

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM ATTRACTION FOR MODEL CREATIVE TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN THE OLD CITY CHIANGMAI, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research were to assess the potential of cultural tourist sites, to analyze the behaviors and motivation of tourists, and develop the creative cultural tourism model in the old city of Chiang Mai. The data was collected from the in-depth interview with the public and private agencies, academicians, community leaders, and people's network organizations. The questionnaires were used to collect the data from 400 Thai and foreign tourists. The research results revealed that Chiang Mai Province is the large city located in the north of Thailand. It is an old city with the long and significant history. There are various cultural attractions such as temples, archaeological sites, markets, old communities, cultural festivals/traditions, etc. Most tourists traveling to the old city of Chiang Mai have important motivation on the reputation of cultural attractions, attractive cultural festivals and traditions. It was also found that a variety of local food, charming traditions, potential of cultural attractions in the old city of Chiang Mai was related to the word of mouth and recommendation of tourists visiting the old city of Chiang Mai in terms of developing the creative cultural tourism model suitable for the old city of Chiang Mai. This was the development that focused on the context of the creative area, creative activity, creative community, and creative network leading to sustainable cultural tourism.

Keywords: Creative Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Old City

INTRODUCTION

At present, the world's economy has entered the new economy or creative economy where creativity and innovation have become an important part of the industrial sector (Laisattruklai, 2013). The creative tourism is the creative economy developed further from cultural tourism focusing on preserving local arts and culture to provide opportunities for tourists to participate in community tourism activities as well as promoting the production of local products to the market to meet the needs of tourists (Wisutthilak, 2015). The creative tourism plays a role in generating economic income for more than 30 countries around the world aiming to introduce creative tourism development policies. The creative tourism programs are seriously conducted such as making their own perfume in France, batik making in Bali, Indonesia, making the special own brand wine in Cape Town, South Africa, Learning to make meringue, the traditional sweets in New Zealand, etc. (Richards & Raymond, 2010). Other countries are interested in promoting creative tourism activities as the strategies such as Chile, Cuba, Jordan, Egypt, Peru, Australia, Vietnam, etc. (UNCTAD, 2016; Tourism Marketing Strategy Division, 2016). Moreover, Association of South

East Asian Nations has also designated creative tourism as the tourism strategy for the ASEAN region (Phumsathan et al., 2015). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimated that the number of tourists to Southeast Asia would increase from 21.1 million in 1990 to 59.6 million in 2007. There was also a chance to increase to 133.3 million in 2020. This group of new tourists tends to seek new travel paradigm, especially creative tourism (UNWTO, 2018).

Thailand has recognized the importance of adding value and preciousness to tourism activities by bringing creativity into tourism activities and services. Thai Tourism Development Strategy B.E. 2555-2559 emphasized the development of creativity and encouraged the development of activities, innovation, and value addition in creative tourism (Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2017). In addition, the Thailand 4.0 policy also focuses on the technology and design strategy that will drive the foundation of tourism economy by building tourism prosperity through science, technology, culture and creativity. The emphasis is placed on providing tourists with the profound experience of Thai culture, tradition, history and locality focusing on creating value from experiences and accessing to identity of local communities in terms of tourist attractions and products (Nakorn et al., 2015).

Located in the north of Thailand, Chiang Mai Province is the predominant tourist spot rich in graceful Lanna culture and tradition of Northern Thailand. Various services are ready to offer and satisfy tourists as needed. As a matter of fact, Chiang Mai is the center of transportation, economy, education and tourism in northern Thailand and the Mekhong sub-region (Tangsomchai & Klanklin, 2016). Because of this, the 18th Thai cabinet meeting in 2011 agreed to proclaim Chiang Mai as the most splendid city of culture (Chiang Mai Provincial Office, 2016). Being an old city is considered as an important identity of Chiang Mai particularly on the old city area in Chiang Mai city. Nowadays, historical sites and archeology are found in Chiang Mai old city area such as moat, city wall and old city gates. Besides, the area around the old city still has traditional communities having historical background and contemporary historical value like Chiang Mai Gate area, Tha Phae Gate area, Kad Luang area and Wat Ket area (Suwanrat, 2015).

The more tourists visit Chiang Mai each year, the more problems are found. It is partly due to the government's policy which focuses on tourism resources as a selling point regardless of readiness and social/physical potential to accommodate tourists. This results in deterioration of cultural tourist attractions and disorder affecting the landscape and architecture of Chiang Mai old city (Palananon, 2011). In addition, the continuous expansion of the urban area caused historical site encroachment (Suwanrat, 2015) which precarious to the loss of local cultural identity (Rittem, 2013).

Chiang Mai is regarded as the number one province having potential in cultural tourist attractions and natural tourism (The word top ten). Meanwhile, various important factors have an effect on tourism industry there. One main factor is rapid economic growth which will make the value of an old city disappear. Therefore, it is essential for all concerned parties to be aware of abstract value of Chiang Mai old city. In other words, the development process should emphasize the preservation of the community traditional way of life (Research Found Office, Institute of Public Policy Studies Foundation and Faculty of Fine Arts, Chiang Mai University, 2018).

According to the aforementioned situations, the researchers therefore were aware of the importance of creative cultural tourism development in Chiang Mai old city. This could be used as the guidelines for developing tourism to strengthen the culture, way of life and body of knowledge related to local wisdom. This will lead to sustainable creative cultural tourism development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Creative tourism is the new form of culture-based tourism. It is the creativity-led tourism emphasizing the interaction among visitors, local community and tourism resource base (Richard,

2011). The creative tourism is studied in various forms. For example, Ellis, et al., (2018) studied the context of food tourism by means of literature review and creation of the conceptual framework. The research results revealed that culture was the central concept of food tourism and it could be concluded that food tourism was like studying cultural anthropology with the understanding of the interaction between tourists and places through the context of food as a medium. Meanwhile, some studies have noted that cultural tourism and creative tourism unavoidably. For example, Canavan (2016) studied the interaction between hosts and guests in three islands in the UK-French region. It was found that the hosts and the guests created a unique tourism culture which was like a middle ground between the culture of the hosts and the guests such as music, dance, handicraft and traditional customs. All of these occurred through interaction and exchange between the hosts and the guests.

The study of creative tourism in Thailand and abroad often involves cultural context because the concept of creative tourism uses the culture and history of the community to tell stories to tourists. Sofield, et al., (2017) studied the spatial design and place-making in 5 communities of Tasmania. It was found that although the majority of communities did not initiate tourism as a primary factor, the spatial design showcased the local culture and engaged tourists such as Sheffield Community Poetry Murals where the works of tourists were collected in Murals Park and eventually became the creative tourism industry.

Gordin & Matetskaya (2012) studied the creative tourism potential of St. Petersburg and found that the potential of creative tourism were 1) having outstanding cultural heritage. St. Petersburg is the famous cultural center of the world. The city's cultural heritage is included in UNESCO's list of places of cultural and historical value. 2) For the expansion of the tourism market, tour operators have particularly developed more than 500 inns and hotel rooms. Each offers a variety of services for guests to choose according to their needs. 3) The transportation and internal structural system are provided. St. Petersburg has the major international airport. High-speed train service is connected to major cities in Russia, Helsinki, and Finland. There are the sea ports and ferry links to the Baltic countries. 4) The development of creative tourism products and services are based on uniquely and notably local arts and crafts.

Madara & Ineta (2014) studied the creative tourism in Riga, Latvia. It is found that Riga is the cultural capital of Europe accepted by many tourists. The city is popular among tourists to visit its culture including art activities, theatrical performance, music and movement performance, traditional food tasting activity, family day learning activities. There are also the activities to visit the Latvian Ethnographic Museum which was established for more than 40 years. The activities are organized in the museum to visit craftsmen throughout Latvia. The atmosphere inside the museum is arranged in an ancient style to present the knitting, potter weaving, basketry, blacksmithing, jewelry design, and wood carving for tourists or visitors to feel like being in Riga in the past.

At the same time, religious beliefs can affect tourism in some countries where the cultural connection with religion highly influences the image of the destination. Farahani & Musa (2012) studied the impact of beliefs, practices and faith in Islam influencing the perception of tourism. The two studied community areas were the tourist attractions in Iran. After having the residents of the areas answering the questionnaires, the results indicated that the residents with very high level of religious beliefs, practices and faith would also have high social and cultural perception of tourism. People who believe in religious principles will have positive attitude towards social problems including tourism that can develop an image infrastructure cultural activities and quality of life.

In Thailand, there are studies on creative tourism such as the study of Sathiya Rungphipatthanapong (2014) examining the components of sustainability for creative tourism in the Amphawa Community, Samut Songkhram Province. The results showed that there were 5 components to create sustainable tourism; 1) creative-minded tourists such as interest in activities, awareness and responsibility for actions that affect the community, 2) strong and creative hosts with

the awareness and understanding on tourism management forms to gather in the network form, 3) activities and interaction which were real and non-organized as the traditional activities of the community's way of life without pretending or expecting commercial benefits, 4) strong and comprehensive internal control processes arising from community mutual agreement, 5) equal access to benefits which must be effective for members who were interested in the creative tourism of the community and must not cause anyone to be disadvantaged.

The research of Wiyada Seriwitthayasawat (2012) on the development of cultural tourism in the upper northern region of Thailand in the form of creative tourism found that 5 elements of creative tourism could be identified; 1) people in creative communities, 2) arts, culture, tradition, and creative local activities, 3) creative government agencies, 4) creative tourism operators, and 5) creative tourists. According to the research results of Darin Varunsap (2018) on the model of cultural capital management for creative tourism in Thailand, the 5 elements of cultural capital management for creative tourism in Thailand were introduced; 1) creative community management, 2) creative story management, 3) creative activity management, 4) creative communication management, and 5) creative impact management.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed qualitative and quantitative research. It aimed at assessing the potential of cultural tourist attractions, analyze tourist behaviors and motivation and develop a management model of creative cultural tourism in Chiang Mai old city. The in-depth interview was used for data collection conducted with public/private agencies, academicians, community leaders, and people's network organizations (16 persons). Also, a set of questionnaires was used for data collection administered with 400 Thai and foreign tourists visiting Chiang Mai old city and they were obtained by accidental sampling. The obtained qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis whereas those of quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Model (SEM).

RESEARCH RESULTS

According to the results of the in-depth interview, there were consistent opinions as follows. Chiang Mai old city was the living historic city. There were diverse tourism activities which included temples, historic sites, interesting culture, and way of life. Nevertheless, there were problems in area management and tourism accommodation such as inappropriate pedestrian. Regarding the data gained from the questionnaires, it was found that potential of cultural tourist attractions in Chiang Mai old city was at a high level. The tourists claimed that cultural tourist attractions were unique and attractive. However, the area management must be improved due to inappropriate transportation routes and pedestrian encroachment, etc. For tourist behaviors and motivation, it was found that most of the tourist respondents were female, 30 years and below, bachelor's degree graduates, private company employees and their income range was 15,001-30,000 baht. They visited Chiang Mai old city for the first time and stayed there for 4 – 6 days. Friends or acquaintances were the data sources for travel planning. The main motivations for travelling were status or reputation of cultural tourist attractions, interesting cultural activities, diverse and tasty local food. The most popular cultural tourist attractions among the tourist respondents were Sunday walking street, Wat Phrasingha and Chaing mai Gate markets.

With regards to an analysis of potential of cultural tourist attractions and motivation of cultural tourism in Chiang Mai old city having influence on revisit and word-of-mouth of tourists based on the second adjustment of the model, it was found that the index value of model fit together with empirical data showed potential of the cultural tourist attractions with an effect on tourist

word-of-mouth for 31 percent (squared multiple correlations $R^2=0.31$). The tourist perception of potential of cultural tourism in Chiang Mai old city had an opportunity to have an effect on tourist word-of-mouth or suggestions about cultural tourism for 31 percent (Figure 1).

Regarding the consideration of components of cultural tourism potential in Chiang Mai old city, it was found that the component having weight most (standardized regression weights) was potential in tourism experience and activity holding (ET). This was followed by value of tourist attraction (VA) and community participation (CI) as shown in Table 1.

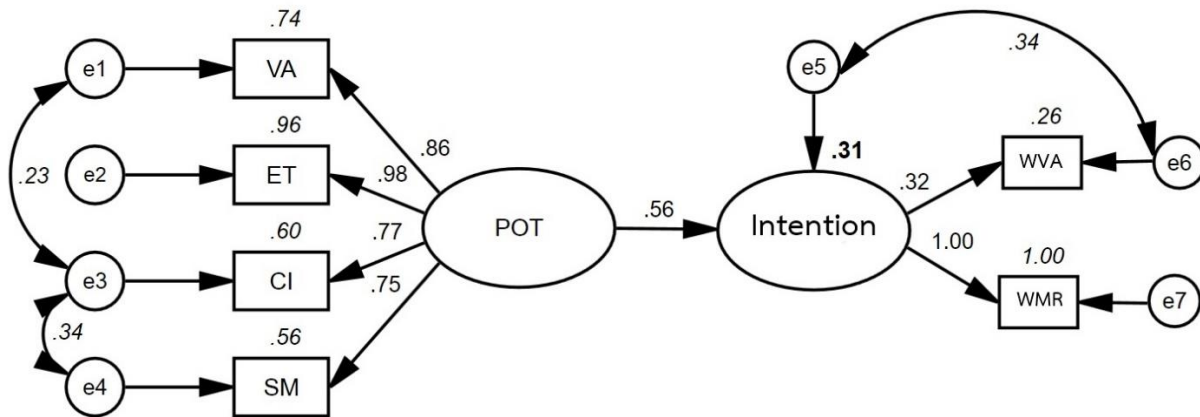


FIGURE 1
AN ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL OF CULTURAL TOURISM HAVING
RELATIONSHIPS WITH REVISIT INTENTION AND TOURIST WORD-OF-MOUTH
ABOUT CULTURAL TOURISM IN CHIANG MAI OLE TOWN (SECOND TIME)

| Variables | | | Regression Weights | | | | Standardized Regression Weights Estimate |
|-----------|------|-----------|--------------------|-------|--------|-----|--|
| | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P | |
| Intention | <--- | POT | 0.148 | 0.042 | 3.517 | *** | 0.56 |
| SM | <--- | POT | 1.000 | - | - | - | 0.75 |
| CI | <--- | POT | 1.165 | 0.058 | 19.956 | *** | 0.77 |
| ET | <--- | POT | 1.726 | 0.088 | 19.671 | *** | 0.98 |
| VA | <--- | POT | 1.135 | 0.062 | 18.328 | *** | 0.86 |
| WVA | <--- | Intention | 1.000 | - | - | - | 0.32 |
| WMR | <--- | Intention | 3.265 | 0.803 | 4.066 | *** | 1.00 |

Remarks: *** means p-value <0.001

A Model of Creative Cultural Tourism Management in Chiang Mai old city Area

Chiang Mai old city at present was set to be an old city area which is controlled and supervised in accordance with the Chiang Mai old city announcement under the Cabinet’s resolution in the meeting of the 9th November, 2010. The Chiang Mai old city covers the inner city wall (moat) and the outer city wall (earthen wall). This is together with land boundary of the type of

conservation for promoting arts & culture identity in accordance with the 2013 Chiang Mai city plan and Chiang Mai municipality ordinance in the old city (2014).

According to an interview, there were consistent opinions that form of creative cultural tourism appropriate with the context of Chiang Mai old city most was “Creative Chiang Mai old city area”. This was because Chiang Mai city had potential in value of tourist attractions (Living historic city). There were diverse tourism activities and experiences facilitating tourists. Communities in the area were aware of importance of the participation in tourist attraction management. This conformed to results of a study which the sample group of tourists assessed cultural tourist attractions that could attract tourist due to diverse arts & culture, way of life, local wisdom, historical background, etc.

According to tourist’s behaviors, it was found that tourists visiting Chiang Mai old city mainly aimed at learning local culture and exchanging knowledge/experience. Important tourism motivation included status or reputation in terms of historical background and cultural tourist attractions which tourists could learn and join tourism activities.

Therefore, the development which would lead to creative cultural tourism needed to take consideration on cultural capital or resources (both abstract and concrete). It could be concluded that a form of creative cultural tourism appropriate with the context of Chiang Mai old city was creative Chiang Mai old city area. This covered 4 components; 1) creative activities, 2) creative community, 3) creative area, and 4) creative networks (Figure 2).

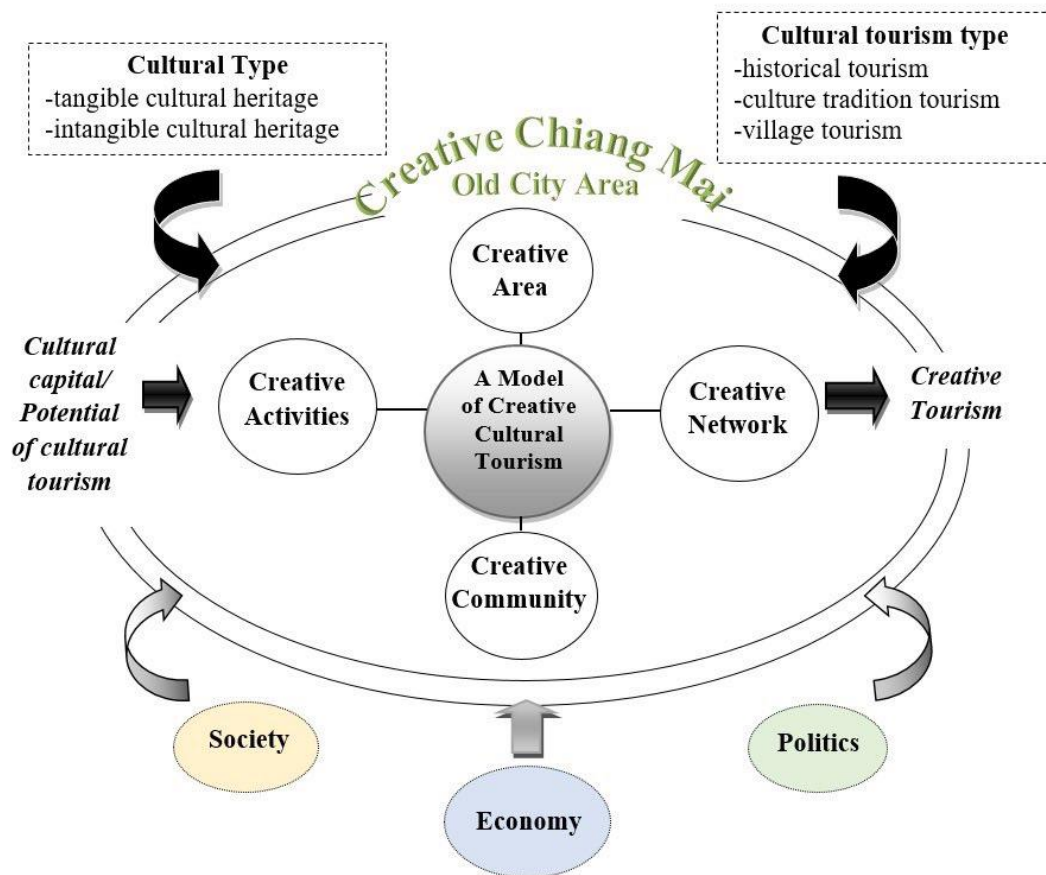


FIGURE 2
COMPONENTS OF A MODEL OF CREATIVE CULTURAL TOURISM IN CHIANG MAI OLD CITY

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The creative tourism plays a role in generating economic income for more than 30 countries around the world with the aim to introduce creative tourism development policies such as France, Indonesia, South Africa, New Zealand, etc. (Tourism Marketing Strategy Division, 2016). For Thailand, the creative tourism is still new. Although many agencies encourage and finance the budget for operations such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization), etc., the creative tourism in Thailand has not yet widely known. This is due to the lack of knowledge in creative tourism management. In addition, Thailand still lacks some supporting factors in order to make creative tourism management successful, for example, lack of sufficient funding, lack of strong leaders, political instability, etc. (Suebsuntorn & Khunwong, 2018). Solving such problems requires cooperation from all stakeholders in creative tourism management. It can begin with the researches to create a body of knowledge and an appropriate model of creative tourism management including the development of creative cultural tourism model that is related to history, art, culture, community lifestyle, and identity of the places where tourists have learned to create direct experience with cultural owners. This can create the added value to the history, art, culture, community lifestyle and identity of the places. The activities should not focus on the income of the community. The activities should rather emphasize the community values (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization, 2018).

The importance should be given to the potential of cultural tourism both tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage which are considered valuable cultural capital. It can attract tourists to travel, visit, expose, learn and create new experiences from a variety of creative cultural tourism. Therefore, the development of cultural tourism that leads to creative tourism should pay attention to care preserving cultural resources and bring it to develop creatively into a creative tourism that tourists can learn. There is a genuine experience that comes from participating in art learning, cultural heritage or special features of that area to connect with the people who live in the area and create the living culture appropriately to the context of the area (UNESCO, 2016) Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization, 2013).

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