

***Behavior and Satisfaction of Thai Tourists towards Cultural Tourism through
Homestay of Community Enterprise in Thailand***

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Abstract

This article focuses on behavior and satisfaction of Thai tourists toward cultural tourism through the homestays of Baanrimklong Homestay Community Enterprise Group in Samut Songkhram, Thailand. This quantitative research used questionnaires concerning the behavior and satisfaction. Sampling consisted of 400 tourists who holidayed at Samut Songkhram during the period of investigation. The statistics used percentage, average, and standard deviation.

The results of this research showed that the tourists that visited Baanrimklong Homestay at Samut Songkhram were Thai nationals between 20-30 years of age, held a bachelor degree and with an income under 10,000 Baht per month. The main purpose of visit was found to be cultural tourism through homestay in order to gain knowledge and experience. The tourists travel with family, travel on the weekend, travelled on average two nights at a time, traveled 1-2 times yearly and spent 2,001-3,000 Baht per time. The level of satisfaction of cultural tourism by the Thai tourists participating in the research was reported to be high.

Keywords: Thai tourists, cultural tourism, homestay, community enterprise

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Introduction

At present, the tourism industry is regarded as a significant segment which boosts the global economic. It has been accepted that the growth of the tourism industry continues to increase and has become a main component of the international trade system worldwide. In Thailand, the tourism industry has been playing an important role for decades. It is a driving force of economic growth which has contributed to increased employment and income, and investment in related businesses. In addition, it has created prosperity for the country and improved the quality of life of the Thai people. However, the competition in this industry exists at a global level, especially in terms of the quality of environmentally-friendly management. Therefore, it is necessary that the Thai tourism industry, as part of the economic drive, should enhance the quality of tourism products to meet international standards (The Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2016).

In order to facilitate confidence of guests towards homestays, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports have developed the “Thai Homestay Standard” evaluation. This is to assess and guarantee the standard of Thai homestays, and also to prepare for the Asian Community. In 2015, the Asian Community will define and employ the universal homestay standard among the Asian Countries with the aim of increasing tourist confidence. Moreover, sustainable tourism will be the focus and be referred to as “Green Tourism” (Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016). Homestays in Thailand have become increasingly popular in the Thai tourism industry since 2004 and their development is expected to continue according to the economic and social developing plan of the Thai government 8th edition. Homestays are viewed as an example of cultural and heritage tourism. During 1998-1999, Thailand’s government announced that these two years would be the year of Thai tourism using the slogan, “Amazing Thailand” which has now been used several times. Because of this trend, the government helped cultural tourism investors to develop their businesses and supported Thailand’s homestay programs since 2004. Many researcher have studied homestay in Thailand (Rermlawan, S. 2010), (Naaipinit, A. and Maneenert, T. 2010), (Nguyen Quang VINH, 2013).



Figure 1: Symbolize the homestay standard Thailand
Source : Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports
available at <http://www.homestaythai.net>

Baanrimklong Homestay Community Enterprise or Baanrimklong Homestay commence operations in 2004 by providing accommodation. The Thai style traditional homestay and guest house is located close to "Phee Lork" canal where tourists can relax with nature, live like a villager and learn the village lifestyle. In 2010, Baanrimklong Homestay received Thailand Tourism Award 8th and in 2013, the community enterprise was selected to be one of twenty "Creative Community" from Creative Tourist Magazine. Moreover, the homestay is also promoted as a self sufficient economy community. (Baanrimklong Homestay, 2016).

In this study, the researcher focused on the behavior and satisfaction of Thai tourists toward cultural tourism through homestays at Baanrimklong Homestay. This article is organized as follows. Firstly, the purpose of the study and conceptual framework of the research are introduced. Next, the quantitative research are revised in the methodology. Then, the analysis of data is presented. The result of the study are described in the results and discussions sections.

Purpose of the study

The objectives of the research are as follows: 1) to study the general information of Thai tourists who visited Baanrimklong Homestay, 2) to study the behavior of Thai tourists, and 3) to study the satisfaction of Thai tourists towards cultural tourism through the homestay community enterprise.

Methodology

This research explored the behavior and satisfaction of Thai tourists toward cultural tourism through homestay tourism of Baanrimklong Homestay as follows: 1) tourist accommodation, 2) food and nutrition, 3) security of life and property, 4) hospitality of the owners and members, 5) excursions, 6) natural resources and environment, 7) local culture, 8) enriching and value-added products, 9) services of homestay group, 10) tourism activities, and 11) public relationship. By investigating the relationships between variables which are the Thai tourist's general information and behavior of Thai tourists towards the homestay community enterprise this research will serve as guidelines for understanding target markets or consumers. In addition, by comparing the levels of satisfactions of Thai tourists towards cultural tourism through homestay, priorities can be developed as shown below in the following conceptual framework:

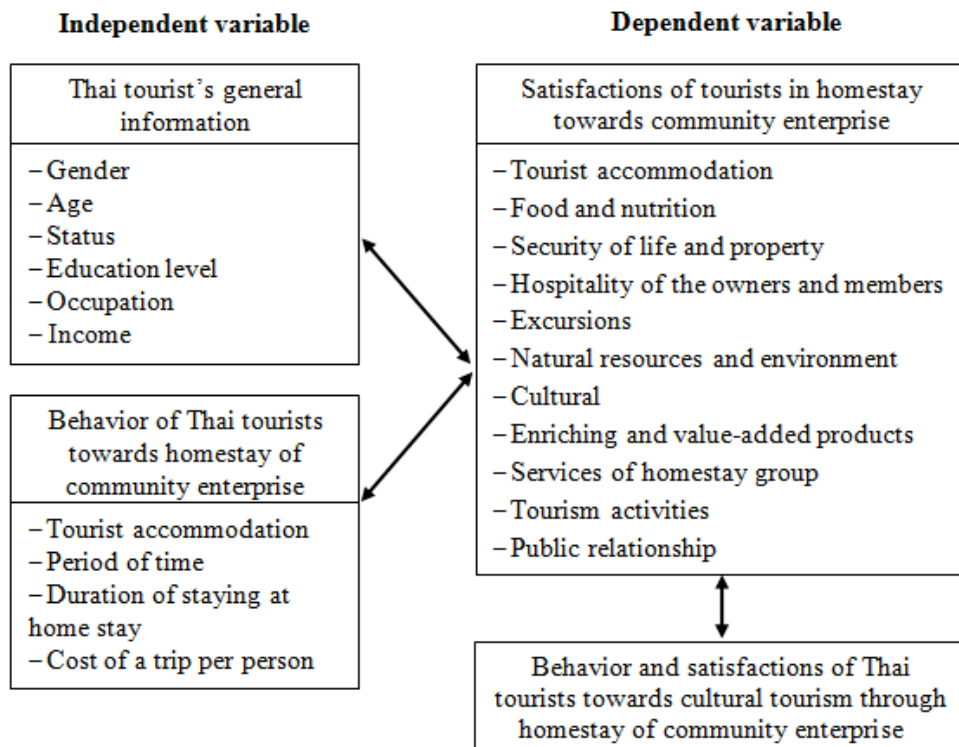


Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the research.

This quantitative research used questionnaires concerning the behavior and satisfaction. The participants for this study were 400 who stayed at Ban Rim Khlong Community Enterprise in Ban Pok sub-district, Muang Samut Songkhram district, Samut Songkhram province, Thailand, during the data collection period. The data was analyzed using percentage, average, and standard deviation.

Results

1. General Information

The sample for this study consisted of 185 males (46.25%) and 215 females (53.75%). From the sample population were 224 participants (56.00%) were 21-30 years old, 229 participants (65.25%) were single, 327 participants (81.75%) had graduated from the university with bachelor degree, 123 participants (30.75%) were business owners / business officers, and 134 participants (33.50%) had a salary between 10,001-20,000 Bath per month. The age, marriage status, education level, and occupation of the sample group is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: General information

Demographic characteristics	Frequency (Total 400)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	185	46.25
Female	215	53.75
Age		
Under 20	20	5.00
21-30	224	56.00
31-40	153	38.25
41-50	2	0.50
51-60	1	0.25
61- over	-	-
Status		
Single	229	65.25
Married	106	26.50
Widowed/Divorced/Separated	65	16.25
Education level		
Primary school	-	-
Secondary school	61	16.25
Associate degree	5	1.25
Bachelor degree	327	81.75
Master degree and above	7	1.75
Occupation		
Government official	67	16.75
Business administrator/Business officer	123	30.75
Business owner/Contractor	87	21.75
Student	64	16.00
Employee	59	14.75
Farmer	-	-
Merchant	-	-
Other	-	-
Salary per month (Baht)		
Under 10,000	64	16.00
10,001-20,000	134	33.50
20,001-30,000	115	28.75
30,001-40,000	86	21.50
40,001-50,000	1	0.25
50,001-over	-	-

2. The behavior of Thai tourists in Baanrimklong Homestay

The majority of the sample population in terms of behavior of tourists were as follows: 268 participants (67.00%) had a trip with their family, 280 participants (95.00%) travelled during the holiday, 328 participants (82.00%) stayed for a duration of two days at the home stay, and 134 participants (33.50%) spent for one trip between 1,001-2,000 Bath per person. The travel tourist style, period of time, duration

of staying in home stay, and cost of a trip per person of the sample group is shown the behavior of Thai tourists in Table 2.

Table 2: The behavior of Thai tourists in Baanrimklong Homestay

The behavior of tourists	Frequency (total 400)	Percentage (%)
Travel tourist style		
Trip with family	268	67.00
Trip with friend/colleague	117	29.25
Bag pack trip	5	1.25
Trip with tourist company	6	1.50
Other	4	1.00
Period of time		
Weekdays (Monday-Friday)	-	-
Holidays	380	95.00
Thailand's official holidays	20	5.0
Other	-	-
Duration of staying in home stay		
1 day	66	16.50
2 days	328	81.00
3 days	6	1.50
More than 3 days	-	-
Cost of a one trip per person (Baht)		
Under 1,000	64	16.00
1,001-2,000	134	33.50
2,001-3,000	115	28.75
3,001-4,000	86	21.50
4,001-5,000	1	0.25
5,001 - over	-	-

3. Satisfactions of Thai tourists in homestay of community enterprise in Baanrimklong Homestay

3.1 The level of satisfaction towards the accommodation for Thai tourists

This study found that Thai tourists preferred an airy, bright, and odor free accommodation (Mean = 4.20). The satisfaction level for the complete sample was 4.06, standard deviation of 0.62. The level of satisfaction of the accommodation for Thai tourists of the sample group is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The level of satisfaction towards the accommodation for Thai tourists

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
- The accommodation for Thai tourists are an airy, light access, and no odor.	144	191	65	-	-	4.20	.70	high
- The accommodation	88	225	87	-	-	4.00	.66	high

for Thai tourists are clean and comfortable.

– The accommodation for Thai tourists have showers and toilets with clean and private.

Average	106	191	103	-	-	4.06	.62	high
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3.2 The level of satisfaction towards food and nutrition

The study found that type of food and raw materials used in cooking towards food and nutrition had the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 3.93). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 3.79, standard deviation of 0.69. The level of satisfaction towards food and nutrition of the sample group is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The level of satisfaction towards food and nutrition

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– Type of food and raw materials used in cooking	62	108	156	74	-	3.58	.59	high
– Food containers clean and safe	61	252	87	-	-	3.93	.50	high
– Drinking water clean	61	192	125	22	-	3.73	.60	high
Average	61	184	123	32	-	3.79	.69	high

3.3 The level of satisfaction towards the security of life and property

The study found that security guard towards the security of life and property was scored the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 3.70). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average of 3.79, standard deviation of 0.69. The level of satisfaction of the security of life and property of the sample group is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The level of satisfaction towards the security of life and property

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– There're security guard.	28	223	149	-	-	3.70	.59	high
– There're preparation for a first aid.	-	227	173	-	-	3.57	.50	high
– There're tools to communicate with the authorities when incidents occur, or the tourists illness.	2	78	261	59	-	3.06	.60	moderate
Average	10	176	194	20	-	3.79	.69	high

3.4 The level of satisfaction towards the hospitality of the owners and members

The study found that the satisfaction towards the Creating knowledge exchange activities in their communities lifestyle was scored the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.18). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average of 4.29, standard deviation of 0.75. The level of satisfaction of the satisfaction towards the hospitality of the owners of the sample group is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: The level of satisfaction towards the hospitality of the owners and members

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– To welcome tourists and create familiarity	120	175	105	-	-	4.04	.75	high
– Creating knowledge exchange activities in their communities lifestyle	174	166	60	-	-	4.29	.71	high
– Providing advice on various matters	154	136	110	-	-	4.11	.81	high
Average	149	159	92	-	-	4.18	.75	high

3.5 The level of satisfaction towards the excursions

The study found that clear excursions, which were accepted by the community had the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.14). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 4.18, standard deviation of 0.75, and satisfaction levels. The level of satisfaction towards the hospitality of the owners and staff is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: The level of satisfaction towards the excursions

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– Excursions are clear, which must be accepted by the community.	115	225	60	-	-	4.14	.65	high
– Excursions has tourism information activities.	87	221	92	-	-	3.99	.67	high
– Homestay owners are a local guide or a local guide coordinator for tourist.	103	246	51	-	-	4.13	.61	high
Average	102	230	68	-	-	4.18	.75	high

3.6 The level of satisfaction towards the natural resources and environment

The study found that caring for the environment for both a tourist attraction and community continuously had the highest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.25). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 4.21, standard deviation of

0.46. The level of satisfaction towards the natural resources and environment of the sample group is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: The level of satisfaction towards the natural resources and environment

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– There're tourist attraction within the community or nearby.	136	197	67	-	-	4.18	.68	high
– There're caring for the environment both a tourist attraction and community continuously.	106	289	5	-	-	4.25	.46	high
– There're an attracting tourists to reduce the environmental impact of tourism and global warming.	82	313	5	-	-	4.19	.43	high
Average	108	266	26	-	-	4.21	.46	high

3.7 The level of satisfaction towards the cultural

The study found that maintaining of cultural and local traditions provided the greatest level of satisfaction (Mean = 3.98). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 3.94, standard deviation of 0.61. The level of satisfaction of the cultural of the sample group is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: The level of satisfaction towards the cultural

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– There're maintaining of cultural and local traditions.	79	235	86	-	-	3.98	.64	high
– There're maintaining of community lifestyle as a daily routine.	49	263	88	-	-	3.90	.58	high
Average	64	258	87	-	-	3.94	.61	high

3.8 The level of satisfaction towards the enriching and value-added products

The study found that the greatest satisfaction level was for people in the community to develop the potential of the services (Mean = 4.35). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 4.24, standard deviation of 0.65. The level of satisfaction towards the enriching and value-added products of the sample group is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: The level of satisfaction towards the enriching and value-added products

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– A product produced by residents and local ingredients that are unique to the community.	154	187	59	-	-	4.24	.69	high
– There is a souvenir shop in the community.	149	163	83	5	-	4.14	.78	high
– People in the community have the opportunity to develop the potential of the services impressed.	139	261	-	-	-	4.35	.48	high
Average	147	204	47	2	-	4.24	.65	high

3.9 The level of satisfaction towards the services

The study found that clearly prescribed details of fees and services for the homestay provided the greatest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.21). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 4.15, standard deviation of 0.64. The level of satisfaction towards the services of the sample group is shown in Table 11.

Table 11: The level of satisfaction towards the services of homestay group

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– A group of residents organized an association or cooperative.	136	205	59	-	-	4.19	.67	high
– Homestay define procedures for Thai tourists to prevent a conflict with the culture, tradition and beliefs of the community.	101	208	91	-	-	4.03	.69	high
– Homestay has bookings and registration system for information about tourists.	127	213	60	-	-	4.17	.66	high
– Homestay offers details of fees and services that are clear and present.	108	269	23	-	-	4.21	.53	high
Average	118	224	58	-	-	4.15	.64	high

3.10 The level of satisfaction towards the tourism activities

The study found that the learning activities (offering food to the monks in the morning) provided the greatest level of satisfaction (Mean = 4.16). The satisfaction

level of the sample had an average total of 4.13, standard deviation of 0.60. The level of satisfaction towards the tourism activities of the sample group is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: The level of satisfaction towards the tourism activities

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– Community lifestyle tourist activities. (Visiting Amphawa Market in the evening).	58	342	-	-	-	4.14	.35	high
– Learning activities. (Give food to the monks in the morning)	144	176	80	-	-	4.16	.73	high
– Entertainment tourist activities.	81	259	60	-	-	4.05	.59	high
– Handicraft tourist activities. (Making the woven coconut leaves)	144	174	82	-	-	4.15	.74	high
Average	107	238	55	-	-	4.13	.60	high

3.11 The level of satisfaction towards the public relations.

The study found that manual, document and printing media for public relation provided the greatest level of satisfaction (Mean = 3.86). The satisfaction level of the sample had an average total of 3.91, standard deviation of 0.44, and satisfaction levels. The level of satisfaction towards the public relationship of the sample group is shown in Table 13.

Table 13: The level of satisfaction towards the public relationship

Items	Rank					Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
	5	4	3	2	1			
– Homestay has manual, document and printing media for public relation their community tourism.	24	297	79	-	-	3.86	.49	high
– Homestay has published data for public relation.	7	315	78	-	-	3.82	.43	high
– Homestay is listed in homestay tourist guide of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports.	42	339	19	-	-	4.06	.39	high
Average	24	317	59	-	-	3.91	.44	high

Conclusion

The results of this study showed that the behavior of tourists that visited Baanrimklong Homestay at Samut Songkhram happened to be Thai people of 20-30

years of age, held a bachelor's degree and had an income under 10,000 Baht per month. Most of the Thai tourists' main purpose of the stay was to learn about cultural tourism through homestays in order to gain knowledge and experience. Tourists traveled with family, travelled on the weekend, holidayed for two nights, traveled 1-2 times per year and spent 2,001-,000 Baht per time. The satisfaction of Thai tourists toward cultural tourism through Baanrimklong Homestay was found to be at high level for all 3 aspects, i.e., the enriching and value-added products, the natural resources and environment and the hospitality of the owners and members and the excursions.

Suggestions

1. Useful in developing homestays in Thailand in order to maintain the natural environment and cultural traditions.
2. Maintain a standard for various aspects of homestay in Thailand, and to improve the quality of services to meet the needs of tourists.
3. The development of activities for homestays to provide for tourists visiting the homestay for both Thai and foreign tourists.

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