

Cross Culture Communication Effecting to Volunteer Tourism Tourist Activities in Chiangmai, Thailand

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to study the cross culture communication effecting to volunteer tourism tourist activities in Chiang Mai province. The purpose of the volunteer tourism needed tourists to get the new experience. All the activities were created for tourists to make experiences valuable. Besides, this research was to study about the cross communication between the volunteer tourists and locals. The study was to prove that making good communication crossing would make volunteer tourists understand the culture. The data were collected through a set of questionnaires with 384 volunteer foreign tourists who travelled to Chiang Mai and then were analyzed by using multiple linear regressions. It was found that the cross communication effected to volunteer tourism activities in Chiang Mai province. It was positively correlated at 0.01 significant levels.

Keywords: Volunteer Tourism, Volunteer Tourists, Cross Culture Communication, Chiang Mai Province

Background and Significance of the Problem

Nowadays, there are some tourists groups that have different target of travelling. These think that travelling is the way to seek new experience to fulfill life which is called volunteer tourism (Methawee, 2013). The numbers of volunteer tourists have been increased in the last 20 years. In tourism research and marketing (2008) found that volunteer tourists are increasing 1.6 million per year and it also found out that there are one million volunteer tourists from United States (Lough, 2010: 1). The volunteer tourism is more like travelling for helping people in poverty countries (Corti and Marola, 2010). Volunteer tourists travelled to Thailand for community volunteer service. They communicated between tourists and locals through cultures which combined with thinking, behaviors, languages, gestures, and tones. Those were the important elements of cross communication which was hiding under

tourism industry. Pimpaporn Suwattikul (2003) told that some tourists will remain the same identity while travelling because they will always curious about the different cultures. When tourists adhered to their cultures and did not adapt to locals, this could make locals unsatisfied especially in popular city which called “Multiculturalism”. It could define that the cross culture communication with different society. If tourism industry providers have good culture communication skill, it could be the main factor that makes tourism gets more high quality and this could make tourists impress easily. On the other hand, if tourism industry providers do not have good culture communication skill, it could change preparedness destination to be unknown.

It was found that, one third who travelled to Thailand, Chiang Mai province had been popular among volunteer tourists. (Keese, 2011: 265)

Most of volunteer tourists would stay and did volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province about 8 weeks or less. They chose to do volunteer activities thru volunteer foundations or private agencies in Chiang Mai province. (Lough et al, 2011)

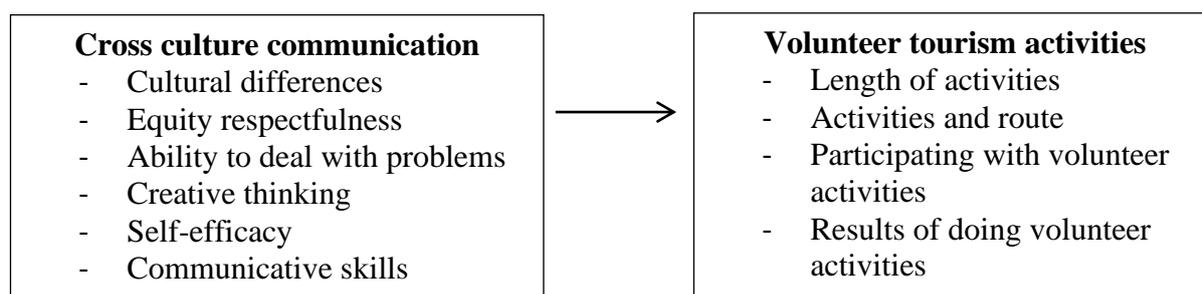
The motivations of volunteer tourists were finding new experiences, seeking new friends along travelling and participating with locals. The participation was the definition of volunteer tourism which would have activities with locals in different cultures and thoughts. Rawewan Proyrungroj (2017) gave the definition of the cross communication that it is the key success for helping to develop volunteer tourism and it could make satisfaction between tourists and locals.

Consequently, the researcher would like to find the empirical answer about the cross culture communication effected to volunteer tourism tourist activities in Chiang Mai province. The result could make the new body of knowledge about the cross communication effected to volunteer tourism activities. Also, it could guide volunteer foundations and private travel agencies improve activities about the volunteer tourism, make understanding about the volunteer tourists needed and lead to the suitable activities.

Objectives

The objective of the research was to study about the cross communication effected to volunteer tourism tourist activities in Chiang Mai province.

Conceptual Framework



Literature Review

Brown (2008) mentioned that the cross communication can help us learn the different cultures and prevent the conflict from miscommunication. The communication from different places can be easily misunderstood from cross culture communication. Communication is the basic skill for human to learn about lifestyle and other cultures. Due to the fact that human have many dimensions and it can be categorized. Cross culture communication can help understanding for self-adapting in new environment easier. Lustig and Koester (1993)

convinced that cross culture communication is the process of exchange and symbol. It can also make high expectation from the symbolic that express to another cultures and it can be lead to miscommunication.

Jennie Small (2016) stated that the volunteer tourism is to travel for community service and help others. In addition, Palacios C.M. (2010) said that it is the short travelling for finding new experience which includes working, studying, and leisure with some volunteer. Meanwhile, Callanan and Thomas (2005b) mentioned that volunteer tourism is alternative tourism combined with volunteer tourism. Tourists will pay for attending the program and spend vacation time to do a volunteer. During the activities, tourists will learn about the culture, lifestyle, and local wisdom as following picture;



Figure 1 Volunteer tourism modified from Callanan and Thomas (2005)

The research has set guideline for an analysis of cross culture communication based on the following aspect:

1) The cross culture consists of;

1.1) Culture differences: Earley et al. (2006: 51) stated that cultural metacognition make individual perception about the cross culture and can be analyze by himself. Polyota (2017) explained about the characteristics of a person who have metacognition; 1) able to explain about the different between cultures; 2) open-minded and able to take action with cross culture; 3) able to develop diverse thinking strategies in order to gain knowledge related to self-adaptation to cross culture; 4) able to plan, check, and learn from meeting with different culture people; 5) always enthusiastic to make relation with cross culture.

1.2) Equality respected: Phumchijzarnan (2018) confirmed that equality is multiculturalism which has dimensions to categorize social distance; 1) small-power distance: they believe that everybody is equal. Everyone can participate and express opinion even though they have different idea. This means that every position in the organization is equal; 2) large-power distance: hierarchy is obvious. The lower position accepts the distance for example, the title of the commander, the position is told who is controlled and under controlled.

1.3) Ability to deal with problems: The cleverness of culture is the ability to express the cultural diversity in cross culture such as racial differences, age interval, organizational culture, etc. The cleverness of culture is also show how to adapt and deal with the problems in differences environment. (Livermore, 2011)

1.4) Creativity: Hall (1981) stated that the increasing of cultural system context leads to the complicated finding solutions. The study of communication on different culture must be understood between sender and receiver. There are two main context cultures;

1.4.1) High context culture means people in or outside the society is highly different in the context. People in the society will participate and think that power is individual. High context culture can be express in creative way and it is under controlled by the society. People will

avoid making argument to embarrass them. They will make good relationship with each other such as Japan, Mexico, China, Korea, Thailand etc.

1.4.2) Low context culture means people in the society will have low communication, more individual, and fragile. They should be together for long term to trust. The communication will be straight from sender to receiver with the gesture. This community will attach importance to agreement. Defending will be used to argue. These society will have creativity, open-minded and interested in innovation such as Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Scandinavians, and United States (Jongsuksomsakul, 2016)

1.5) Self-efficacy: Van Dyne, L.; et al., (2012) mentioned that these people will be confident in doing activities in multicultural, able to manage stress; make relation with strangers including being good team work.

1.6) Adaptive interpersonal skills: Polyota (2017) stated that it is a stress management skill or it is a communication skill combine with public relation skill which can be perform to communicate with others.

2) Activities for volunteer tourism consist of:

2.1) Length of activities: Raymond and Hall (2008) said that volunteer tourists will have long length of stay in each destination including activities and seasonal. The culture might be changed during the activities.

2.2) Activities and routes: Wongkit et la. (2016) mentioned that most of volunteer tourists satisfied about the activities and places in Thailand. This is because foundations or agencies are professional and have many experiences. Moreover, Thailand has several beautiful atmosphere and environment with interesting culture.

2.3) Volunteer activities participation: Prapanpot (2015) stated that participating is the process of thinking, solving, making decision, doing, and analyzing with the activities. In this study, the participating will collect from sacrificing and devotional during the activities which is shown from the volunteer tourists.

2.4) The result of volunteer activities: Griffin (2013) found out that volunteer tourists will get valuable experiences, develop self-potential, participate with local community and make good relationship between tourists and locals.

According to the statements mentioned above, it can be concluded that variables used as important components in this study include: 1) cross culture communication including culture differences; 2) equity respectfulness-willing to listen to opinions of people having different culture and able to face with problems. The elements of the volunteer activities consist of length, route, and result from doing the activities.

Research methodology

Since the size of population in this research is big and uncertain so, the sample group size could be computed by using the formula of W.G. Cochran with the reliability level of 95% and the error level of 5% (Wanitbancha, 2011) and the sample group of 384 persons was obtained. The data were collected from November 2018 to April 2019 by using a set of questionnaires. It was constructed and based on concepts, theories, and related review literatures which were under controlled by the objective. The data were analyzed by Stepwise Multiple Regression.

Results

The analysis of cross culture communication effecting to volunteer tourism tourist activities, the activities were assigned to be dependent variables and six factors of cross cultures communication were independent variables consisted of; 1) culture differences 2) equality respected 3) ability to deal with problems 4) creativity 5) self-efficacy and 6) adaptive interpersonal skills. The data were analyzed by Multiple Regression with Stepwise. The

researcher would like to make reader understand what it is about, the symbols and abbreviations were assigned as follow;

R	means multiple correlation coefficients
R Square	means regression coefficient or forecasting
F	means Statistical values used in consideration
Adjusted R Square	means regression coefficient or predictive adjusted
Std. Error of the Estimate	means standard error of regression coefficient
Sig	means probability
*	means significance at 0.05 level
**	means significance at 0.01 level

The researcher assigned the symbols of dependent variables in volunteer activities as follows;

X1	means understanding between people
X2	means understanding in Thai culture
X3	means understanding of communication in Thai people
X4	means understanding about attitudes in Thai people
X5	means understanding in local culture that tourists do volunteer
X6	means interested in learning local culture at volunteer destination
Y	means volunteer activities

The result found that cross culture communication effected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province with statistical significant at 0.01 level. When considered independent variables individually found that;

1) The result of cross culture communication affected to volunteer activities 26.4% . The factors about the understanding between people revealed that the highest priority was given to volunteer activities 25. 60. Other factors were prioritized respectively including understanding in local culture that tourists do volunteer 24. 50% , understanding in Thai culture 22. 80% and interested in learning local culture at volunteer destination 18. 60% . However, the factor about understanding of communication in Thai people and understanding about attitudes in Thai people were not affected to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 1 The analysis of Stepwise Multiple Regression when added independent variables

Independent Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Sig.
X ₆	.433 ^a	.188	.186		.000 ^a
X ₆ X ₂	.482 ^b	.232	.228		.000 ^b
X ₆ X ₂ X ₅	.501 ^c	.251	.245		.000 ^c
X ₆ X ₂ X ₅ X ₁	.514 ^d	.264	.256		.000 ^d
R = 0.514 R Square = 0.264 F = 33.982					
Adjusted R Square = 0.256 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.7093					

Remark **p-value < 0.01

2) The result of equality respected affected to volunteer activities 25.20% with positive result in statistical significant at 0.01 level. It was found that individual respecting in differences between cultures affected to volunteer activities at 24.60% followed by practices with people of equal cultural differences affected at 23.90% . The factor about accepting opinions from people with culture differences affected at 19% . Meanwhile, the factor about education system and local law did not affect to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 2 The result of Stepwise Multiple Regression when added independent factors

Independent Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
X ₁	.438	.192	.190	.000 ^a
X ₁ X ₄	.493	.243	.239	.000 ^b
X ₁ X ₄ X ₃	.502	.252	.246	.000 ^c

R = 0.502 R Square = 0.252 F = 42.585
Adjusted R Square = 0.246 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.72133

Remark **p-value < 0.01

3) The factor about ability to deal with problems affected to volunteer activities found out that it was positive result in statistical significant at 0.01 level. It revealed that it was increasing of ability to deal with problems affected to volunteer activities at 27.70% . The result of adapting with the situation in culture differences factor affected to volunteer activities was 27.20% , ability to deal with problems factor was 25.30% and the ability to develop self-potential when working in culture differences was 20.40% . While the other two factors; ability to fix the problems and understanding the changing culture differences did not affect to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 3 The result of Stepwise Multiple Regression showed factors which affected to volunteer activities

Independent Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	10.005	.539	
X ₅	.392	.141	.177
X ₁	.495	.126	.204
X ₆	.334	.150	.144
X ₄	.311	.154	.128

R = 0.534 R Square = 0.285 F = 37.758

Adjusted R Square = 0.277 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.68477

Remark **p-value < 0.01

4) The result of creativities affected to volunteer activities found out that it was positive result in statistical significant at 0.01 level. It revealed that it was increasing of creativities affected to volunteer activities at 26.20% . The result of reasonable and valuable ideas increased to 26.10% . Following by the ability of finding answers in multiple ways factor affected to volunteer activities increased to 24.60% , the new idea affected increasing to 17.50% . The other three factors; profound and able to develop ideas, active thinking and details thinking did not affect to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 4 The result of Stepwise Multiple Regression when added independent factors

Independent Variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
X ₁	.421	.177	.175	.000
X ₁ X ₅	.500	.250	.246	.000
X ₁ X ₅ X ₃	.516	.266	.261	.000

R = 0.516 R Square = 0.266 F = 45.995

Adjusted R Square = 0.261 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.70424

Remark **p-value < 0.01

5) The result of self-efficacy affected to volunteer activities found out that it was positive result in statistical significant at 0.01 level. It revealed that it was increasing of self-efficacy to volunteer activities at 30.40%. The factor about understanding targeted volunteer increased to 29.90% followed by attitudes toward volunteer activities increased to 28.10%. The ability to adapting with destination increased to 22.20%. For other three independent variables were courage to express opinions when working with people of different cultures, working with others in different cultures, and emotional controlled under pressured situation did not affect to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 5 The result of Stepwise Multiple Regression when added independent factors

Individual Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
X ₁	.473	.224	.222	1.74831	110.203	.000
X ₁ X ₆	.534	.285	.281	1.68044	75.882	.000
X ₁ X ₆ X ₃	.552	.304	.299	1.65973	55.380	.000

R = 0.552 R Square = 0.304 F = 55.380
Adjusted R Square = 0.299 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.65973

Remark **p-value < 0.01

6) The analysis of communication skill affected to volunteer activities 20.90% in statistical significant at 0.01 level. The factors of self-disclosure and acceptance of identities of people with cultural differences affected to volunteer activities increased to 20.30%. Moreover, the good relationship with other tourists and locals with cultural differences increased to 19.40%, ability of adapting with cultural differences increased 16.40%. However, the ability of sending and receiving message to make understanding to cultural differences did not affect to volunteer activities in statistical significant.

Table 6 The result of Stepwise Multiple Regression when added independent factors

Independent Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
X ₅	.408	.166	.164	.000
X ₅ X ₃	.445	.198	.194	.000
X ₅ X ₃ X ₄	.457	.209	.203	.000

R = 0.457 R Square = 0.209 F = 33.424
Adjusted R Square = 0.203 Std. Error of the Estimate = 1.76990

Remark **p-value < 0.01

Discussion

According to the research results mentioned above showed the factor of cross culture communication affected to volunteer activities can be described as follow;

1) The culture differences affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. It is found out that cultures in every country are different. Interpersonal communication is important and need to learn the differences. Human can adapt themselves to every culture by using cross culture communication effectively including the understanding about other cultures by using effective communication skill (Chotirosthiti, 2013). It conformed to Sue (2003) that when volunteer tourists have free time, they will try to catch up and communicate with local people to learn about the culture. S. Lo and Y. Lee (2011) interested about cultural learning and communicating between tourists and locals while doing activities. This is because volunteer tourists will have social interaction and

flexibility. Including Proyrungroj (2014) mentioned that learning local culture will help volunteer tourists understand the root of locals.

Moreover, the research also found out that understanding culture is important to create the activities for volunteer tourists. To be cleared, people will be curious about the unusual situation or differences in culture e.g. lifestyle. We do not understand about faithfulness in religion. The cross culture communication can help others understand about the culture and cross culture which is combined with Carter (2008) stated that the volunteer experiences will not only help the activities succeed but also it can make good relationships and learn about the culture through the activities. Hammersley (2014) mentioned that volunteer tourists must pay respect to the local culture and remind all the time that they are not experts in everything. Volunteer tourists are learning not helping. Callanan and Thomas (2005a) found that volunteer tourists need to learn about culture and community and return with full experience of volunteer including understanding and face with the differences of destination. Besides, the understanding between people affected to volunteer activities because everyone is different. Phaopoksatid (2000) and Corti I.N. and Marola P.N. (2010) agreed that the difference between cultures affected to decision making. Caria Barbieri (2011) found that volunteer tourism is the best way to gain experience for self-development and understand about different cultures.

2) Equality respected, in accepting the various opinions, affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistically significant at 0.01 level. It was accepted that the different opinion from different cultures is important. From the study of Summat (2016) about the factors influencing desirable characters for multicultural society of students found that the flexible and open-minded can make good relations between each other and it can develop to multicultural society. Yodkaew (2013) also stated that accepting and respecting the differences are the identity of "ASIAN" which is analyzed by cultural intelligence. Wanda Vrasti (2013) mentioned that the first target of multicultural study is to prepare the democracy in various cultures in society and accept other opinions. Aumer-Ryan, Hatfield, and Frey (2007) found that a person from multicultural prioritizes equality in love and relationships. We have to secure the different cultures and make it equal in every group. Also, the action to the different cultures people affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Naowabutr (2015) found that the activities help volunteer tourists learn the different cultures, understand each other, and accept the different such as race, religion, language and culture. Sripahol (2017) told that the different skills can help tourists learn new things, respect the different and keep the identity. Therefore, Reisiger (2009) stated that the self-adapting can be part of the activities. Alexander (2012) found that volunteer tourists learn a lot for example respect and accept the different. Freeman et al. (2014) and Benson and Henderson (2011) mentioned that these tourists succeed about learning how to respect other cultures and how to work with locals for example volunteer tourists from Germany and volunteer tourists from Nigeria. These two have wide gaps about the culture but they can respect each other and accept the different.

3) The ability to develop self-potential affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistically significant at 0.01 level. They will learn the strength and weakness of themselves when they get a mission (Tantiyabhinun, 2011). Benson and Henderson (2011) stated that volunteer tourists will develop their skills and potentials to do activities. Also, Alexander (2012) found that developing self-potential is the success key to do the activities. Li Ju Ming (2010) said that if the volunteer tourists can develop self-potential will be admired because being volunteer tourists will sacrifice time and money to find self-respect and ability to help others.

Furthermore, the ability to face with the cross culture communication problems affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Crossley (2012) found that it will help volunteer tourists from Western understand about the

poverty in community which is a challenged situation and it can turn to “happy poverty society”. Lin (2012) stated that facing to problems from cross culture communication can make new experiences to volunteer tourists and can adapt to any situations. Boon-aad (2009) studied about Communication and cultural adaptation of Thai participants in Work and Holiday Visas Thai-Australia found that self-adapting is based on the positive thinking in both studying and working. Everingham (2014) mentioned that self-adapting is the important part that can help volunteer tourists learn something new and fast. Lough (2011), Witayawiroj (2009), Anderson (1994), Karlsen (2012) also found the result that the self-adapting is important for tourists when they travel to different country or culture. If they can adapt with the culture, they will be happy with the travelling.

4) New creativity affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. Suanpleng et al., (2016) said that the creativity and enthusiastic person affected to activities. Coghlan (2012) mentioned that the creativity will help tourists solve the problems. Also, Vodopivec and Jaffe (2011) and Brown (2008) stated that the more creativities volunteer tourists have led to the way to solve problems because of the reasonableness. Alexander (2012) and Novelli (2005) said that the reasonableness should be in volunteer tourists.

5) Self-efficacy: the ability to adapt with community affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. Wearing (2001) found that understanding and learning way of life/local culture of a community where volunteer tourists are can make their volunteer-activities there be smooth and successful. Witayawiroj (2009) and Chotirotiti (2013) agreed that the culture differences can adjust perspective towards foreigners. It can make them stay in Thailand longer and happier. Kim (1994) stated that the reason of self-efficacy is communication skill which is the way to learn and understand the culture in that society. So, doing activities with locals is the best choice for volunteer tourists. Meanwhile, the good perspective also affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. Witayawiroj (2009) said that perspective will directly effect to self-adapting and it will support the multicultural to make activities more interesting and successful (Kunsil, 2012 and Zahra, 2006)

6) Communication skill in self-adapting with different culture affected to volunteer activities in Chiang Mai province and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. Chaipanha (2016) found that when tourists can do self-adaption, they will clearly see the real culture and easy to accept the different. Chantrangsua (2017) stated that creative communication is the best way to expand the new plan or activities in the future. The good relationship and communication skill will impact to the work Chonmasuk (2013) and Julsukon (2012) found that if there is good relationship in the office, it will reduce the conflict.

Disclosing and accepting the identities of different people in multicultural affected to volunteer activities and it is statistical significant at 0.01 level. It helps us understand the message. Phutrakul (2015) mentioned that disclosing is the key of communication between people through the right target and it can make people trust each other. Roengsak (2014) said that it can make people get to know who they are and make the communication partner communicate more targeted.

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