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**A STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS AND THE GUIDELINE FOR  
PROMOTING THE TOURISM BUSINESS OF BAN GANG WAH –  
GANG HAI VILLAGE, NAKHON THAI DISTRICT,  
PHITSANULOK, THAILAND**

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**Keyword: The problems, The guideline, Tourism business**

**ABSTRACT**

This research project aims to study the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province; and to provide a guideline for promoting the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province. The samples used for the study were Thai tourists who visited Phitsanulok Province. The samples were selected using the Quota Sampling Method. The data were analyzed using percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The statistics used were T-test and One-way Anova. The result reveals the decision making of tourists was influenced by the relationship between personal characteristics of tourists and factors of problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province; namely, destination's characteristics, attractions, economy, security, and the promotion and public relations; as follows. Gender didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, attractions, economy, security, and the promotion and public relations. Age caused a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of security, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. On the other hand, Age didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang

Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, attractions, economy, and the promotion and public relations. Education caused a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of security, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. On the other hand, education didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, attractions, economy, and the promotion and public relations.

The occupation caused a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, economy, security, and the promotion and public relations, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. On the other hand, the occupation didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of attractions. Income caused a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of economy and security, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. On the other hand, income didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, attractions, and the promotion and public relations. Marriage status caused a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of security and promotion and public relations, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. On the other hand, marriage status didn't cause a significant difference in the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of destination's characteristics, attractions, and economy. The overall score of participants' opinion toward these 5 factors of tourism was high. Factors that had the highest influence over their decision making were age and income; whereas the age of visitors had a moderate influence over their decision making, followed by income.

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism business is continuously developing and improving while bringing a tremendous amount of income to many countries, as well as creating many negative effects on the economy, society, culture, and environment of those countries. Therefore, Ecotourism is being promoted and supported as an important component of the sustainable development program implemented in many countries around the world. Ecotourism is also being used as an instrument or measure for promoting the preservation of biological resources, which tends to decrease or even deplete, as a result of the rapid development of the country's economy and society. In terms of the current trend of the tourism business, it can be seen that consumers' demand for adventure tourism is increasing. Adventure tourism also includes the opportunity to actually participate and experience nature. Moreover, tourists who pursue natural tourism also want to study and learn about the place they are visiting, whether in terms of the culture, ecosystem, flora and fauna of those places. There are several issues regarding the preservation of local culture and the environment against changes. These concerns are the result of the increasing attention and focus that have been placed on the issues regarding the quality of the environment and environmental protection, which are now the main

problems that many countries around the world are facing. The concept of alternative tourism was born out of those policies. Alternative tourism is a novel tourism strategy that focuses on turning a community into a tourism attraction that, in turn, generates revenue back to the community; by collaborating with the local people to develop and maintain the local tourist attractions, as well as to invest in the development project of new tourist attractions. The concept of alternative tourism aims to provide alternative tourist attractions while giving the community the opportunity to engage in this business. Alternative tourism is essentially a form of ecotourism. (Asitirat C., 2010; Shahid et al., 2019; Siddiqi et al., 2019; Sulaiman et al., 2020)

Thailand is widely recognized as an important country in the field of agriculture and industry, as well as in the tourism industry, in which many Thai and foreign tourists are interested in visiting the country. The tourism industry is also one of the major sources of income in Thailand. Regardless of the mode of traveling or the destination, when tourists visit any places they will bring with them the opportunities to create the products and services, as well as the management of those products and services, in order to attract repeated visitation and to ensure the satisfaction with the destination of those tourists. Though at present the tourism industry of Thailand faces many effects, both domestically and internationally, this industry still continuously generates so much revenue for the country. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports also has several important policies on developing and promoting domestic tourist attractions and increasing the variety of available types of tourism in those destinations, such as ecotourism, health tourism, agricultural tourism, etc. The government promotes and supports the development of the new tourist attractions, and encourages the local community to actively participate in tourism management. These efforts are done in many forms, such as the creation of tourism cooperatives, the development of local community into a tourist attraction, the implementation of various measures that facilitate and safeguard tourists against exploitation, as well as the more serious efforts on solving tourists' problems. These are good policies for further improvement of Thailand's tourism industry, in order to make the tourism industry more complete and mature, as well as to disperse the revenue to the local people and to improve the overall quality of life of those people. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2009; Shabbir et al., 2020; Ul-Hameed et al., 2019; Usak et al., 2019)

Phitsanulok is a decent size province that locates in the lower area of the Northern Region of Thailand. Phitsanulok is a house of a major government center, several educational institutions, and major organizations, as well as a mixed batch of the population of diversified background in tradition, culture, nationality, occupation, etc. The population of Phitsanulok concentrates in the urban area of this province and, therefore, the city of Phitsanulok faces the same problems as many other urban cities: a competitive society where life paces at a much faster speed, elderly people are being forgotten and ignored, adolescences now addict to games and technologies, and the working-age people just focusing on their career and keeping up with

the fast-paced living while ignoring their owned culture and tradition. As Phitsanulok province has several tourist attractions, the concept of ecotourism has the potential to convert tourism activities into activities that also promote nature study and environment protection, as well as generate revenue and job opportunity for the local people. Ecotourism will provide the local people with an additional source of income which, in turn, will reduce the use of natural resources for living. For these reasons, ecotourism is a solution that allows the development of the tourism-based economy and the environment protection to be done simultaneously. Therefore, it is safe to say that ecotourism is another form of sustainable development.

Gang Hai Rapids is another famous tourist attraction of Phitsanulok. It is born out of the collaboration of the local people, who developed these rapids into a natural tourist attraction that generates so much revenue for the local people. Gang Hai Rapids is an ecotourism attraction where tourists can relax, enjoy the food and rafting, and experience real nature. Originally, this area was a desolated place where adolescences usually mingled in the evening. The local people came up with the idea of converting this area into a tourist attraction. Gang Hai Rapids is a natural stream that has lots of trees. It has a very pleasant atmosphere for relaxation, a vast courtyard, and a clear and clean stream. Gang Hai Rapids is especially lovely during summer, as thick trees cover and shield the entire stream from sunlight so tourists may fully enjoy many activities without the concern of sunlight. (Benjachai S., 2006; Shabbir et al., 2019)

Therefore, the authors are interested in studying the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province; in order to create and provide useful information for related organizations, authorities, and entities. The authors intend to provide a guideline for further development and improvement of the tourism business and services of this community, in order to meet with the expectation and demand of tourists; as well as to promote the tourism business of Phitsanulok Province.

### **Research objectives**

1. Studying the problems and obstacles faced by the local tourism community of Ban Gang Hai Village, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province.
2. Providing the guideline for resolving the problems and improving the local tourism community of Ban Gang Hai Village, Nong Kathao Sub-district, Nakhon Thai District of Phitsanulok Province.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Population and samples**

The populations of this research project were 865,368 Thai tourists who visited Phitsanulok Province (2017 Tourism Information, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Central Region Office, Zone 1)

## RESULT

This research project intends to study the problems and the guideline for promoting the tourism business of Ban Gang Wah – Gang Hai Village, Nakhon Thai District, Phitsanulok; by interviewing X samples, analyzing the data, and interpreting the analysis result. The authors specify the symbols and abbreviations used for the analysis as follows.

**Table 1** Numbers and percentages of participants, categorized by gender, age, level of education, occupation, level of income, and marriage status

General information	Percentage
1. Gender	
Male	44.00
Female	56.00
Total	100.00
2. Age	
Under 20 years old	12.00
21 – 30 years old	44.00
31 – 40 years old	19.00
41 – 50 years old	16.00
Over 51 years old	09.00
Total	100.00
3. Education	
Elementary School	07.00
Junior High School	10.00
Senior High School/Vocational Education	13.00
High Vocational Education/diploma	18.00
Bachelor Degree	46.00
Bachelor Degree and higher	06.00
Total	100.00
4. Occupation	
Students	34.00
Government/state enterprise employee	20.00
Private company employee	12.00
Private business/trade	12.00
General contractor	16.00
Farmer	04.00
Unemployed/retired	02.00
Total	100.00
5. Income	
Under 10,000 Baht	53.00
10,001 – 20,000 Baht	28.00
20,001 – 30,000 Baht	18.00

More than 30,000 Baht	01.00
Total	100.00
6. Marriage status	
Single	60.00
Married	35.00
Divorced/widowed	05.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>

According to Table 1, the table depicts the analysis result of the demographical characteristics of participants, categorized by variables, as follows.

Gender: the majority of participants were female, which was accounted for 56.00 percent; while the remaining were male, which was accounted for 44.00 percent.

Age: the majority of participants were those at the ages of 21 – 30 years old and they were accounted for 44.00 percent. This group of participants was followed by those at the age of 31 – 40 years old, which were accounted for 19.00 percent; those at the age of 41 – 50 years old, which were accounted for 16.00 percent; those at the age of 20 years old, which were accounted for 12.00 percent; and lastly, those at the age of 51 years old and older, which were accounted for 09.00 percent.

Level of education: the majority of participants held Bachelor Degree and they were accounted for 46.00 percent. This group of participants was followed those who held High Vocational Education Degree/diploma, which were accounted for 18.00 percent; those who held the Senior High School/Vocation Educational Degree, which were accounted for 13.00 percent; those who held the Junior High School Degree, which were accounted for 10 percent; those who held the Elementary Education Degree, which were accounted for 07.00 percent; and lastly, those who held Master Degree and higher, which were accounted for 06.00 percent.

Occupation: the majority of participants were students, which were accounted for 34.00 percent. The remaining of participants were government/state enterprise employees, which were accounted for 20.00 percent; general contractors, which were accounted for 16.00 percent; private company employees, which were accounted for 12.00 percent; private business owners/traders, which were accounted for 12.00 percent; farmers, which were accounted for 04.00 percent; and lastly, unemployed/retired persons, which were accounted for 02.00 percent.

Level of income: the majority of participants earned less than 10,000 Baht a month, and they were accounted for 53.00 percent. This group of participants was followed by those with the income of 10,001 – 20,000 Baht a month, which were accounted for 28.00 percent; those with the income of 20,001 – 30,000 Baht a month, which were accounted for 18.00 percent; and lastly, those with the income of 30,001 Baht a month and higher, which were accounted for 01.00 percent.

Marriage status: the majority of participants were single persons, which were accounted for 60.00 percents. This group of participants was followed by married persons, which were accounted for 35.00 percent; and lastly, divorced/widowed persons, which were accounted for 05.00 percent.

Part II Data for the analysis of mean and standard deviation, for the studying of the problems and the guideline for promoting the tourism business of Ban Gang Wah – Gang Hai Village, Nakhon Thai District, Phitsanulok

**Table 2** Mean and standard deviation of participants' level of satisfaction and the influence to their decision making, regarding the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in terms of the destination's characteristics, attractions, economy, security, and promotion and public relations.

<b>Destinations' characteristics</b>	$\bar{x}$	<i>S.D.</i>	<b>Influence of the decision making</b>
1. Preservation of the nature at the destination	4.41	0.669	Highest
2. There are clear road signs that guide visitors to the destination	4.23	0.683	Highest
3. The destination has convenient and wide-enough roads	4.02	0.772	High
4. The destination has sufficient parking spaces for visitors	4.08	0.770	High
5. The destination has hygienic bathrooms for visitors	3.88	1.013	High
<b>Total score of the destination's characteristics</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>0.568</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Attractions</b>	$\bar{x}$	<i>S.D.</i>	<b>Influence of the decision making</b>
1. The destination is available all year long	4.23	0.740	Highest
2. The destination is beautiful	4.13	0.719	High
3. The friendliness of local people at the destination	4.09	0.793	High
4. The opportunity to visit and admire the beauty of the reservoir by rafting on bamboo rafts	4.18	0.791	High
5. The peacefulness and nature at the destination	4.18	0.828	High
<b>Total score of attractions</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>0.560</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Economy</b>	$\bar{x}$	<i>S.D.</i>	<b>Influence of the decision making</b>
1. Local people participate in the provision of services, foods, and beverages	4.20	0.741	High

2. There are sufficient services provided to visitors, such as raft for rent, by the local people	4.22	0.769	Highest
3. The sales of processed – local products	3.85	0.837	High
4. There is a local souvenir shop or an OTOP store for visitors	3.83	0.834	High
5. The contribution of external organizations	3.93	0.866	High
<b>Total score of economy</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.596</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Security</b>	$\bar{x}$	<i>S.D.</i>	<b>Influence of the decision making</b>
1. The availability of medical facilities and medical staff at the destination	3.89	0.921	High
2. The availability of warning signs at the destination	4.07	0.874	High
3. The availability of life jackets at the destination	4.27	0.811	Highest
4. The availability of safety tip and recommendation for visitors	4.00	0.877	High
5. The security management of the touring route	3.90	0.951	High
<b>Total score of security</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>0.679</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Promotions and public relations</b>	$\bar{x}$	<i>S.D.</i>	<b>Influence of the decision making</b>
1. The availability of public relations and tourism information center at the destination	4.18	0.722	High
2. The availability of promotion campaigns on various online media	4.09	0.775	High
3. The availability of introduction brochures at the destination	3.93	0.880	High
4. The availability of promotion campaigns through books/magazines or tourism articles	3.88	0.939	High
5. The availability of information billboards at the destination	3.90	9.15	High
<b>Total score of promotions and public relations</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>0.663</b>	<b>High</b>

According to Table 2, the detail analysis result of participants' level of satisfaction and influence over their decision making, regarding the problems and obstacles faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, can be summarized as follows.

In terms of the destination's characteristics, the overall level of satisfaction is high, with the mean of 4.12.

In terms of the attraction, the overall level of satisfaction is high, with the mean of 4.16.

In terms of the economy, the overall level of satisfaction is high, with the mean of 4.00.



In terms of the security, the overall level of satisfaction is high, with the mean of 4.03.

In terms of the promotions and public relations, the overall level of satisfaction is high, with the mean of 3.99.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. The difference in gender causes no significant influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Rakkhayan D., 2009) on the subject of behavior and satisfaction of visitors toward the agricultural tourism management of Suphan Buri Province. Rakkhayan found that difference in gender of visitors didn't cause any significant influence over their opinion toward the agricultural tourism management of Suphan Buri Province, in terms of planning, organizing, motivation, and control.

2. The difference in age causes significance influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai; with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Mayor V., 2012) on the subject of tourism motivation and the satisfaction of Thai tourists who visited Raksavarin Hot Spring and Porn Rung Hot Spring of Ranong Province. Mayor found that difference in age of visitors was significantly related to their traveling methods, with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. Another literature (Hongpang S., 2010) on the subject of ecotourism management guideline and its influence on satisfaction of tourists: a case study of Phu Ruea National Park, Phu Ruea District of Loei Province. Hongpang found that age of tourists was significantly related to their satisfaction with the tourist services provided at Phu Ruea National Park, with the level of statistical significance of 0.01.

3. The difference in education causes no significant influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Rakkhayan D., 2009) on the subject of behavior and satisfaction of visitors toward the agricultural tourism management of Suphan Buri Province. Rakkhayan found that difference in the level of education of visitors didn't cause any significant influence over their satisfaction toward the agricultural tourism management of Suphan Buri Province, in terms of services provided by staff, agricultural tourist destination, and tourism promotion.

4. The difference in occupation causes significance influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai; with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Hongpang S., 2010) on the subject of ecotourism management guideline and its influence on satisfaction of tourists: a case study of Phu Ruea National Park, Phu Ruea District of Loei Province. Hongpang found that the local people of different

occupations had a significantly different level of participation with the management of the ecotourism business of Wat Takhian Water Market.

5. The difference in the level of income causes significance influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai; with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Hongpang S., 2010) on the subject of ecotourism management guideline and its influence on satisfaction of tourists: a case study of Phu Ruea National Park, Phu Ruea District of Loei Province. Hongpang found that the monthly income of tourists was significantly related to their satisfaction with the tourist services provided at Phu Ruea National Park, with the level of statistical significance of 0.01. Another literature (Songthip K., 2014) on the subject of the people participation with the management of the ecotourism business of Wat Thakian Water Market, Bang Kruai District of Nonthaburi Province. Songthip found that the local people of different level of income had a significantly different level of participation with the management of the ecotourism business of Wat Takhian Water Market.

6. The difference in marriage status causes significance influence on participants' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai; with the level of statistical significance of 0.05. The analysis result is in line with the result of other literature (Lertwhanwit O. and Anuwitchanon J., 2012) on the subject of the tourists' expectation and recognition of the environmental issue management for consumption and tourism of the green space of Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex. They found that the difference in marriage status of Thai tourists who visited Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex caused significant difference in their post-visitation behaviors, with the level of statistical significance of 0.01.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. In terms of the destination's characteristics, these factors appears to have a high level of influence over visitors' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. Looking at these factors in more detail instead reveal that the factor of a highest level of influence is 'preservation of the nature at the destination' and the factor of the least level of influence is 'the destination has hygienic bathrooms for visitors. Some recommendations are, including, planting more trees and flowers and arranging enough facilities for visitors.

2. In terms of the attractions, these factors appears to have a high level of influence over visitors' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. Looking at these factors in more detail instead reveal that the factor of a highest level of influence is 'the destination is available all year long' and the factor of the least level of influence is 'the friendliness of local people at the destination.'

3. In terms of the economy, these factors appears to have a high level of influence over visitors' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. Looking at these factors in more detail instead reveal that the factor of a highest level of influence is 'the destination is available all year long' and the factor of the least level of influence is 'the friendliness of local people at the destination.'

4. In terms of the security, these factors appears to have a high level of influence over visitors' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. Looking at these factors in more detail instead reveal that the factor of a highest level of influence is 'the availability of life jackets at the destination' and the factor of the least level of influence is 'the availability of medical facilities and medical staff at the destination.'

5. In terms of the promotion and public relations, these factors appears to have a high level of influence over visitors' decision making toward the problems and obstacles of faced by the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai. Looking at these factors in more detail instead reveal that the factor of a highest level of influence is 'the availability of public relations and tourism information center at the destination' and the factor of the least level of influence is 'the availability of promotion campaigns through books/magazines or tourism articles.'

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Further study should focus on the satisfaction toward the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai and the guideline for improving the tourism business of Ban Gang Hai, in order to create the tourism plan and tourist attraction development plan for Phitsanulok Province.

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