imposed from the outside so the people in the community could not participate in decision-making and management. They could not organize nor integrate local tourism for sustainability (Juladalai, et al., 2008). The need to foster community involvement with respect to the need and the rights of local people with their participation is an imperative for tourism development (Pakdeepinit, 2007). This author also mentioned participatory activities, for instance seminars and sharing experiences to create cooperation and coordination and to solve public problems or damages caused by tourism activities like garbage, degraded environment, water shortage and waste while most of benefits go to operators and tourists. Sustainable tourism development with a sense of ownership of local community can reflect how they love, take care of, depend on and utilize tourism resources (Pakdeepinit, 2007 claim to Tauphon 2000). The local people or host knows well about their assets and resources, and they are the key in the process of planning and making decisions.

Furthermore, Murphy (1985) highlighted that tourism development and planning should rely on the goodwill and cooperation of the local inhabitants which consider the local aspirations and capabilities to enhance the potential outcomes. Doxey (1975) discussed that the stage of tourism development can change the attitude of locals toward tourists from first welcoming, apathy, annoyance and finally aggression,(claimed in Breugel, 2013). He explained that more

developed tourist destinations may cause irritation. Inbakaran and Jackson (2005) suggested that the residents' attitudes, such as rudeness of the locals, will have an effect on future tourism development in such places. Hosts having different views of what is beneficial to their community and to themselves from tourism activities can cause conflict within the community itself and destruct the industry shortly afterwards. The more villagers possess positive attitudes and understanding of tourism and homestay context, the more offensive problems may decrease (Siparcha and Hannam, n.d.).

The above-mentioned subjects indicate e important role of the local leader who can take a leading role within the community by calling for meetings and working towards achieving a model of agreement amongst themselves and other relevant outsiders. Studies show that the community should consider the costs and benefits of tourism for their own region. A highly developed tourism plan is complicated; thus, the leader is a vital organizer to try to involve as many locals as possible in all practices. Inevitably, the criteria of tourism development planning should be done through a bottom-up approach with community participation. It should follow the theme of PDCA (Plan Do Check Act). This will facilitate the opportunity for local communities to take part and realize how tourism development is important to their localality and how it should be effectively organized.

2. Creating relationships between host and other stakeholders into collaborative process

Achieving success in home stay tourism and working within the local community itself is not a single, one-time event. Even though the host communities are acquainted with their resources and hold

the main responsibility in home stay tourism, they need a lot of help from outsiders; those who provide publicity and other private tourism stakeholders. The hosts need to work along with other partners within a reciprocal process (Thongsrikate, 2006). Building relationships will be a good catalyst for action and a platform for effective communication among stakeholders who are committed to adopting good tourism development practices.

Gu and Wong (2010) described the conflict between the multi-stakeholders and local homestay operators with contrary interests in the coastal area of China for the use of resources and beach management. On the other hand, Bauer (2008) discussed his experience as a tour guide in Antarctica of best practices in Antractica tourism that emerged from the close cooperation between tour operators, cruise companies, governments, guides and tourists. In addition, Inbakaran and Jackson (2005) compared formulated a tourism plan with other normal business plans suggesting that allied sectors should pay closer attention to working together with local communities. The finding of Byrd and Gustke (2007) revealed that "differing perceptions of the impact of tourism requires communication between all community stakeholders: residents, business owners, tourists and government officials". The authors also emphasized that the tourism development would fail if there was lack of stakeholder participation. Alternatively, due to lack of knowledge and experience, and some skill shortages such as communication skills and customer service skills in the hospitality industry, the local communities require training from professionals and working together to prevent unplanned tourism development (Dewhurst, H., Dewhurst, P. and Livesey, R.,2006).

A good example of the role played in Thai tourism by a leading university stakeholder is Suranaree University of Technology (SUT), which has been ready to help in assessing existing knowledge and competencies. The SUT Newsletter (2003) published a report of the success of Suranaree University of Technology (SUT) being a participant in building and developing the initial model of homestay at Ban Bu Tai community, Wang Nam Kheo district. Under the government's policy, preservation and development of the residential area is a very critical concern. Becoming aware of the great potential of geography, natural resources with community interest, the university noticed the strengths and opportunities to upgrade local values within the community itself such as marketing perception, agriculture production process, language practice and hospitality management. Till now, the community can well carry on all sustainable practices itself in the model of homestay tourism.

While the local community can assess what they have, what they still need to know, and how to achieve what is needed, they need the support for a comprehensive assessment of both the area's technical and non-technical aspects. Significantly, public sector agencies, such as the Thai government, Tourism Authority of Thailand, local administrators, regional officials, and educational institutions are certainly pertinent. Likewise, the private sector, for instance tour operators, travel agencies, tour guides, and the press are relevant. Training programs and short-term courses, such as tour guide, English communication, service provision, restaurant management, hygiene and so on, should be provided for the local people's careers.

Furthermore, several required skills in finance and hospitality management are fundamental for local needs and progress in tourism. Notably, tourism stakeholders need to be interlinked and interdependent for long term development, not just in the short term.

3. Managing and developing the area compatible with the local ecology.

While the tourism growth is perceived as an economic opportunity for a larger number of tourists and for increased spending, it also has the potential to create negative impact on the natural surroundings. As environmental issues become more and more widespread, it is important to answer how homestay tourism will meet the tourists' needs while at the same time assuming environmental responsibility. Page (2011) discussed the impact of tourism in different dimensions especially the environmental aspect. Furthermore, Page enumerated physical evidence of actual and potential risks identified from the following tourism activities (2011):

- increased litter and rubbish disposal,
- accelerated degradation of tourist landing sites,
- growing marine pollution from fuel spillages, sewage dumping, and contamination of the environment,
- disturbance of wildlife through tourist viewing

Importantly, raising environmental awareness can facilitate the tourism destination becoming more sustainable in the long run. How to design and manage service facilities for local based accommodation and homestay programs was mentioned for sustainability (World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, 2002). Wherever possible, approaches to minimize environmental

impact, for instance, by providing information about the environment and raising awareness among tourists of environmental consequences of their actions, can be applied (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2001). These measurers can bring people into closer connection with nature and the environment together with reflecting on their behavior and activities, raising greater environmental appreciation, and recognizing the need for added conservation.

Novelli and Benson claimed that the concept of sustainability has evolved to manage natural resources as part of the World Conservation Strategy by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (cited in Novelli, 2005). It is quite clear that additional plans and progress need to apply to the model of sustainable tourism in order to achieve a natural balance in preservation and protection issues. If homestay tourism is not properly planned and implemented, it can destroy vegetation, create overcrowding, litter trekking areas, pollute rivers, eliminate open space, create sewage, cause housing problems and ignore the needs and structure of the host community (Goeldner and Ritche, 2006).

A case in point is the establishment of accommodation which is counted as a major tourism product in homestay tourism sector. The Office of Tourism Development in the Ministry of Tourism and Sport in Thailand recommended that suitable styles of tourist accommodation reach sufficient standards of living by focusing on cleanliness and relaxation with comfortable beds and sanitary toilets (Thaochalee, Laoakkha, and Panthachai, 2011). Nonetheless, many local residents renovate their own houses for tourists to stay without such awareness; they just consider the value of money and how much they will earn.

Hence, communities need to comprehend the theory of homestay in harmony with the environment and reduce the negative impact within the local area.

In term of saving energy, some houses can be designed by selecting and using appropriate and available materials consistent with sustainable planning policy and local living styles. With locally sourced materials, not only will there be diversification of the local economy, but also it could attract more tourists or visitors.

The World Tourism Organization's the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (WTO) highlights the significance of tourism development in both tourism infrastructures and activities (Willims, 1999). It is emphasized that both the ecosystems and biodiversity should be preserved and sustained while tourism activities should be controlled. Other infrastructure like transport, residential amenities, communication equipment, and other facilities need to be taken into account within a sustainable framework. Technology and innovation should be carefully considered from the local community. For instance, some communities should promote more sustainable transport alternatives in cooperation with other tourism activities such as rental of bikes, non-engine boats, walking, use of carts and trekking elephants.

In addition, tourism activities in the community should avoid destructive outcomes of traditional living style and the local setting. All activities including jungle trekking, cycling, eating quality local foods, and visiting cultural heritage sites, should be offered as a varied range of tourism related activities by the host community. As evidence of the negative impact from tourism activities is the long tailed boat for watching fireflies at night at Amphawa, Samut Songkhram Province,

Thailand. Wipatayotin (2008) reported in the Bangkok Post that as a result of tourism boom, local people accused boat operators of disturbing fireflies and the local people at night by using their loud boat engines. Consequently, some residents had cut down mangrove trees or Lamphu trees, where the fireflies live, in order to prevent these disturbances near their homes. Moreover, using flashlights at night for watching the fireflies disturbed these insects' basic life cycle. From this situation, it could be seen that these distractions are real issues affecting the environment and homestay tourism development.

More importantly, the disturbance of the ecosystem by the communities should be better controlled and well-planned. Ban Mae Kampong is another good example for preserving the environment, together with upholding the tourist experience by employing a zoning system. Ban Mae Kampong community is divided into three zones: residential zone, agricultural zone, and conservation zone (Satarat, 2010). Hence, the tourist can experience on existing surrounding locale with the awareness of the love of nature.

4. Promoting and maintaining culture and tradition

Homestay tourism is not only about tourist attractions, food and beverage, security, entertainment including accommodation as people commonly understand but also showcases the value of local communities in their traditional life style, unique rituals, and their meaningful customs. How locals live, think and interact with their local surrounding can be a powerful attraction to travelers (Edgell, et al. 2008).

Based on the idea of homestay tourism, rooms and facilities should be provided for the basic needs of the tourists while conserving

the traditional way of life. For example, in Ban Khok Kong in Kalasin Province, most accommodation is built by using locally mixed materials with timber and brick and are one-storey houses on the stilts the same as normal rural Isan homes. Not only does it cultivate the traditional way of living, but it also helps to diminish financial risk. Security and sanitation are needed, while enlarging the kitchen and luxury decorations are redundant (Pipatanayothapong, 2004).

Thaochalee, Laoakkha and Panthachai (2011) found in their research that setting some rules, for example, prohibiting immodest clothes, forbidding expression of sexuality and banning the use of drugs, have been set for visitors to avoid some problems and to protect the local culture and their tradition. Importantly, they highlighted that some traditional cultural practices such as Rice Offering for returning visitors or 'Hospitality with a Warm Smile' campaign can be a shared experience between visitors and home owners (2011). Likewise, Ban Bo Jed Look in the south of Thailand, a Muslim community, while accepting cross-cultural tourists, maintain their ethnic traditions, thus the use of drugs and drinking of alcohol are banned.

There is quite a range of aspects related to the importance and value of cultural items, beliefs, artifacts, and practices as tourism products. Notably, both the quality and authenticity in tourism were emphasized in the Final Report of World Ecotourism Summit at Quebec City in Canada (World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme, 2002). Quality was explained as learning what the customers wants and needs while authenticity was expressed as "Authenticity is about meeting a visitor's aspiration of seeing the real thing while respecting the sensitivities of local communities and

environments." Boonratana (2010) highlighted that the host communities should maintain a traditional way of life and culture to attract the tourists. Bauer (2008) proposed that respecting culture, heritage and customs will bring into being good practices in tourism. With high tourist demand, some communities pay more attention to satisfy tourists' needs than to practicing their traditional customs. Unfortunately, some locals do not take into account traditional and cultural observances. Some of them adapt their older traditions into new forms in order to meet the tourists' needs, just to save time or respond to visiting frequency. Consequently, as culture and tradition are very sensitive, they can be changed and modified unknowingly. If the tourism product, as the key motivation, is not authentic, becomes degraded and spoiled, how can the reliability of the product continue to encourage a continual flow of visitors or tourists? Without a doubt, the deterioration of culture, lifestyle, and values will make the tourist less motivated to visit such destinations.

5. Carrying capacity

In general, most homestays are established as a small scale enterprise, with basic infrastructure and facilities adequate to serve the tourists' needs. When tourism in such areas booms, there will be a greater number of tourists continuously visiting. Correspondingly, some areas are not designed to accommodate large number of visitors or vehicles, or both, causing congestion or crowding (Edgell, 2008). Edgell also mentions because of tourism congestion, the quality of the tourism experience can be lessened with over capacity or lack of carrying capacity in such tourist destinations.

A number of definitions of carrying capacity have been suggested. The World Tourism Organization proposes the definition of the carrying capacity as "The maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction." (UNEP/MAP/PAP, 1997). Middleton and Hawkins Chamberlain (1997) suggested that Tourism Carrying Capacity (TCC) can be understood as ฏ...the level of human activity an area can accommodate without the area deteriorating, the resident community being adversely affected or the quality of visitors experience decliningฏ. (cited on the website of http://www.biodiversity.ru/coastlearn/tourism-eng/con_capacity.html).

Likewise, Goeldner and Ritche (2006) defined the carrying capacity as "the maximum amount of development, use, growth, or change that a site can endure without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment, the community's social fabric, and the local economy and without an unacceptable decline in the quality of experience by the visitor."

Jovicic and Dragin (2008) offered the similar explanation of carrying capacity. These authors also mentioned five characteristics of destinations affecting the carrying capacity: (1) Naturaฒ Geographic characteristic and process, (2) Economic structure and development, (3) Social structure and organization, (4) Political structure and organization, and (5) Level and type of tourism management. In addition, Prabphiree (2003) claimed that homestay management on the community capacity can build the balanced with environmental preservation.

From the above definitions, the carrying capacity affects both the local community itself and the quality of the visitor's experience. It can be concluded that without a good blueprint of carrying capacity additional visitors can disturb and degrade the value of culture, environment and tourist experience of such a tourist destination.

Homestay programs are for a niche group in a specific area. For its long-term sustainability, it is vital to consider the maximum amount of tourists to a particular area or zone, how tourists can be accommodated with a high level of satisfaction matching their needs and avoiding all negative outcomes (Gu and Wong, n.d.). They also mentioned that some homestay owners want to expand the number of rooms and sleeping capacity without any knowledge on carrying capacity. Besides he found that the crowded condition in the homestay may adversely affect resources and amenities.

Along with the need for lodging, tourists or visitors, including hosts, have other requirements such as water, energy, food, amenities and utilities. In some localities, it may be impossible to add more capacity for additional home stay tourism; however, in some situations, expanding homs stay tourism for tourists or visitors to nearby communities may be the best solution for avoiding undesirable repercussions. On the other hand, the high demand for water and energy resources can be reduced by more stringent conservation of these limited resources. Additionally, waste and garbage can also be controlled.

In examining tourism capacity, limits can be provided from the in-depth analysis of the maximum sustainable visitor capacity. Homestay should be looked at not only as how many people can stay

but also how many people can be accommodated without impact on the sensitive resources in the local community. How the tourist destination can control the massive growth is a fundamental implication for the carrying capacity management. Without an effective plan in tourism development, another issue consequently arises: the effect of rapid growth in tourism demand leading to overcrowding. Definitely, the subject of carrying capacity needs to be extensively addressed in the tourism planning for long-term benefits.

Conclusion

With the high popularity of homestay tourism, more tourism activities are now more closely affecting local communities. That makes tourists - both foreigners and Thais - becoming more familiar with homestay. As a result of promising growth, the critical question is how to manage successfully homestay tourism by maximizing the benefits to the locals while minimizing negative impact on the physical and social environment.

This paper has suggested several good practices for future tourism planning; firstly, the principle that the participation and acceptance of locals as they are the host community and provide resources, as well as local leaders who can be helpful in reducing conflict and promoting positive consideration. Secondly, collaboration between the host and stakeholders is supportive on gaining knowledge and skills regarding finance, marketing, hospitality and occupational training courses in language and guiding. In addition, tourism planning should be compatible with exploiting local ecologies without causing negative impact. It is vital to consider carefully how best to utilize the

resources in the community. Most important, the local culture and traditions are very sensitive and can be considered as the core product for homestay tourism. If altered or distorted, how can it continue to attract tourists or outsiders. Finally, the carrying capacity needs to be carefully analyzed when faced with the increase of tourist demand in order to control and eliminate overcrowding.

Overall, Thailand's tourism development has had both positive and negative impact. Tourism has contributed greatly to enhancing Thailand's economy. However, tourism has had considerable negative impact on the physical environment. Success cannot be solely measured by short-term economic gain. The potential model for conservation and sustainability should be highlighted. Therefore, raising awareness of the impact of tourism and applying the principle of sustainability can encourage and foster mutual understanding for homestay tourism. Certainly the study of good practices while highlighting and considering how positive examples can be adapted to other communities to ensure success and maximum benefit of homestay tourism should be considered.

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