



คุณลักษณะของมัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นสำหรับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศในประเทศไทย The Attribute of Local Guides for Ecotourism in Thailand

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Abstract

This study explored the attributes required for local guides conducting land ecotourism in Thailand. The purpose of the study was to identify the attributes necessary for local guides at land ecosystem tourist sites and classify them according to the 3 principle qualities of tourist guides, including knowledge, personality and attitude, and skill. The researchers applied multi-methods as well as quantitative and qualitative data analysis. According to the 30 sets and structured interviews with 10 key informants from organizations related to tourism in Thailand, the research revealed that local ecotourism guides require different attributes than general tourist guides. Significantly, they must have knowledge of the region and be able to pass on knowledge of the local identity. Local guides require knowledge of cultural history and local traditions, and ecotourism concepts and management. The occupation necessitates honest, moral and ethical personalities, as well as effective communication skills to give detailed explanations about the environment.

บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้เป็นการศึกษาคุณลักษณะของมัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นสำหรับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศในประเทศไทย เพื่อกำหนดคุณลักษณะที่สำคัญของผู้ที่จะทำบทบาทหน้าที่เป็นมัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นในแหล่งท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศทางบก ซึ่งผู้วิจัยกำหนดคุณลักษณะเป็น 3 ด้าน คือด้านความรู้ ด้านบุคลิกภาพและทัศนคติ และด้านทักษะซึ่งใช้วิธี multi-methods โดยมีทั้งข้อมูลเชิงปริมาณและข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพโดยใช้แบบสอบถามจำนวน 30 ชุดที่เก็บข้อมูลจากมัคคุเทศก์เชิงนิเวศที่มีประสบการณ์ในการนำเที่ยวไม่ต่ำกว่า 5 ปี และการสัมภาษณ์ Key informants จากองค์กรที่เกี่ยวข้อง จำนวน 10 คน พบว่า คุณลักษณะของมัคคุเทศก์เชิงนิเวศที่เป็นมัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นควรมีความแตกต่างกับมัคคุเทศก์โดยทั่วไป ความรู้ด้านที่สำคัญที่สุดคือความรู้เกี่ยวกับท้องถิ่นของตนเองและถ่ายทอดด้วยลักษณะที่ใช้ความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของท้องถิ่น ความรู้ที่มัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่นควรมีคือความรู้ประวัติศาสตร์วัฒนธรรมและประเพณีท้องถิ่นในพื้นที่

ความรู้เกี่ยวกับหลักการและการจัดการการท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศ คุณลักษณะด้านทัศนคติและบุคลิกภาพที่สำคัญอย่างมากที่สุดคือ ควรมีความซื่อสัตย์ มีจริยธรรม ส่วนทักษะที่สำคัญคือด้านสื่อความหมายทางธรรมชาติ

Keywords : Tourism, Ecotourism, Local guide

คำสำคัญ : การท่องเที่ยว, การท่องเที่ยวเชิงนิเวศ, มัคคุเทศก์ท้องถิ่น

1. Introduction

Nowadays, environmental problem and deterioration, and the decrease of natural resources are unsolved and accumulated problems (Stansuk and Pattaratuma, 2005). In Thailand, from the survey of the earth surface of the regional forest, year 2012-2013, it found that there is only 102 million rai, accounted for 31.75, which decreased from 33.44 compared to 2011 (Isranews Agency, 2014). The cause of the deterioration of the natural resources is partly from tourism industry. This is because of the lack of consideration and unity in the tourism management in general, tourism development, and the natural resources preservation (Khawsa-ard et al, 2007; Srisattarattanamat, 2008; Noknoi et al, 2010).

However, tourism development is necessary for the developing countries which have tourism as a main strategy to develop the countries since the tourism development does not only directly lead to tourism industry and region development but also encourages the economic growth in the countries (Chancharat, 2011; Promburom et al, 2009). For Thailand, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) set the ecotourism as the policy in 1996 by allocating the budget to support ecotourism development projects. Moreover, for cooperation networks activities and guides have been established to form Community Based Ecotourism (CBT) which will eventually lead to efficiency preservation and help generate income for the community (Gilder and Le

Quire, 2009). Ecotourism which is based on the nature observation, presenting natural and cultural diversity of each unique region will finally lead to the sustainability of the ecosystem. Ecotourism has the value in country development as it is friendly to the environment and aims to develop the economy of the community (Mihai, 2005; Barkauskiene et al, 2013).

At present, the meaning of ecotourism is the tourism which is responsible for nature by providing a sustainable preservation which will finally lead positive effects on the local people. Also, it is about the natural and knowledge translation (TIES) including the learning of the local workers and the visitors. According to The International Ecotourism Society (2015), the main principle of ecotourism is to provide an opportunity for a local community to participate in sustainable tourism from the development to the related activities (Butcher, 2006; Emphandhu, 2007; Drumm et al, 2004; Boonkeaw et al, 2011). Anyway, the major role that people in community should take part in is becoming local guides who can translate the nature and culture of their regions to their visitors. This will lead to the development of the knowledge and that enhances the natural resource preservation of the community (Sarobon, 2004; Drumm et al, 2004).

A local community should be encouraged to take care of its resources more enthusiastically. Local people should also use their knowledge and experience in local environmental resources creatively by distributing

such knowledge to tourists by conveying the meaning through nature and culture which are the identity of their locality. People in the community can communicate such knowledge and experience to visitors by taking the role of local guides which will make them feel proud and realize the value of resources in their area more. (Boonkeaw et al, 2011)

The most important question is what the significant attributes of people who will become the

local guide are and how they are different from the qualities of the guides in general. Thus, this research aims to examine and define the suitable attributes of ecotourism local guides. However, land ecotourism and marine ecotourism are different, and there are many communities in Thailand that are located near the forest borders, so this study focused only on the attributes for local guides of land ecotourism.

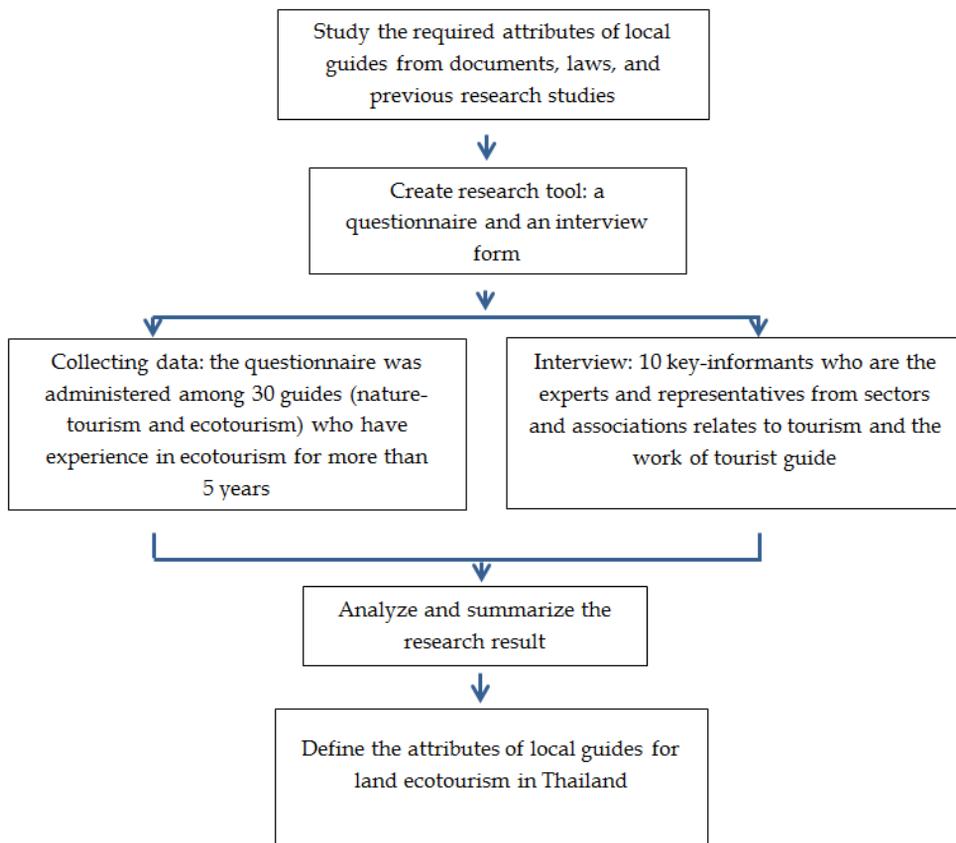


Figure 1. Research framework

Review Literature

The International Ecotourism Society (2015) revised definition is “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves interpretation and

education” with the specification that education is to staff and guests.

Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. This means

that those who implement, participate in, and market ecotourism activities should adopt the following ecotourism principles 1).Minimize physical, social, behavioral, and psychological impacts. 2).Build environmental and cultural awareness, and respect. 3).Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts. 4).Produce direct financial benefits for conservation. 5).Generate financial benefits for both local people and private industry. 6).Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates. 7).Design, construct and operate low-impact facilities. 8.Recognize the rights and spiritual beliefs of the Indigenous People in your community and work in partnership with them to create empowerment.

Diamantis (2004) mentioned 3 types of ecotourism activities, which are:

1) Activities which rely on nature such as bird and animal watching; 2) activities which require adaptation to nature such as camping and 3) activities which do not rely so much on nature such as swimming. As a matter of fact, ecotourism will be successful when it is based on the concept which emphasizes the merging of the objective to conserve nature and environment and the aim to develop community together. Mutual benefits of local community members are very important. Ecotourism relies on agreements with businesses inside the community which must have mutual intention in the determination of their own business standard as well. It should also concern local stakeholders who are independent from the government's suggestion, especially when it comes to the development of policy to protect natural areas. Ecotourism should support local

businesses which are related to the community. (Bandara, 2009; Nuchphuang, 2010)

One important role that allows community members to present their knowledge and experience as well as the stories between themselves and natural environment as a service for tourists is the role of a tour guide who can convey the meaning to tourists through local nature and culture. According to the Act of Tourism and Guide Registration 2008, a guide is a service provider who usually takes tourists to places and provides service by giving advice and knowledge in various aspects to tourists. For ecotourism, to gain knowledge about first-hand experience in nature through the telling of stories with awareness of conservation will positively create impression and will influence the raising of awareness regarding the value of natural resources according to the objectives of ecotourism.

2. Materials and Methods

Multi-methods, which consisted of questionnaire and structured interview were used in data collection to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data for analyzing to address the research question due to the objective of the research. Before collecting data, the researcher inspected the research tools by testing the questionnaire and analyzing its reliability applying Cronbach theory. The reliability was at 0.73. Then, the questionnaire and the question structure for the interview were examined by an expert to evaluate the content consistency and the appropriateness of the questions. The researcher modified and applied to the data collection. The data between 2010 and 2011 were collected. The scope of the study was determined. Regarding the area scope, this research

aims to study land ecotourism only. As for the content scope, this research focuses on studying the attribute of land ecotourism guides in Thailand only.

2.1 Data collection and data analysis

The key-informants in this research were divided into 2 groups:

1) The key-informants were the sample group of 30 ecotourism local guides who have experiences in ecotourism more than 5 years. According to the statistic of the registration of specialized guides who have operated land ecotourism tours (trekking) in Thailand since 2008 until now, there are only 181 registered guides in total. (Office of Tourism Development, 2007) Therefore, the researcher determined the sample size using minimum value which would allow the distribution to be close to the normal curve of 30. Also, simple random sampling was used to determine questionnaire respondents.

2) 100 key-informants for the interview are the local people who have experiences, proficiency, and roles related to tourism and the work of tourist guide from relevant sectors and associations: 3 representatives from Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2 representatives from Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 1 representative from The Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA), 1 representative from Professional Guide association Thailand (PGA), 1 representative from Thai Ecotourism & Adventure Travel Association (TEATA), 1 representative from The Tourism Academic Association (Thailand), and 1 representative from Advisor on Standing Committee of Tourism and Sports

2.2 Quantitative data collection and data analysis

The researcher classified data into 3 parts: from the sampling ecotourism guides who are working

with tourist companies which have the ecotourism programs by gathering information from the companies, the ecotourism guides who are working in the national parks, and the ecotourism guides who are working in ecotourism tourist sites. Then, the questionnaires were sorted out to group the ecotourism guides who have more than 5 years of experiences in ecotourism to by the application of the SISS program to gain the average, and the percentage.

2.3 Qualitative data collection and data analysis

To collect the qualitative data, the researcher contacted organizations related to tourism and tourist guides to make appointments with the target, who are able to provide significant information and interviews. Then, the researcher conducted the content analysis, classified and summarized the information according to research objective.

3. Results and Discussion

The research results were classified to 2 parts:

3.1 Part 1 The quantitative data analysis resulted from questionnaire of ecotourism guides who have more than 5 years experiences. It found that:

About the respondents

36.6% of the respondents were 31-40 years old, 30.0% were 21-30 years old, 16.7% were 51-60 years old, 10.0% were 41-50 years old, and 6.7% were more than 61 years old. 69.9% of the respondents were working in national parks and 23.4% were working throughout Thailand.

Two-third of the respondents stated that they had the experiences in ecotourism for 5-10 years. One-third had the experience in ecotourism more than 10 years. 25.7% of the respondents stated that they were

the ecotourism guide in trekking, 20.8% in shedding animals, and 19.8% in camping. Moreover, two-third of the respondents stated that they do not have tourist guide license.

The development of local tourism guides

58.6% of the respondents identified that they had never participated in tourist guide training while 41.4% had participated in the training organized by universities, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, and Thai Ecotourism & Adventure Travel Association. Six of them joined the training twice, three of them said they joined it once, and two of them participated in the training for 5 times. 63.6% of the persons who participated in the training said that the latest training was 3-5 years ago. Only one respondent stated that the latest training was the past year.

Local guides as the ecotourism guides

93.3% of the respondents agreed to encourage people in their local communities to become the ecotourism guides in their own regions because they would love and value resources, and have more knowledge of the regions and more proficiency in

tourism. Also, they stated that local people who became the local ecotourism guides should have the distinguished attributes, roles and responsibility from general guides, especially the local identity should be focused.

Attributes of the local guides for ecotourism

The researcher divided the attributes of the local guides for ecotourism into 3 aspects: knowledge, skill, and personality and attitude. According to the points of view of the respondents, it found that most of the respondents thought an important knowledge for the land ecotourism guide was knowledge of history, culture, and tradition in the tourist region (average 4.17). Next, it was the knowledge of ecotourism principle and management (average 4.13), knowledge of tourism and tourist site in the province and nearby provinces (average 4.07), knowledge of capacity of tourism (average 4.03), knowledge of impact of tourism (average 3.93), knowledge of tourism and tourist site in Thailand (average 3.90), knowledge of tourists' behaviors (average 3.80), and knowledge of culture differences and exchange (average 3.70) respectively.

Table 1. Required knowledge of local guide for ecotourism

Required knowledge	X	SD
Knowledge of tourism and tourist site in Thailand	3.90	0.85
Knowledge of tourism and tourist site in the province and nearby provinces	4.07	0.69
Knowledge of tourists behavior	3.80	0.71
Knowledge of culture differences and exchange	3.70	0.84
Knowledge of ecotourism principle and management	4.13	0.68
Knowledge of impact of tourism	3.93	0.64
Knowledge of capacity of tourism	4.03	0.62
Knowledge of history, culture, and tradition in the tourist region	4.17	0.65

Most of the respondents thought that the first necessary skill for land ecotourism guide was skill in convey the nature interpretation (average 4.62). Next was skill in problem solving (average 4.30), skill in safety (average 4.27), skill in ecotourism activities (average

4.00), skill in English language and first aid (average 3.90), skill in dialect language (average 3.83), skill in entertainment (average 3.53), skill in using entertainment equipment (average 3.47) and lastly, skill in foreign languages other than English (average 3.28).

Table 2. Required skill of local guide for ecotourism

Required skill	X	SD
Skill in ecotourism activities	4.00	0.64
Skill in entertainment	3.53	0.73
Skill in convey the nature interpretation	4.62	0.56
Skill in dialect language	3.38	0.70
Skill in foreign languages (English)	3.90	0.62
Skill in foreign languages (others)	3.28	0.70
Skill in safety	4.27	0.52
Skill first aid	3.90	0.71
Skill in problem solving	4.03	0.60
Skill in using entertainment equipment	3.47	0.87

Most of the respondents agreed that the first required personality and attitude for land ecotourism guide was honesty (average 4.83). Next was communication, morality and ethics (average 4.53), being healthy (average 4.50). The third was positive attitude towards

service jobs and being intelligent in problem solving (average 4.37), leadership (average 4.30), being up-to-date (average 3.90), and the last one was having good personality (3.38).

Table 3. Required personality and attitude of local guide for ecotourism

Required personality and attitude	X	SD
Good personality	3.38	0.83
Positive attitude towards service jobs	4.37	0.56
Communication	4.53	0.63
Being up-to-date	3.90	0.61
Leadership	4.30	0.60
Honesty	4.83	0.46
Being healthy	4.50	0.63
Morality and ethics	4.53	0.63
Being intelligent in problem solving	4.37	0.56

Furthermore, most of the respondents defined in the question that the most influence attribute on the success of ecotourism guide operation was skill in transferring, communicating and conveying the nature interpretation, including morality and ethics.

3.2 Part 2 The qualitative data analysis resulted from interviewing 10 experts who have knowledge, proficiency, and roles in tourism and tourist guide from relevant sectors and associations.

It found that:

The development of the local guides

Overall, the development of tourist guides in Thailand has been well conducted. However, the quality, the lack of personnel in some parts, must be improved. The most important problem concerned with quality was most of the personnel valued more benefits than service mind. Thus, for the member of ecotourism guides inadequate because there has been only a few curriculums and experts. Besides, there has not been enough support from the government sector and responsible agencies because they have still adhered to mass tourism. The main problem of personnel development is the guide of old generation lacked of enthusiasm to give services and develop themselves. They have been motivated by benefits more than by the sense of service mind. The operation of working functions was not systematic and the guides lacked knowledge of ecotourism.

The development project on allowing community to take part in becoming the local guides in ecotourism was good and very important because people in

community loved and understood the environment in their own region so they should have participation in making decision. Anyhow, the development should proceed gradually, focusing on the sustainable management and the dignity of people in the community rather than the earnings. Subdistrict Administrative Organization must be the mainstay and the scholars should take part in educating, focusing on the integration tripartite between the scholars, government sectors, and entrepreneurs, and studying the market and target groups clearly. After all, the study revealed that the problems and obstacles of the development was because of the lack of knowledge among the community, the cooperation between sectors, and the awareness of this issue.

Attributes of local guide for ecotourism

Local guides for ecotourism should love and understand the context and be aware of the identity of their region. Moreover, they should have ethics, good personality of being a host, skills on communication to narrate stories, love providing services, and have an adequacy. Furthermore, they should have knowledge of ecotourism, impact of tourism, understand how to communicate to avoid possible negative impacts. Their presentation should focus on the sense of natural appeal, for instances by using the local dialect to the tourist. The prior purpose of their jobs should not aim at money or the competition but presenting the unique identity of the region. All of these aims will distinguish them from the general guides. Local guides who are the local people would be more capable than the ones from other regions.

Table 4. Context of the local guide development in Thailand and attributes of local guides from the experts' points of view who are representatives from sectors related to tourism and tourist guide in Thailand

Aspects of the context	Example of the reflection from the experts
The performance of local guides	<p>☺ "...tour agents, normally, don't take the tourists to the place where they don't get benefits or where they have no connection with. Everything depends on benefits."</p> <p>☺ "...the difference between the old generation and the new generation guides are sense of being active and skills. The new generation guides are active without skills while the old generation guides have skills but not active enough."</p>
Guide development	<p>☺ "...there's a high proportion of general guides. There're very few specific curriculums and only few educational sectors of Rajabhat institutions which develop curriculums for tourist guides. I understand that the entrepreneurs will appoint a person for trekking, bird watching, and rock climbing..."</p> <p>☺ "...there are many training programs for general guides but only a few for the specific one or none of them. Recently, there was the law amending but this law matter was not proposed anyway. It is the ones who have the gold card, which allow them to work all over the country, but they should be qualified from the program specified by the committees, not from Tourism Authority of Thailand. The bronze card doesn't require foreign language. Holding the gold card requires of foreign language. The pink one is only for local area, provinces, and tourist sites. However, when having the card, they are not allowed to work out of the area. The reason of why people don't want to have training to be a local guide because the law states that the golden card allows the guide to work all over the country..."</p>
Context of local guide	<p>☺ "...The obstacle of the development of the local guides in Thailand is the less cooperation of concerned sectors. Each one produces personnel in each field but they don't have enough information to do so. There are a small number of local guides, some are illegal and have no tourist guide licenses though they know a lot more than the ones who have the licenses. The issue concerning is not properly taken into consideration for the possessing of a license. Many guides don't know their roles. Instead, they know what and how to explain."</p>

	<p>☺ “...It is possible if local guides and general guides cooperate for fairness earnings , it can be a fair play. The allocation of earnings should be fair. It’s not a good idea if the local guides can’t do anything.”</p> <p>☺ “...Local guides came from local people. There are a lot more people from the northeast communities who want to change their communities to the tourist sites for trekking, rafting, and other tourism activities.”</p>
Attribute of local guide	<p>☺ “...Local guides for the specific areas don’t need to know everything, only some key information is enough, especially information of their own areas and the couple connected provinces. We need to find the solutions of the problems for them...”</p> <p>☺ “...Theoretically, training local people to become the guides, their culture should be a priority...”</p> <p>☺ “...Local guides need to learn more about foreign language which is more important for them. What they need to know is the culture, philosophy of old people. They must be able to explain about local people’s way of life or how they do rice farming. Do not be ashamed to speak dialect...”</p> <p>☺ “...I don’t think local guides need to have the same path as the professional guides. They should only have the awareness of being a good guide, be a good Thai citizen to let the visitors love Thailand and Thai people...”</p> <p>☺ “... They must believe in knowledge and the value. Without positive attitudes and will to present their attitudes, it is worth nothing. Skills and attitudes are important equally...”</p> <p>☺ “...Local people know their communities very well. The only thing we should top up is good strategies in transferring knowledge because the interpretation of local is important ...”</p> <p>☺ “...Local people tell the facts from their own experiences, This is different from what general guides do. Local guides tell about the flood from their experiences and what their instance feelings. The narration will be different from what the outsiders do. Also, when they complete their jobs successfully, they will tell the stories with their pride...”</p>

4. Conclusion

Local guides for land ecotourism in Thailand should have the attributes as follows:

Knowledge

The most important knowledge is the knowledge of local community history, cultures, and traditional, which represent the identities and the values of the communities the tourists would like to sense. In this aspect, the experienced guides and the experts should collaborate with each other. This is also in accordance with the basic principles of UNEP and WTO, 2002: 82 referred in Butcher (2006) that people in the communities who have knowledge of resources values and local culture by participating in ecotourism development will be able to contribute effectively on community preservation and, thus, brings benefits to the community. Also, it is in accordance with the tourist guide standard of the Department of Tourism. (2015) However, the scope of knowledge of local ecotourism guides will be narrower since they focus only on local areas and their neighborhoods. The second important aspect of knowledge is knowledge of ecotourism principles and management. However, to develop this knowledge to the people who would become the local guides, the issue concerning the lack of experts need to be. Especially, the experts who are knowledgeable to provide training programs on ecotourism is number of this limited, and this results in the lack of the ecotourism local guides. This finding is confirmed by the statistic of the new applicants for tourist guide licenses during 6 April 2008 to March 2015 from Department of tourism. It was found that there were very few guides for specific areas; only 181 persons registered to be the trekking guides,

264 persons to be natural tourist site guides, and 160 persons to be local culture guides (Office of Tourism Development, 2015). The next important knowledge required for local guide was knowledge of tourism and tourist site in a certain province and the nearby provinces for the benefits and stories presented to the visitors. The nearby areas which connect to each other always have the related historical and cultural stories. This related story would generate an understanding in the relation of the areas and becomes the new interesting tourist site. This has a positive impact on establishing the networks to develop the region tourism and to promote the earnings sharing obtain from tourism instead of competing with each other because each region has its own different unique identity. Besides, the knowledge required for local guides is knowledge of capacity of tourism and knowledge of impact of tourism. The knowledge is very useful for cooperating and controlling the number and the behavior of the tourists to avoid the damage of the natural resources and create the satisfaction of the tourist and the local people at the same time. However, there is possible to face the problem on developing these specific areas of knowledge as same as the knowledge of ecotourism principle mentioned earlier. The last three attributes on knowledge required for ecotourism guides are knowledge of tourism and tourist sites in Thailand, knowledge of tourist behaviors, and knowledge of culture diversity and exchange, to be able to analyze the needs and diverse behavior of tourist appropriately (Suwanbandit and Adulpattanakij. 2005). These are the general knowledge which local guides should have to integrate with other contexts to present and communicate the meaning to impress the tourists.

Personality and attitude

The most important attributes of being local guides for this field includes honesty, morality and ethics, which most experts agree that these attributes are currently the problems. The experienced guides and the experts state that the current guides focus more on the benefits than the positive attitudes to provide services. This idea is in accordance with Somjaiwong (2003) and Panarun (2003). Furthermore, ecotourism local guides ought to be the persons who are healthy and confident to lead the ecotourism activities for the tourists safely. Thus, they should be healthy and are well prepared for the sudden problems (Somjaiwong, 2003; Suwanpimol, 2005). In other words, local guides should be intelligent in problem solving, have leadership trait and be up-to-date. The local guides should have the personality that has been formed from the regional context, not the international personality. This attribute is similar to the ethical standards of guides in general which are determined by Tourist guide standard (Department of Tourism, 2015). Nevertheless, it is more consistent with local works.

Skill

The most important skill of local guides for ecotourism is skill in translating the sense of nature to their visitors. It is interpretation skills which the experienced guides and the experts agree and confirm that it is the beneficial skills for the success of tourism business because ecotourism also provides learning from ecosystem study (Ratana, 2004). In addition, skill of problem solving, safety concern, and specific skill in ecotourism activities are important because some of the activities have a risk so the guide must be always aware of the risk and safety, including having the skill

in first aid (Hall et al, 2003). Skill in using English language, in the experienced guides' point of view is another important skill but not the priority compared to other skills while the experts consider having ability in communication in English moderately is good but it is not as a necessary requirement as the general guides need to fulfill. The skill attribute is totally different from the operational skill standard of guides in general as determined by Tourist guide standard (Department of Tourism, 2015) since the operation of local ecotourism guides puts an emphasis on the service in response to the objectives of ecotourism in specific areas, not to transport tourists and provide them with other facilities which are the tasks of normal guides.

Suggestions

From this research, the researcher has the suggestions as follow.

1. Since ecotourism focuses on obtaining the knowledge of nature, culture, environment, tradition, and way of life of community in the region which have the history relate to each other, the tourist information and activities are different depending on the regional context. The general guides, sometimes do not have enough information, knowledge, and the connection with the areas like the local people do. Also, the number of ecotourism guide in Thailand is limited. Thus, there should have more campaigns to promote and support local people to take part in local tourism and become local guides. The local sectors should have training program on the required knowledge and skills and motivate local people to love and be proud of their identities and take advantage of being a local guide to present the identity of the communities. Having more local people participate in ecotourism will generate

the income distribution and positive impact on natural resources preservation. Also, it helps to sustainably maintain the tradition, way of life, and local culture.

2. One of the problems that cause the inadequacy of ecotourism guides is an inadequate number of training organizers. Mostly, the training is for the general guide programs because there are not many experts on ecotourism guide. To develop the quantity and quality of the related sectors and organizations, the suitable programs should be set by integrating the knowledge from both within and outside the region. For example, the sectors concern with tourism and tourist guide, sector concerned with preservation, and the association and educational institution should organize training programs which focus on the knowledge and primary skills. Then, the sectors and skillful experienced personnel in the regions should support them with the knowledge and skills from their direct experiences to be in line with identity of the areas.

3. The community in the region comprehends some knowledge deeply more than other people. To develop local guides, it would be good to require the people who will become the guides to apply the knowledge related to the area. They should be able to present the uniqueness and charm of the local areas, not only follow the standards of the general guides. Presenting the facts of the regions can introduce the values of community's identity to impress the visitors.

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