

FACTORS AFFECTING THAI TOURISTS' APPRECIATION OF BAN CHIANG MUSEUM, UDON THANI

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ABSTRACT

Abstract— The research studies ‘factors affecting Thai tourists’ appreciation of Ban Chiang Museum, Udon Thani. The research samples were the Thai tourists visited Ban Chiang Museum. Surveys, group meetings and non-participant observation were used to obtain data. The study found tourists were satisfied with the visit and components of museum played crucial role to such satisfaction.

Keywords— Thai tourists, Ban Chiang Museum, Udon Thani

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered as the largest industry. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) had predicted that in year 2020, there will be twice amounts of tourists travel around the world or more than 1,500 billion. World Bank had also forecasted that the growth of the developing countries will be increasing at least 4 % each year, the industrialized countries will increase 2.5 % per year. Until today, there are many factors effecting the future of tourists’ behaviors such as the factors of politics, biology, economy, technology and society. The future tourists may change their behaviors in tourism product consumption, travel frequency, attractions, special services assistance and tourists’ expectations. From those changes will impact to the tourism industry as UNWTO had predicted the numbers of tourists in the future, there will be the intra-region tourists more than 1,200 million.

Udon Thani is a province in the upper northeast region of Thailand. Its topography is mostly peninsulas and mountain ranges are combined to create the variety of natural diversity. The “Phu-Phan” mountains lie across the north to the south of the province as the natural boundary line to the neighbor province. It is also far from the “Khong River”, which separate Thailand and Laos People of Democratic about 50 kilometers. As many countries in Asia that the river basins will create many civilizations, Ban Chiang was one of the ancient civilization aged more than 5,000 years. The traces of ancient humans found in Thailand shows the development of wisdom, the tools invented to help their living and helped create the social function. Ban Chiang National Museum established for collecting the information, wisdoms, materials, antiques, relics and objects which involve with the local community and people. Also, the culture of any ethnicity usually offers the local tradition, heritage and pass on to the next generation.

When mentioning about the museum, it is not only the exhibition, but the knowledge that the audiences will receive and absorb the historical legacy and also its culture will unite people in the society to adapt to the modern world with their roots and ethnic identities. The museum is not only the place to collect and categorize ancient objects as we used to understand but its roles are the place where can offer knowledge and arouse audiences of creativity in order to develop multi-disciplinary. So that, museum is the power pot to change the society to become the learning society.

Ban Chiang National Museum locates at Ban Chiang Sub-district, Nong Han District, Udon Thani Province, Thailand. It is the important source for historical information of the northeast region of Thailand. Department of Fine Arts had excavated the Ban Chiang’s archeology sites between 1974 – 1975; from the evidences showed that it was the civilization aged around 1822 – 4600 B.C. UNESCO had registered Ban Chiang as the Historical World Heritage on December 1992 in Tunisia. The Ban Chiang National Museum is the place offer knowledge, enjoyment and link to other tourism attractions so that tourists from other places can understand the local ways of life and learn the local cultures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Objective

This study aims to study the factors that affecting Thai tourist's appreciation towards Ban Chiang National Museum, Udon Thani Province, Thailand.

2. Methodology

This study was a mixed method between quantitative and qualitative research. The samples were Thai tourists who visited Ban Chiang National Museum by using purposive random sampling and accidental sampling as follows;

2.1 Government Agents: Provincial Administrative Organization and Sub district Administrative Organization were used with purposive sampling of 30 members with informal structured interviews.

2.2 Thai tourists who had visited Ban Chiang National Museum: the samples were used by accidental sampling with the calculate formula of Cohen at 156.66 sample but the researcher used 160 samples.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The Ban Chiang National Museum is non-profit organization, it is service to public and society development. The museum is open for collection, conservation, research, knowledge dissemination and exhibition. It aims to be a place for exhibiting the objects and offering knowledge through the evidences of ancient humans and environments, under the systematic administration, show the development of culture, especially the wisdoms and society conform concluded other scattered archeology sites in the northeast of Thailand. According to Pruksa Geawsarn and Arun Kongrunchok (2015), the strategies from the marketing mix are very important either products, services, prices, distribution channels, promotion, people, service process and physical evidence in the service consumption process.

The results of the study of factors affecting Thai tourists' appreciation towards Ban Chiang National Museum are the local uniqueness as the antiques architecture. There are 2 main sections of the exhibition.

Section 1: locates at the right of the main entrance, in the area of Bho Sri Nai Temple. It is the first open archeological museum and a permanent exhibition. It exhibits the excavation, which can be seen of objects buried in soil.

Section 2: locates at the left of the main entrance, the building exhibits the history and culture of Ban Chiang's civilization as well as the tools of ancient technology and other ancient objects which were exhibiting in America. Ban Chiang National Museum has the admission fee of Thais for 30 baht and foreigners for 150 baht. It is open daily during 08.30 – 16.30. The price of souvenirs are appropriate and tourists can travel to the museum by private vehicles or public bus. Inside the building, there are facilities and amenities for tourists such as information service center, shops and toilets.

The Ban Chiang National Museum features 2 buildings, which are 1) "Sri Nagarindra" building offers admission tickets, information service, meeting rooms and circulate exhibitions and 2) "Gulya Nivadhana" building is the main exhibition include with 9 minor exhibiting sections as follows;

1. "King Bhumibol and Ban Chiang". This locates at the right of the main entrance, in the area of Bho Sri Nai Temple. It is the permanent open exhibition shows the process of excavation of ruins and found objects buried in soil. The audiences may study the archeology excavation process, most of the objects found were utensils which were buried with the bones. It presumed that the ancient habitation of Ban Chiang's civilization, the beliefs and tradition of burial ceremony seemed to bury under the place where they were living or not very far from where they lived. In the period of excavation, it was founded of the pillar holes, pottery, charcoals, and other utensils. They found the traces of grave and painted pottery scattered near the community, this exhibition also exhibits about King Bhumibol, who had visited in 1972 and brought the cooperative with other organizations to study the Ban Chiang Archeology Sites and other sites in Thailand.

Figure 1
"King Bhumibol and Ban Chiang" exhibition



2. The exhibition shows about the administration and a study period of excavation focused on the main events, highlights and significance people who participated in the excavation. It is located at the left of the main entrance. The building also exhibits the history and culture of Ban Chiang, as well as the exhibition which had exhibited in America. Besides, inside the section 2 contains the exhibition, lecture room, and cinema room for study resources. At first, Ban Chiang was a village with the locals did not pay any attention to the debris of painted pottery which were found easily, but when the archeologist had analyzed them, it turned out that those debris was the pre-historic evidences. So that the many archeological excavations have begun since 1967, the main evidences were 400 graves with bones and objects buried with the bodies and the traces of house pillar holes which marked as the important information to further study.

Figure 2
“Excavation Period”



3. The 3rd section exhibits the process of excavation from the archeologists during 1974 – 1975 such the category of objects and video interviews during the excavation.

Figure 3
“Excavation Process”



4. This section imitating the excavation holes during 1974 – 1975 and the audiences can visit and observe the process of excavation when the bones were found and the soil profile arranged by periods and time of excavation. Ban Chiang’s civilization had appeared around 5,600 – 1,800 years ago and the excavators used the dentist-like-tools to scrape the soil off the objects and the blower rubber to chase out soil debris.

Figure 4
“Excavation Holes”



5. This section exhibits the objects found from the Bho Sri Nai Temple excavation site, categorized by 3 periods of Ban Chiang’s culture, such as the painted pottery, ornaments, beads, stones and metals.

Figure 5
“Bho Sri Nai Temple Objects”



6. This section exhibits the imitation of the ancient village of Ban Chiang civilization, which imitating that period atmosphere and environments.

Figure 6
“Ban Chiang’s Civilization”



7. This section exhibits the disappear of the Bronze Age, adapted from the exhibitions shown in America and Singapore. It explains the study of archeology in Southeast Asia and the discovery of Ban Chiang’s Bronze Age.

Figure 7
“The Disappearing of the Bronze Age”



8. This section exhibits the Ban Chiang Community as the world heritage site in culture in 1992 and shows the evidences of its civilization until present.

Figure 8
“Ban Chiang World Heritage”



9. This section exhibits about the scatter of Ban Chiang’s culture, it also shows the objects found nearby the excavation site since 1972 and objects found in Sakhon Nakorn’s basin (Udon Thani, Sakhon Nakorn and Nong Khai)

Figure 9
“Ban Chiang’s culture in Sakhon Nakorn’s basin”



Figure 10
“Ban Chiang’s culture in Sakhon Nakorn’s basin”



Figure 11
“Ban Chiang’s culture in Sakhon Nakorn’s basin



CITATION

The satisfaction of Thai tourists who have visited Ban Chiang National Museum in the administration and attractions attributes are satisfactory. The section which is the permanent open exhibition at the right side of the main entrance in the area of Bho Sri Nai Temple, where exhibits the process of excavation is also satisfactory for tourists. The components of museum influencing tourist satisfaction such as the exhibition shows about the history and culture of Ban Chiang’s civilization, as well as ancient tools, ancient objects and the exhibition that had been exhibited in America and Singapore are satisfactory. The accessible to its museum is also satisfactory because it is far from the town about 55 kilometers by using the highways number 22 (Udon Thani – Sakhon Nakorn Highway) and the museum’s signs are clearly to be seen.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has studied only Thai tourists, so that the further research should change the sampling because it can be compared in terms of marketing promotion in the future or for developing policies to develop the tourism attractions and integrating with other tourism development plans.

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