



PROCEEDINGS OF  
**The IRES**  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



ate: 16<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 | Venue: Zurich, Switzerland

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PROCEEDINGS OF  
**THE IRES**  
**103<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**ZURICH, SWITZERLAND**

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**Organized by**



**Date of Event**

**16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

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Plot No- 161, Dharma Vihar, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

Mail: [info@theires.org](mailto:info@theires.org), [www.iraaj.in](http://www.iraaj.in)

Publisher: **IRAJ**

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**Type set & printed by:**

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## **EDITORIAL**

It is my proud privilege to welcome you all to the TheIRES International Conference at Zurich, Switzerland. I am happy to see the papers from all part of the world and some of the best paper published in this proceedings. This proceeding brings out the various Research papers from diverse areas of Science, Engineering, Technology and Management. This platform is intended to provide a platform for researchers, educators and professionals to present their discoveries and innovative practice and to explore future trends and applications in the field Science and Engineering. However, this conference will also provide a forum for dissemination of knowledge on both theoretical and applied research on the above said area with an ultimate aim to bridge the gap between these coherent disciplines of knowledge. Thus the forum accelerates the trend of development of technology for next generation. Our goal is to make the Conference proceedings useful and interesting to audiences involved in research in these areas, as well as to those involved in design, implementation and operation, to achieve the goal.

I once again give thanks to the Institute of Research and Journals, TheIIR, TheIRES for organizing this event in Zurich, Switzerland. I am sure the contributions by the authors shall add value to the research community. I also thank all the International Advisory members and Reviewers for making this event a Successful one.

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# THE IMPACT OF TOURISM ON LOCAL COMMUNITY FOLLOWING THE CASE STUDY OF WAT SIRI PHUTTO (KHAMCHANOD), BAN DUNG, UDON THANI

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**Abstract** - The study on the impact of tourism on local community following the case study of Wat Siri Phutto or Wat Kamchanod, Ban Dung, Udon Thani aims to investigate the potential of local tourist attractions to increase the number of tourists in that area. This study is survey and qualitative research. The findings show that the impact of this case on local community is that the increasing number of visitors who believe in superstition is causing garbage problems and destructing the ecosystem of Kamchanod forest. The area of Wat Kamchanod is a small island with peat swamp forest whose floor rises upon being seasonally flooded. This type of landscape is called "Sa Nom" by locals and Kamchanod is a spring area where taraw palms densely grow. Therefore, the researchers are interested in studying the tourism situation at Wat Kamchanod in terms of the impact on economy, society and environment. The results are expected to be utilized as a guideline to manage and improve local tourism, increase incomes of locals and conserve environment to meet the concept of sustainable tourism.

**Index Terms** - Impact of tourism, Impact on local community, Kamchanod

## I. INTRODUCTION

Buddhism has played an important part on Thai society for hundreds years. Temples have become the center of community and the Buddhist monks considered as the representative of the temple have become a spiritual leader who has a great influence on faith and cooperation of locals. Also, temples are the place for religious ceremonies and practices and enlighten Buddhists. In addition, temples are the hub of valuable fine art related to architecture, sculpture and painting in which the artists depict the remarkable features of Buddha's teaching. The Buddhist art is notable in fineness and is utilized to encourage Buddhists to practice Dharma which help purifies and gentles their mind. Therefore, not only is Buddhist art in the temples considered ideal art but it also is valued in supporting high morality. Currently, the temples apparently are the hub of cultural heritage and multidisciplinary wisdom since ancient times. The monks play an essential role in conserve, inherit and utilize the religious ritual and other activities in Thai local community.

Udon Thani is a province located in northeast Thailand where the topography is plateau with mountain ranges creating the variety of nature. Most area in Udon Thani is flat or lowlands called plains. Considered as a natural border, Phu Phan mountain range lies from north to south dividing Udon Thani from other provinces. In addition, Mak Khaeng Stream flows through Amphoe Muang Udon Thani and is far from international natural border i.e., Mekhong River. Udon Thani also has Dharma tourism routes e.g., Wat Pa Ban Tat, Wat Phra Phutthabaht Bua Bok, Wat Pa Pu Kon and Wat Kamchanod. These religious destinations attract the tourists to visit and worship holy objects and holy places as well as famous monks. Religious places

include religious sites i.e., the buildings where sacred objects are placed, the structure or consecrated space where individuals or a group of people such as a congregation come to perform acts of devotion, veneration or religious study, and the building where the monks reside. The areas of religious places are divided into several sections according to the purpose of area uses. Religious tourism places include the sites or the buildings which are related with religions. Wat Siri Phutto or Wat Kamchanod with the natural landscape like an island covering 20 Rai and connecting three Tambon including Wang Thong, Ban Muang and Ban Chan is one of the remarkable tourist attractions in Udon Thani. Isaan people believe that Kamchanod is a holy land according to an ancient myth saying that Phaya Srisutthothanak was a person who created Mekhong River and used a sacred well in the heart of Kamchanod forest to connect between the netherworld or the underground kingdom of mythical Phaya Naga and the earth. It is also believed that Nagas can impersonate to be humans and live on the earth on the period of the waxing moon and transform to Nagas and come back the netherworld on the period of the waning moon. Kamchanod, a floating forest island, is well-known for its mystery; especially, the myth of the land of Nakin City and the Kingdom of King of Nagas. The area of Wat Kamchanod is a small peat swamp forest whose floor rises upon being seasonally flooded. This type of landscape is called "Sa Nom" by locals and Kamchanod means a spring area where taraw palms or Chanot trees densely grow. However, there is no taraw palms found in areas around Kamchanod forest, which is very usual and not appeared in other areas in Thailand. Kamchanod is believed to be a holy land of King of Nagas because it is the gate connecting between the netherworld and the earth according to the myth of Mekhong River. People living along this

river respect this area a great deal because they worship King of Nagas due to their culture and belief. Therefore, Kamchanod apparently reflects the relation and the interdependence between natural landscape and local culture.

In addition, the mystery about ghosts in Kamchanod is nationwide famous and got attention from people across the country. In 1987 a four-strong projectionist team arrived early evening on the island and set up their open-air cinema equipment in a clearing, exactly as the mysterious caller had requested. At four in the morning the outdoor theatre finished and the crowd disappeared just as suddenly as they had arrived. The cinema crew packed up their equipment and headed back to Wang Tong where villagers knew nothing of the event, and nobody had heard the loud speakers booming either. All four men realized that their movies had been viewed by a large gathering of ghosts. The movie was made in 2007 based on this tale in which Kamchnod forest is linked to the belief and ghosts.

As a result, the researchers are interested in considering the current tourism situation at Kamchanod because of the fever of Thai soap opera about the Queen of Nakees who fell in love with human, which attracts ten thousands of visitors a day. Mr. Suwat Kerndee or Grandfather Khiew, the host of Chao Pu Srisuttho ceremony claimed that the faith that flows in Kamchanod was from the holiness of Chao Pu Srisuttho which brought thousands of visitors to worship him. However, the increasing number of the visitors leads to garbage problems and destructing the ecosystem of Kamchanod forest. Currently, related government organizations are seeking preventive measures to deal with this problem. However, it is essential that locals and the visitors help conserve this forest and inherit the mystery of Kamchanod.

## II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To consider the current tendency of tourism at Wat Siri Phutto or Wat Kamchanod, Ban Dung, Udon Thani.
2. To investigate the impact of tourism on local community in terms of economy, society and environment.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Concept of Ecotourism and Cultural Tourism

Ecotourism is a new form of tourism and in English there are several terms sharing the same meaning as ecotourism including nature tourism, biotourism and green tourism. However, all tourism types refer to sustainable tourism. The 1990 Globe Meeting in Canada defined sustainable tourism as "tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. The objective of sustainable tourism is to

retain the economic and social advantages of tourism development while reducing or mitigating any undesirable impacts on the natural, historic, cultural or social environment." In addition, sustainable tourism is driven under the limit of nature and is aware of the participation of locals in social, cultural and traditional concerns related to the tourism. Sustainable tourism provides crucial economic incentives for habitat protection. Revenues from visitor spending and economic benefits are often channeled back into nature conservation or capacity building programs for local communities to manage protected areas.

Chalita Inchai (2012) conducted the study on Tourism Awareness Toward Conservation of Tourism Resources in Mae Sa Waterfall, Mae Rim District, Chiang Mai Province and found that personal factors of visitors including genders, ages, education levels, occupations, tourism experiences in natural tourist attractions and information gained created various tourism background and awareness toward conservation of tourism resources because personal factors are related to physical, emotional, social, intelligent, proficient components having a great influence on various behaviors of individuals.

The Ecotourism Society (1991) defines ecotourism as "the responsible travel to natural areas and historic sites that does not change or destruct values of the ecosystem while offering economic opportunity leading to conserve natural resources and sustains the well-being of the locals." Western (1993) redefined and shortened the definition of ecotourism by The Ecotourism Society as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the locals, and involves interpretation and education."

Therefore, it is clear that marketing is a remarkable tool in filtering types and quality of tourists to promote tourism in terms of qualitative tourism rather than quantitative tourism. The quality obviously leads to sustainable tourism and current marketing promotion and advertising are run by Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

### B. Theory and Concept Related to Cultural Tourism

World Tourism Organization defined cultural tourism as the movement of persons, aroused by cultural factors, to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs. The main or concomitant goal is to visit the sites and events whose cultural and historical value has turned them being a part of the cultural heritage and religious belief in that community. European Center for Traditional and Regional Culture or ECTARC mentioned to cultural attraction typology of cultural tourism as follows:

1. Archaeological sites and museums
2. Architecture, buildings and historic ruins

3. Art, crafts, sculpture, festivals and events
4. Music and dance
5. Drama and entertainment
6. Language and literature study
7. Religious festivals and pilgrimages
8. Complete culture and sub-cultures

Following the guideline to plan development strategy of cultural tourism above, it is concluded that the most important factor in planning to develop tourism is the participation of locals to share ideas and requirements to upgrade the community to cultural tourist attractions. In addition, the cooperation between locals and private sector as a specialist is also necessary. Cultural tourism aims to learn from other people and consider ourselves. The feedback can be shown in various forms and the perception of people is different depending on several factors e.g., knowledge and experience.

Phusit Phukamchanoad claimed that there were ten of study about social and culture context for tourism management they believe it is the location of ancient Naga and supernatural beings. People perform several religious activities related to it, especially the worship of Naga. Kamchanoad is covered by Chanoad trees. The shrine of Grand Srisutto is the No. 1 attraction in the region. Since Kamchanoad is a very interesting area, people try to introduce it to tourists. However, before promoting it commercially, a close study about culture and social content in the region should be performed first. The ideal tourism management is that it should 1) be owned by the community 2) local people participate and share their ideas and make decision 3) develop self-esteem 4) improve quality of life 5) preserve environment 6) maintain local tradition and culture 7) create internal and external learning between local and tourists 8) respect different beliefs, cultures and dignity 9) provide income for local people 10) spread income into infrastructures

In brief, cultural tourism is tourism activities in which the visitors want to experience real culture, realize different ways of life, learn simplicity of lifestyles of locals and exchange their knowledge and ideas with locals e.g., exploring art and culture, participating in festivals of local community and studying tradition and belief inherited from generation to generation as well as religious myths. Also, festivals held in tourist attractions should reflect the history of that community.

### C. Concepts Related to Analysis on Tourism Capacity

Boonlert Chittangwattana (2006) defined tourism elements as tourism capacity in several aspects i.e., tourist attractions, convenience and safety in accessing tourist attractions, security in life and belongings of visitors while traveling, and facilities that support tourism.

The study or the analysis on tourism demand which is

the investigation on the tendency of tourism expansion e.g., the estimate of the number/ types of visitors travelling to such an area based on prediction, estimation or forecasting. There are several demand model methodologies and analysis depending on objectives and purposes of the study; existing database used as data inputs for analysis e.g., Delphi data, time series methods; and structural models (population size, distance to market, income levels and measures of quality). The study on tourism demand shows the change in the number/ types of tourists visiting that area. The related factors include price changes, public relations, competition, quality improvement and increase of facility to support visitors and other demand shifters.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

This study is survey research and qualitative research conducted to investigate the impact of tourism in terms of economy, society and environment. The population and the sample are local people living in Kam Chanod Amphoe Ban Dung, Udon Thani Province; the government officers serving at Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO), Sub-district Administrative organization (SAO) and community leaders e.g., sub-district headmen and village headmen; business owners; and Thai and foreign visitors. The samples interviewed in this study were selected by using two methods including purposive random sampling and accidental random sampling as follows:

A. Local people living in Kam Chanod Amphoe Ban Dung, Udon Thani Province; the government officers serving at Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO), Sub-district Administrative organization (SAO) and community leaders e.g., sub-district headmen and village headmen; business owners (30 samples) were selected by using purposive sampling. The data were collected by using formal and informal interview.

B. Thai and foreign visitors were selected by using nonprobability sampling or accidental sampling. The sample size calculated by using power analysis of Cohen is 156.66 samples. Therefore, the researcher used 160 samples in this

## V. RESULTS

The findings showed that the support and the growth of tourism in Wat Siri Phutto or Wat Kamchanod have a great impact on community in terms of economy, society, culture and environment. After analyzing the data collected from the samples by observation and interview and the ones from literature review, it is found that tourism at Wat Kamchanod helps increase incomes of locals e.g., shops selling things for ceremony of King of Nagas Baci, shops selling small Buddha images and

souvenirs and shops selling food and drinks. In addition, Thai folk dancers in the ceremony of fulfilling vows to Po Pu Srisuttho and Mae Ya Sripathumma Nakarat are the students from Sri Kwuan Muang School, an opportunity expansion school in Ban Dung. The students founded a dancing art club that provides them and locals with more income. In terms of society and culture, more people tend to change their ways of life to urban society but still conserve local culture and wisdom which help contribute to their current career. Most of their income is from preparing and decorating Pa Kwan, which is a fine handicraft. However, the increasing garbage is leading them to encounter environmental pollution and water pollution.



Picture I. Kamchanod Forest



Picture II. The Entrance of Wat Kamchanod



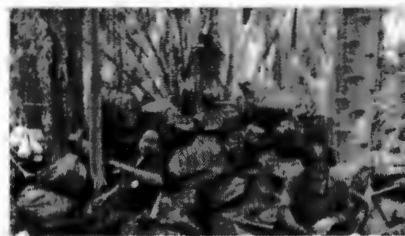
Picture III. The Management of Visitor's Order and Shops in the Temple



Picture IV. Parking for Visitors



Picture V. The Atmosphere and the Activities in the Temple



Picture VI. The Garbage Waiting for Waste Disposal

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Following the data analysis of the impact of tourism on local community following the case study of Wat Siri Phutto or Wat Kamchanod in Udon Thani, it is found that although tourism is playing an important role in upgrading economy, increasing incomes of locals and offering opportunities in careers, it also causes environmental pollution, garbage problems and inevitably changes ways of life of locals to urban society. In terms of economy, the increasing number

of tourists helps support the circular flow of economy in Kamchanod. In addition, it is suggested to improve the quality of service providers e.g., shops selling things for ceremony of King of Nagas Baci, shops selling small Buddha images and souvenirs, shops selling food and drinks and Thai folk dancers in the ceremony of fulfilling vows in order to provide the visitors with convenience. Kamchanod is a unique natural Dharma tourist attraction because it is an island that attracts many visitors who believe in superstition to visit Wat Kamchanod. However, the increasing number of visitors causes negative impact on environment, society and culture. Also, tourism causes environmental pollution and garbage problems. As a result, it is important to launch rules and regulations to control and prevent the problems from worship activities, shop management, parking management and waste disposal. The corporation between government sector and community is very essential to conserve cultural and natural resources and to take care of environment. Also, local organizations and

people in Kamchanod need to have good cooperation to maintain good culture and upgrade the quality of tourism, environment and society to increase the number of visitors in this holy place.

#### **SUGGESTION**

The potential of tourist attractions in local community should be upgraded to support sustainable tourism.

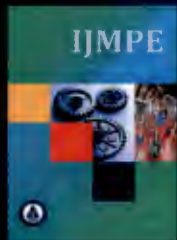
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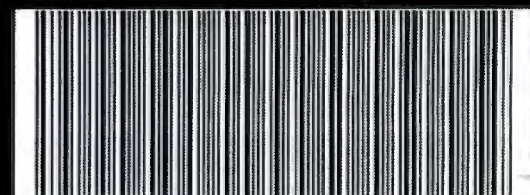
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