

# **SUCCESS OF THE SUSTAINABLE HISTORIC TOURISM IN PHRA NAKHON SI AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE**

**Damkerng Aswasuntrangkul**  
**Asst.Prof.Dr.Sriparinya Toopgrajank Prof.Dr.Voradej Chandarasorn**

*Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, 1 U-Thong Nok Road, Dusit,  
Bangkok, 10300, Thailand*

## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative research aimed to study the success of sustainable historic tourism with 15 participants who involved with sustainable historic tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province. The instruments were documentary evidence, in-depth interviewing and observation then analyzed the data with content analysis. The findings found that the success of sustainable historic tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province could be considered from 1) the revisiting of tourists by tourists who were satisfied and impressed in the tourist attractions until revisiting 2) the word-of-mouth implied that a satisfied tourist recommended the tourist attractions to other 3) the local economic which the tourism contributed to improve the local economic, raise the standard of living, increase employment and revenue 4) the preserve of the natural environment due to be sustainable tourism that emphasized to reduce the impact to resource and environment, maintain the quality of tourist attractions including the historic sites and antiquity 5) fairness treatment to all tourists and legal enforcement without discrimination 6) the responsibility of the tourists for culture, local tradition and the nature of tourist attractions, respected the place and paid attention to the environment 7) the quality of folk life, income, employment, happiness and standard of living were improved from the tourism.

Key words: success, sustainable Historic tourism

## **INTRODUCTION**

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province was located on Asian Highway 75 kilometers from Bangkok. It was capital city with the longest period of 417 years with physical, historic and civilized identities of the flourish. At the present the archaeological sites were still remained as the evidence of the prosperity in the past. The World Heritage Committee of UNESCO decided to inscribe The Historic City of Ayutthaya as The World Heritage Cultural Sites that contributed Thai and foreign tourists visited this province continuously. Tourism industry made the national income 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked under the export. A mount of 7,047,051 tourists visited Ayutthaya province with income 12,430 billion Baht (Ayutthaya Province Offices, 2016).

The problems and obstacles of the tourist security, unsafe traffic utilities, crime, the unfair fee of public transportation to Thai and foreign tourists including encroachment problems on archaeological sites and continuously deteriorated antiquities. Lack of the relevant agency's integration in tourism management and coordination affected to be unsuccessful tourism promotion. The lack of cooperation and confidence among entrepreneurs in activities including the reactive governmental operations as well. All factors affected the success of promoting and developing tourism in Thailand contributed the tourism of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya to be sustainable quality. These problems could be seriously solved the private sector and government agencies together so that tourists were happy, revisiting including recommending Ayutthaya to others. Therefore, the researcher was interested in measuring or the key

performance indicators that indicated the success of the sustainable historic tourism promotion of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya that contributed to promote the tourism in the future.

### **Research objectives**

This study aimed to find the measuring factors or key performance indicators of the success of sustainable historic tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. Sustainable tourism was a tourism that met the needs of tourists at the present and the future generations through the protection and the preservation of resources. (Ranee Isichaikul, 2014, 46), a responsible tourism for natural and environmental tourist attractions that provided the long-term returns to sustainable tourism entrepreneurs and local communities. (Boonlert Jittangwatana, 2005,7), was a tourism that contributed the economy of the community without destroying the resources that affected the tourism in the future (Swarbrooke,1999,13), better standard of living and economics, local people involvement, fairly benefits distribution to society, protect and preserve resources and environments, creating valuable experiences and the highest satisfaction and preserving in the unique culture of the community (Muller, 1994, quoted in Shapley, 2009,60 and Ranee Isichikun, 2014, 47) to contributed to the sustainability of the ecosystem, society, culture and economy by local people engaging (Mowforth & Munt, 2009, 10) that could summarize the important criteria of sustainable tourism in five criteria: 1) people involvement in the tourism process. 2) created local benefits. 3) having a good foundation of resource and environment preservation. 4) efficient resources usage 5) created the tourist (Chetsarit Aagsuanjanakul, 2014,39-40).

2. Sustainable historic tourism was an operation that related with historic tourism in the direction to preserve resources and maintain the environment, to be still attractiveness. To continuously developed the tourism industry resulted in be expanded this industry with the following important elements as following: 1) Tourist revisiting were the satisfaction and impression of tourists towards the attractions until returning to visit (Chen & Tsai, 2007, Fullant, Matzler & Fuller, 2008 and Quintal & Polezynski, 2010) 2) Word-of-mouth was the satisfaction of tourists towards tourist attractions and services until returning to visit and recommending word-of-mouth to others to visit the tourist destination (Kozak Rimmington, 2000 and Petrick & Backman, 2002) 3) Tourism contributed to improve the local economic, profit increasing, better standard of living, increasing employment that resulted to generate income and positive effect to national and locally economic (Ritchie, J., 1988, Var & Kim, 1990, Kaiser & Helber, 1978 and Saranya Warakunwit, 2015) 4) To maintain the resource environment, sustainable tourism emphasized the resource management that contributed the benefits and the survival of the community under ecology system, focused on conservation and equilibrium of resource utilization, decreased negative impact to resource & environment and preserved the tourist attractions (Tourism Canada, 1990, Shirley Eber, 1992, Muller, 1994 and Holden, 2008) 5) The fair treatment and legal enforcement for all without discrimination in protection (Miller & Engle, 2001, Fleischacker, 2005 and Ruitenbergh & Vokey, 2001) 6) the responsibility of the tourists for culture, local tradition and the nature of tourist attractions, respected the place and paid attention to the environment 7) the tourism promoted better quality of local life, income, employment, happiness, standard of living, health and environmental community were improved from the tourism.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher approached the research by qualitative research with in-depth interview with the procedures as following

1. The participants

The participants were target population of in-depth interviewing who came from public, private and the people that all parties involved with the Sustainable Historic Tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province and 15 samples were purposive selected

2. The research instruments

The research instruments were in-depth interviewing through semi-construct interview which covered the measuring factors or indicators to the success of sustainable historic tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province, documentary study that were theories, researches, articles, participants interviewing and observation as well.

3. Data quality inspection

Researcher used quality inspection technique with data triangulation technique to check the data that had been collected correctly or not.

4. Data collection

To collected data which came from documents, in-depth interviewing that met the specified the number of samples, observation and analysis.

## FINDINGS

The key success factors of the sustainable historic tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province as following:

1. The revisiting, tourists who were satisfied and impressed

in the tourist attractions until revisiting that was the behavior of their experience and perceiving the value. The impression and satisfaction in tourism, tourist attractions, tourism and information service caused to persistence and expectation of revisiting because of the historic sites, antiquity, the comfortable and safe transportation which could easily and reasonably access in all season. There were facilities such as accommodation, restaurants, bathrooms, souvenir shops or other services and communication for tourists to be comfortable as well as the safety in life and property of tourists.

2. The word-of-mouth, tourists who are satisfied with the tourist attractions and services, would recommend mouth-to-mouth to others. Interpersonal communication including Social media enabled the sharing of tourism information, criticism, feelings and ideas, especially the experience that was impressive and satisfying to the tourist attractions and tourism services in the historic tourist attractions of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya. The impression of tourists made the recommendation as a result of the honest identity of local community, exploiting and warm welcoming.

3. Local economic, the tourism improved the national and local economic. The increasing of tourists and expenditures affected the increasing of local incomes, production, sales, consumption, less unemployment and creating direct and indirect jobs, local business's profitability, standard of living enhancement, beneficiary of nation or local communities.

4. Maintain the resource environment, sustainable tourism emphasized to reduce the negative impact on resources and the environment, maintain the tourism resources and environmentally friendly, did not destroy the environment, maintain the environment, ancient sites and antiquity to remain in good and suitable condition, improving the landscape to be cleaner and more order, preserve with care and do not destroy the value of historic tourist attractions and community could live together with the environment.

5. Fairness treatment to Thai and foreign tourists and legal enforcement without discrimination from the police, government officers and volunteer in tourist attractions for both

foreign and Thai tourists with transparent justice, fair, equal, not taking advantage, insulting, discrimination, and not seeking benefits from tourists visiting the historic sites of Ayutthaya.

6. The tourists had responsible for culturing, local tradition and the nature of tourist attractions, respected the place and paid attention to the environment, be conscious, not exploit the host and information finding before traveling for the most benefit.

7. The quality of local life, tourism improved the quality of local life. The livelihood of local people in a suitable and happiness environment were completed both physically and mentally, which they lived together in society in peace, having sufficient income and stable work, did not cause burden or problems to society which was the result of tourism in the area with a satisfaction in health and safety, better standard of local living in a peace society.

## CONCLUSION

The measuring factors of the success of sustainable historical tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya could be considered to be following. 1) the return of tourists because tourists, who came to visit the historic tourist sites were satisfied and impressed the place until returning again according to Chen and Tsai (Chen & Tsai, 2007), Fullant, Matzler & Fuller (Fullant, Matzler & Fuller, 2008) and Quintal & Polezynski (Quintal & Polezynski, 2010) found that satisfaction and impressions of tourists towards the tourist attractions would come back again. 2) The word-of-mouth was a tourist's satisfaction with the tourist attractions and services. They recommended telling with the mouth-to-mouth attention to others through social media and interpersonal communication, which were according to the Reid's finding and Reid (Reid & Reid, 1993). Kozak & Rimmington (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000) and Petrick and Bamman (Petrick & Backman, 2002), who discussed the increased satisfaction of tourists, causing the tourists returned and recommended others to travel in that tourist destination 3) local economic tourism contributed the better economic, improving the standard of living, creating more employment, generating income that was beneficial to the national and local economy that according to the Rich's finding C. (Ritchie, J., 1988), Kaiser & Helber (Kaiser & Helber, 1978) and Saranya (Saranya Warakulwit, 2015) found that the success of tourism determined the enhancing of economic, standard of living, employment and income which contributed to national and local economic. 4) To preserve the resource environment, sustainable tourism emphasized managing the benefit of resource, reduced the negative impact on resources and the environment, maintain the tourism resources including the ancient sites and antiquity which according to the Tourism Canada (Tourism Canada, 1990), Shirley Eber (Shirley Eber, 1992), Muller (Muller, 1994) and Holden (Holden, 2008) found that sustainable tourism emphasized managing the benefit of resource, preserved and balanced the resource, reduced the excess consumption, reduced the negative impact on resources and the environment of tourist attractions and environmentally friendly, did not destroy the environment, maintain the environment, ancient sites and antiquity to remain in good and suitable condition, improving the landscape to be cleaner and more order, preserve with care and do not destroy the value of historic tourist attractions and community could live together with the environment. 5) Social justice was an equal treatment for tourists without discrimination that was according to Miller and Engle (Miller & Engle, 2011), Fleischacker (Fleischacker, 2005) and Ruitenberg & Vokey, 2001, (Ruitenberg & Vokey, 2001) found that all individuals were been treated with equality and the right for protection. The fair treatment and legal enforcement for all without discrimination in protection including Thai and foreign tourists must be treated equally in law enforcement by government official. 6) The tourists had responsible for culturing, local tradition and the nature of tourist attractions, respected the place and paid attention to the environment that according to United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2017) and the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM, 2010) found that a responsible tourist

had response in culture, traditions and nature in tourist destinations around the world to reduce conflicts between tourists and local people. Things should be done or not when traveling abroad, to respect the place and environment, made an impression, respect and learn each other and 7) The tourism enhanced the quality of local life, income, employment, happiness, standard of living, the satisfaction of health and local environment that according to Argyle (Argyle, 1996) McIntosh & Goeldner (McIntosh & Goeldner, 2000) and Kim (Kim, 2002) found that the quality of life was determined by sufficient household income, employment, health, happiness, the satisfaction of health and community and local standard of living.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. To create awareness and the consciousness of local people to realize the importance of ancient sites and antiquities that were hundreds of years old and registered as a few world heritage sites from all countries in the world. The local people must respect the place of the ancient monument and had discipline for living in residence with ancient sites to maintain the world heritage.

2. To develop the plan of the transportation routes in the historic park to be more convenience and safety for tourists, made confidence and impression to the tourists, traffic management and adequate parking area including the signs and facilities.

3. The promotion policy of sustainable tourism in PhraNakhon Si Ayutthaya should be done continuously, especially when provincial and local administrators were changed. The facilities must be adequate and not far away such as the bathroom should be done by local community, lack of care on archaeological sites which were preserved for a pleasant and relaxing by private and local community involvement.

4. The operations in historic sites must comply with the criteria, conditions and requirements of UNESCO in order to maintain a world cultural heritage.

5. The infrastructures were improved in order to facilitate tourists and the quality of local people life that operated by local administrative organizations to take care, especially improving the landscape of the city to be cleaner and more orderly organized.

6. Tourism activities were promoted to stimulate tourism expense, especially the night market contributed the increasing of spending and accommodation in Ayutthaya.

7. Government agencies, especially provincial office, had integrated clearly plans in historic tourism for achieving the sustainability, communicated to understand each other in the province and doing activities in the same direction.

8. The agencies that involved the tourism had to avail information, understanding and the impact to tourism trends and any problems to the perception and understanding of the local leader for beneficial tourism driving.

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