

การศึกษาความคิดเห็น
ของชุมชนท้องถิ่นที่มีต่อคุณค่า
ด้านการอนุรักษ์และการพัฒนาการ
ท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม
ของแหล่งโบราณคดีเมืองโบราณขี้จำปา
จังหวัดลพบุรี

Community's Perspectives Values
About Conservation and Cultural
Tourism: Sap Cham Pa Archaeological
Site, Lop Buri Province.

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**การศึกษาความคิดเห็นของชุมชนท้องถิ่น ที่มีต่อคุณค่า
ด้านการอนุรักษ์และพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม
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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาระดับความคิดเห็นของชุมชนท้องถิ่นที่มีต่อคุณค่าของแหล่งโบราณคดี เมืองโบราณ ชับจำปา จังหวัดลพบุรี งานวิจัยนี้เริ่มดำเนินการตั้งแต่เดือน มิถุนายน พ.ศ.2550 จนถึงเดือนพฤศจิกายน พ.ศ.2552 เครื่องมือวิจัยใช้แบบสอบถามในการวัดระดับความคิดเห็นแบบ Likert Scale เพื่อวัดระดับความคิดเห็นของชุมชนท้องถิ่นที่มีต่ออนุรักษ์ และการพัฒนาแหล่งโบราณคดีให้เป็นแหล่งท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมในด้านต่างๆ และวิเคราะห์ผลโดยใช้โปรแกรม SPSS เวอร์ชัน 10.1 ผลจากการศึกษาพบว่าชุมชนท้องถิ่นมีระดับความคิดเห็นในแง่บวกต่อการอนุรักษ์และการพัฒนาแหล่งโบราณคดีแห่งนี้เพื่อเป็นแหล่งท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม อีกทั้งยังพบว่าชุมชนท้องถิ่นให้ความสำคัญกับคุณค่าของแหล่งโบราณคดีด้านเศรษฐกิจสูงกว่าคุณค่าทางด้านวัฒนธรรมและคุณค่าทางการศึกษา

คำสำคัญ:

ความคิดเห็นของชุมชนท้องถิ่น คุณค่า แหล่งโบราณคดี

Abstract

The study focuses on the community's perceived values of an archeological site, Sap Cham Pa Archaeological Site in Lop Buri Province. The study was conducted from June 2007 to November 2009. The research methods used questionnaires survey which respect to cultural heritage tourism

development and conservation of an archeological site. The Likert scale was to rank the local perceptions on various aspects of tourism development and conservation. The data were analyzed using SPSS program Version 10.1. The result indicated that the local perspectives about the values of the site were generally positive. The economic value was consistently ranked much higher than the cultural and educational values.

Keywords:

Community's perspectives, Value, Archeological site

Introduction

Sustainably managed cultural heritage tourism can be a means to improve livelihood opportunities and promote the conservation of cultural attractions upon which tourism depends. The involvement of communities in tourism development is being promoted worldwide especially in developing countries such as Thailand (Cohen, 2001). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2011) states that cultural heritage tourism can enhance, nurture, and revive cultural heritage. However, the benefits of tourism at the community level can be undermined if the host community is not involved in the planning and management of tourism. Given that different people have different ways of viewing the values associated with cultural heritage in the context of tourism and heritage conservation, it is necessary to have broad public consultation and involvement with emphasis on communities that are direfully affected by development (Cole, 2006; Catibog-Sinha, 2010). Through genuine participation, the community members can be assured that their major concerns and issues are addressed (Hardy & Beeton, 2001).

Archeological sites are popular cultural heritage attractions (Smith, 2009). Archaeological sites and the artifacts found therein are important elements of a society's past culture and histories (Renfrew, 2000). They have symbolic, aesthetic, spiritual, historic, educational, research, and economic values (Mason & Avarani, 2002). These values provide both national and local

public awareness and cultural pride and identity. Through sustainable tourism development, archeological sites can help generate local, national, and international employments and revenues (Costin, 1991). All these values, both tangible and intangible, should be maintained and enhanced for the present and future generations in order to promote local pride and identity, enhance local economy, and increase public awareness on conservation.

Local perspectives especially of members of a community who are directly affected by tourism development within a destination, where culturally valuable heritage such as archeological sites are located, are necessary in tourism. This paper focuses on what the local community living around and adjacent to archeological site feel about the importance of the site in relation to their way of life as well as the benefits that they foresee if the site were to be developed as a cultural heritage tourist destination.

Sap Cham Pa Archaeological Site (henceforth SCAS) has interesting features and stories that could attract cultural tourists. SCAS is located at Sap Cham Pa sub-district, east of Tha Luang district, about 80 kilometers from Lop Buri Province in the central region of Thailand. It is 350 rais in area and has an altitude of 160 meters above sea level. SCAS assumes the shape of an inverted heart (Lertrit, 2003). Two parallel layers of moat structures, each 16 meters wide and 10 meters deep, surround the site. The moats are 20 meters apart, which may have been built as physical barriers to protect the ancient city from enemies and intruders (Figure 1). Some fragments of three small monuments are found in the site; these monuments are believed to have been used for religious ceremonies (Lertrit, 2004).

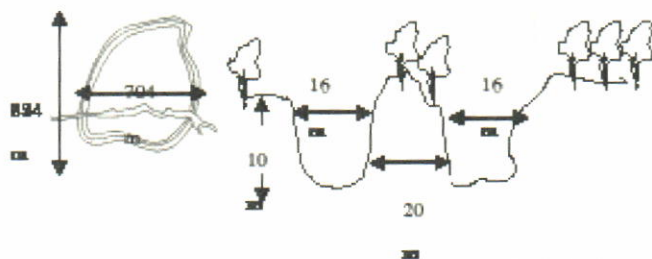


Figure 1: Perspective of the moats enclosing the SCAS (left) and the section perspective (right)

Source: Adapted from Openbase, 2008(left) and drawn by I. Sarttatat on August 28, 2009(right)

The cultural heritage significance of SCAS has to be preserved and its stories re-told to the present and future generations; tourism is a tool to highlight this significance and promote its conservation at both the local and national levels. The cultural heritage significance of SCAS is that it was discovered accidentally during the government's campaign to eradicate an agricultural pest. Later, the Regional Office of Fine Arts in Lop Buri and Silpakorn University collaborated in a scientific excavation of the site from which they recovered many important and ancient relics, such as grinding stone, Buddha image red stone, crouching deer, and south Indian inscription (Maleipan, 1973; Bhumadhorn, 1979). These archaeological evidences indicate the chronological age of the ancient city. The existence of the city can be divided in four periods, namely prehistoric and proto-historic period (2000 B.C. to ca.A.D.500); Dvaravati period (600-700 A.D.) (Maleipan, 1973; Bhumadhorn, 1979; Lertrit, 2003); Deserted or unoccupied period (10th- 19th A.D.) (Bhumadhorn, 1979); and present period (1900s A.D.) (FAD.4, 2006). It is believed that the strategic location of this ancient city made it an important trade exchange route between the central and northeastern regions of Thailand (Bhumadhorn, 1994; Lertrit, 2003). The artifacts collected from the site indicate that the early settlers of the ancient city traded with Indian merchants. Prior to World War II, Marshal Pibunsongkram ordered the establishment of a military town in Lop Buri province and the transfer of the capital of Thailand from Bangkok to Petchaboon province. During this period, non-Thai residents (i.e. Chinese) in Lop Buri province were ordered to settle east at and around the vicinity of the archeological site, which during that time was still unknown to exist (Pibunsongkram, 1997). A large portion of the forest that had overgrown and covered the ancient city was cleared for settlement and agriculture (Sujchaya, 1999). The new settlers while farming the land discovered some of the archeological remains of the ancient city now called Sap Cham Pa. Some 20 years later, the Royal Forest Department promulgated the National Forest Act of 1964. Consequently, Chai Badan district, where the archeological site is located, was declared a protected zone under the Chai Badan National Forest Act of 1969. As this archaeological site was within the



Chai Badan Forest, it is basically a protected site (Unyuang, 2000). Despite the enactment of the above-mentioned laws, the local farmers and residents have continued farming even expanding their farms and claiming land ownership (Boonyanant, 1999). The Royal Forest Department compromised in 1974 by allowing farmers to remain on their land under a 50- year lease agreement, that is, no private ownership was permitted (Lertrit, 2003).

Upon the discovery of the archeological site (SCAS) and to promote its cultural significance, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn was invited by Mr. Bhumadhorn Bhudhorn, the former chief of the Som Dej Pra Narai National Museum to visit SCAS on October 15, 1986. After her Majesty's visit to SCAS, conservation and archaeological research projects funded by national cultural heritage offices were implemented (Bhumadhorn, 1994). The Royal Forest Department up until the present has reforested the vicinity of SCAS as it has also been mandated to protect the site from illegal entry especially from thieves stealing antiquities for trade.

Thus, this paper aims to discuss the views of the local community (local farmers and residents) regarding their perceived values of SCAS as a cultural heritage site. Their views regarding the conservation associated with the development of the site as a cultural tourism destination were also determined.

Methods

A structured questionnaire survey was conducted from December 2007 to March 2008. A total of 217 respondents from the seven villages of Sap Cham Pa sub-district were available and willing to participate in this study. The perceptions of the respondents were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale to determine the level of importance attached to the following variables: (a) preservation of heritage for the future generations, (b) promotion of heritage as new tourist attraction, and (c) co-existence of conservation and tourism. The numerical values from the Likert scale were averaged and the corresponding standard deviations computed. The respondents' views regarding the perceived benefits of developing the site as a cultural heritage attraction were also

determined. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program Version 10.1 was used in the analysis of the data.

Result and discussion

The survey results are discussed below and presented into three parts: (a) socio-graphic profile of the respondents, (b) the local community's perspectives on conservation and tourism management of the archaeological site, SCAS, (c) the values of benefits from SCAS

(a) Socio-demographic profile

The majority of the respondents were females (60 %). The respondents ranged from 18 to more than 49 years of age. The main occupation of the respondents was farming (45%), and had no adjunct or supplementary income. The average family income of the majority of the respondents (28%) was less than Baht 10,000 per year, which is quite below the national average family income (The National Statistical Office of Thailand, 2009). The respondents had lived in Sap Cham Pa sub-district for some 11-20 years.

(b) Local community's perspectives on conservation and tourism management of SCAS

The results indicate that the local community had a positive attitude towards the conservation of SCAS and expressed agreement on the integration of tourism development and the conservation of the study area (Table 1). The community's agreement on how tourism and conservation of SCAS should be managed yielded an average Likert score close to 5 (strong agreement). More specifically, the respondents gave an average Likert score of 4.91 (S.D. $\pm$ 0.35) regarding the conservation of SCAS for the future generations; an average of 4.85 (S.D. $\pm$ 0.42) regarding the need to promote SCAS as a new tourist attraction in Lop Buri province, and an average score of 4.82 (S.D. $\pm$ 0.38), regarding the need to managed conservation and tourism simultaneously in SCAS.



Table.1. Local community's perspectives about conservation and tourism in

Items	n	Mean	S.D.
1.Should preserve for the future generations	215	4.91	0.35
2.Should promote as new tourist attraction in Lop Buri province	214	4.85	0.42
3.Should co-exist between conservation and tourism	217	4.82	0.38

¹ Likert Scale: 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, and 5 = strongly agree

The respondents felt that SCAS should be preserved to halt further destruction. The mere existence of SCAS in their locality has made them feel proud of their heritage, and stated that proper management of SCAS will give them opportunities to participate in various conservation initiatives, which can further enhance public awareness about cultural heritage conservation as well as a strong feeling of social unity. SCAS can, therefore, be instrumental in uniting the people of Sap Cham Pa sub-district, where relevant stakeholders including researcher s, experts, academicians, and government representatives can work together for a common good.

As a new cultural attraction in Lop Buri province, it can provide additional and alternative economic benefits at the community level. They all suggested that additional government support is needed for the development of the site as a tourist attraction. However, they believed that cooperation among stakeholders is necessary to make this idea a reality. The majority of respondents were in favor of the idea of integrating tourism and conservation in the management of SCAS, The co-existence of conservation and tourism can serve as a tool to preserve the cultural heritage value of the site while at the same time creates job opportunities for the residents.

(c) The values and benefits of SCAS

The respondents had several expectations with regards to the benefits that might arise from developing SCAS as a tourist destination. Figure.2 summarizes the perceived economic, cultural, and education values associated with the development of SCAS as a tourist destination.

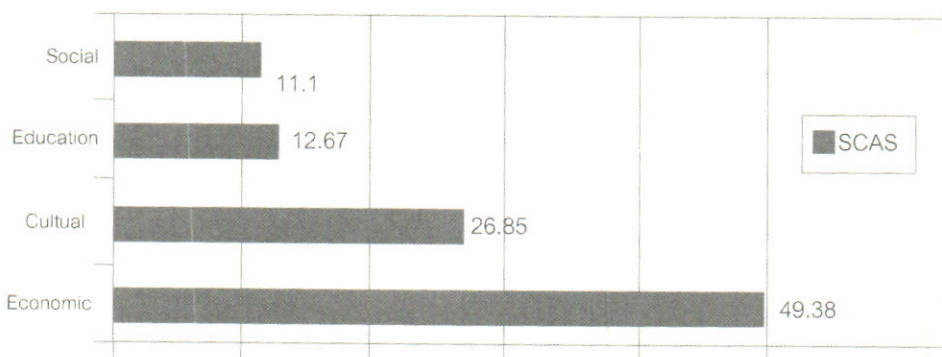


Figure 2: The community's perceived values of SCAS as a cultural heritage tourist destination.

Table.2: Benefits of SCAS to the community (n=multiple responses)Categories

Categories of Values	n	Percent
Economic Values		
More job opportunities	187	12.81
More government support for local community	182	12.46
Increased family income	180	12.33
More infrastructure development	172	11.78
Sub-total	721	49.38
Cultural Values		
Increased public appreciation of cultural heritage	201	13.77
Conservation of the cultural heritage site at the national level	191	13.08
Sub-total	392	26.85
Education Values		
Increased educational or learning opportunities	185	12.67
Sub-total	185	12.67
Social Values		
More cooperation among stakeholders	160	10.96
Other : increased motivation towards conservation would strengthen the relationships within the community	2	0.14
Sub-total	162	11.1
Grand Total	N=1,460	100.000

¹ Based on multiple responses from 217 respondents



As shown on Table 2 and Figure 2, the respondents (49.38%) believed that economic benefits are very important in the context of tourism development of SCAS. They expected that tourism can create job opportunities, increase family income, and improve their quality of life. The cultural value of SCAS as a tourist destination was considered important by 26.85% of the respondents as the site has the potential to increase public awareness of the cultural value of the site and generate more national support for conservation. The educational and social benefits of SCAS were ranked relatively low (11.1% and 12.67%, respectively) by the respondents even though several organizations and academic institutions have had initiated a few educational and research activities at SCAS. It seems that the educational benefits of SCAS have not quite filtered through the majority of the respondents, probably because they are not actively involved in these academic activities. Providing incentives to the local community to appreciate the value of SCAS should also be provided. Because the social benefits of SCAS were ranked low (11.1%), motivation and incentives of the local community to conserve the archaeological site may be inadequate. Thus, the local community should be given better incentives to ensure that they can truly appreciate the value of conserving SCAS both as a cultural heritage site and as a tourist attraction.

Conclusion

The local community residing near and around the Sap Cham Pa Archaeological Site had a positive attitude towards the conservation of the archeological site and agreed that the integration of tourism development and conservation is essential for sustainability. Based on the results of a 5-point Likert scale, the respondents, in the context of developing SCAS as a tourist destination, expressed the importance of (a) preserving heritage for the future generations, (b) promoting heritage features of SCAS as new tourist attraction, and (c) the need to simultaneously manage the site for conservation and tourism. The economic benefits that would accrue from the development of SCAS were high in the minds of the majority of respondents. The cultural value of SCAS as

a tourist destination was also considered important. It seems that the educational benefits of SCAS have not quite filtered through the majority of the respondents, probably because they are not actively involved in these academic activities. If SCAS were to be developed as cultural heritage tourist destination, it is necessary that both short term and long term goals be addressed. The involvement of all relevant stakeholders is crucial in all aspects of tourism management.

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