

FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH THROUGH CREATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM (C-CBT): A CASE STUDY OF BAN RUAM THAI VILLAGE IN KUI BURI NATIONAL PARK, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

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This research aims to achieve three main objectives: 1) to analyze tourists' travel motivations and actual recreational experiences, 2) to assess the potential of a potential tourist site to encourage the development of creative tourism, and 3) to offer proposals for creative community-based tourism (C-CBT) programs and management guidelines. The research utilized a combination of tools, including questionnaires, interviews, and potential assessment forms. The sample comprised 112 Thai and international tourists who completed the questionnaire, while the assessment that looked into the potential of the tourist destination in question with regard to creative tourism development, involved 30 participants, including scholars, Kui Buri National Park officers, members of Ban Ruam Thai CBT, and tourists. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with the Kui Buri National Park superintendent and the chief of Ban Ruam Thai CBT. Following this, a data analysis was performed using t-tests, descriptive statistics, and content analysis. The findings indicated that the primary travel motivation was 'exploring nature', while the other most frequent actual recreational experiences included 'seeking relaxation and calm', 'escaping work overload and crowded environments', and 'strengthening family bonds and shared values.' The comparison between travel motivations and actual recreational experiences revealed that 'prioritizing safety and comfort' was the only factor with a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$). Tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit were both rated highly. The potential assessment reported that the destination overall has a high potential for creative tourism development. Drawing from the gathered data, the study recommends C-CBT activities and programs, organized into four key themes: exploring wildlife; immersing in local culture; experiencing local-style leisure activities; and trekking along nature trails.

Keywords: Creative community-based tourism; national park; Thailand

1. INTRODUCTION

Ban Ruam Thai Village, situated adjacent to Kui Buri National Park in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand, used to be confronted with ongoing issues with elephants. The national park serves as a habitat for these animals which often venture into village plantations in search of food, causing significant economic damage to the local community. To address this issue, encouraging tourism in the area was introduced as a strategic tool to mitigate the impact of these conflicts. Therefore, through a collaborative approach, Kui Buri National Park allowed Ban Ruam Thai Village to actively participate in wildlife tourism management. Consequently, the villagers have been able to generate supplementary income by offering services such as local tour guiding and transportation services for wildlife enthusiasts. As a result, this encouragement of tourism activities has also played a vital role in enhancing local awareness about the importance of preserving natural resources. The presence of wildlife, particularly elephants, has become an indirect yet valuable source of income for the community, leading to an increased appreciation for conservation efforts. Consequently, the number of issues faced with elephants by the villagers has shown signs of improvement, with the number gradually subsiding. In response to this growing focus on tourism, the Kui Buri Wildlife Ecotourism Club was established as the village's primary tourism management center, further enhancing the community's involvement in sustainable tourism and wildlife conservation.

Due to the increasing influx of wildlife tourists to Kui Buri National Park, Ban Ruam Thai Village has identified opportunities for tourism product development aimed at enhancing visitor experiences and extending their length of stay. They have tried to accommodate this growing demand by establishing various community occupational groups and homestays, offering tourism activities centered around sharing knowledge with regard to local culture and products. Despite currently being in the initial stages of development, the village is proactively seeking ways to create products that more effectively align with the evolving preferences, interests and expectations of modern tourists. This aligns with the principles of creative tourism, which is a sustainable and innovative form of tourism that caters to contemporary travelers seeking immersive, culturally enriching experiences. Currently, in particular, creative tourism is adopted by many countries as part of their tourism development policies, which is part of a shift toward more participatory and authentic travel experiences (Benhaida et al., 2024; Dachum, 2013; Thaveeseng, 2012). One example of how Ban Ruam Thai Village has adopted creative tourism is the using of fertile ground to grow community-based products for tourists. Additionally, the villagers have devised sustainable agricultural management strategies in order to be more responsive to the demands and needs of the tourists. This scenario forms the basis of this research that explores the development and management of creative community-based tourism in the village.

With regard to nature-based tourism development, there are two key elements which have been identified that needs to be given equal emphasis by recreation planners: the potential of resources and the needs of users. Balancing these factors is crucial for achieving the main goal of recreation management, which is namely providing a high-quality experience for visitors while maintaining the quality of the natural environment and its resources in a sustainable manner (Gu et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024; Winter et al., 2020). Therefore, the present study includes an investigation of travel motivations and actual recreational experiences, as well as an assessment of the tourist site potential. These findings should aid the design of tourism products as part of creative community-based tourism (hereinafter referred to as C-CBT) programs and guidelines for the management of creative tourism activities so that the offered activities align with both the user preferences and the sustainability of tourism resources. The outcomes of this study will directly benefit both Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park by offering new strategies focused on tourism that will help attract new visitors and generate increased economic opportunities for local residents, all while ensuring the long-term conservation of natural resources. Additionally, other villages adjacent to the national park, which share similar tourism resources, might be able to apply the findings of this study to initiate and develop their own tourism activities, while fostering sustainable community growth.

The aims of this study are threefold: 1) to analyze tourists' travel motivations and actual recreational experiences, 2) to assess the potential of a potential tourist site to encourage the development of creative tourism, and 3) to offer proposals for creative community-based tourism (C-CBT) programs and management guidelines.

2. RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Travel motivation and actual recreational experience

Travel motivation is a fundamental concept in the study of tourist behavior, as it is widely regarded as the driving force behind all tourist actions (Kara & Mkwizu, 2020). Numerous scholars have offered various

definitions of travel motivation. According to Pearce and Lee (2005), it refers to the fundamental motivations for travel, which are based on a person's needs and aspirations. Similarly, Park and Yoon (2009) describe travel motivation as a set of needs that prompt an individual to engage in tourism-related activities. Additionally, some researchers have explored these by assessing the desired recreational experiences, which influence decision-making when visiting nature-based destinations for leisure activities (Budruk & Stanis, 2013; Kaewuthai, 2012; Phumalee, 2005; Stein et al., 2003; Tanakanjana et al., 2006; Whiting et al., 2017). From this, it can be derived that travel motivation is a key factor that drives individuals to select and explore various tourist destinations and participate in recreational activities.

Charoensit et al. (2022) looked into the motivations of CBT tourists visiting communities located near national parks in the southern part of Thailand and the resulting motivations were grouped into eight main categories: 1) developing one's physique and boosting self-esteem, 2) exploring nature, 3) seeking relaxation and calm, 4) prioritizing safety and comfort, 5) fostering independence and introspection, 6) escaping work overload and crowded environments, 7) engaging in cultural learning and diverse activities, and 8) strengthening family bonds and shared values. Consequently, these eight components were then utilized to analyze the travel motivations of tourists for this project within the context of Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park.

In the context of nature-based tourism, the actual recreational experience generally refers to the outcome of participating in an activity. In other words, it is the result of how one felt about the experience that follows engagement in a recreational activity (Brown, 1983; Budruk & Stanis, 2013; Lee & Jan, 2015). Seppo (1988) further suggested that a recreational experience encompasses tourists' emotional responses to a site or environment, which can occur before, during, or after a visit. The actual recreational experience is a critical variable in tourism studies, as aligning the actual experience with tourists' expectations and motivations can lead to greater satisfaction and an increased likelihood of revisits (Kaewuthai, 2012; Parasakul, 2017; Pessoa et al., 2022; Phumalee, 2005; Torabi et al., 2022). For this study, travel motivations were analyzed alongside actual recreational experiences using the same variables to facilitate a direct comparison. It was believed that the differences between these two factors could help provide valuable insights into the planning, organizing and managing of recreational areas in ways that would enable the offering of quality experiences to the tourists. Ultimately, it is hoped that this approach will also contribute to the sustainable use of resources in the future (Emphandhu, 2001; Kaewuthai, 2012; Kara & Mkwizu, 2020; Phumalee, 2005; Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016).

2.2 Creative Community-Based Tourism (C-CBT)

The concept of "Creative Tourism" was first introduced by Greg Richards and Crispin Raymond in 2000. They defined it as a form of tourism that allows visitors to engage in activities that develop their creativity through active participation in courses and learning experiences specific to the destination (Richards & Raymond, 2000). In the context of Thailand, creative tourism has been framed by scholars as a type of tourism that promotes reciprocal interactions between tourists and hosts, which in turn enables visitors to gain firsthand experiences that foster an appreciation for the social values, culture, and natural environment of both Thailand and the destination they are visiting (Dachum, 2013; Wisudthiluck et al., 2016).

Richards (2011), through his creative tourism model, suggested that experiences and products focused on showcasing or developing creativity, could be either treated as a core activity or as a background activity. This means that when creativity is the focus of a tourist activity, it facilitates interaction between the host community and visitors through participatory experiences that encourage active learning. These activities often involve skill development linked to the community's local skills and knowledge, such as cooking traditional dishes or creating handicrafts. On the other hand, creativity as a background tourist activity enhances the atmosphere and charm of a tourist destination by integrating the showcasing of creativity into events, festivals, or even urban development projects. The model also highlighted that creative tourism experiences and products require a substantial level of tourist involvement. This is because the typology of these creative tourism experiences includes activities such as buying, seeing, tasting, and learning (Figure 1).

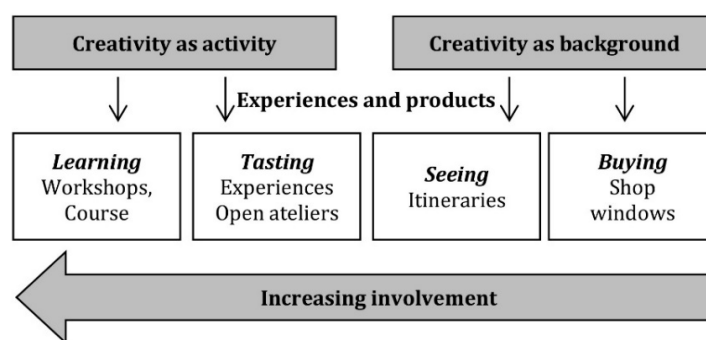


Figure 1: Model of creative tourism adapted from Richards (2011)

However, it is not only the tourists that are involved but also the community. Community-based tourism (CBT) is defined as a form of tourism that is managed by the local community, allowing it to directly benefit from tourism activities. This approach emphasizes the sustainability of the environment, society, culture, and the overall well-being or quality of life of local communities and people. The exchange of culture between locals and tourists is also a fundamental aspect of CBT (Charoensit et al., 2022). The principles and activities connected to creative tourism share significant similarities with those of CBT, particularly in regard to their focus on cultural engagement and sustainability. As a result, this study chose to integrate these two concepts into a framework and refer to it as C-CBT. According to this framework, CBT principles are applied to the management dimension of tourist activities, while creative tourism is more fixated on the development of tourism activities.

2.3 Study site

Ban Ruam Thai Village is located in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand. Established in 1978, the village was once known as a politically sensitive “red zone” due to its association with it being a communist settlement. Consequently, in an effort to transform the area into a buffer zone, authorities encouraged the settlement of people from various parts of Thailand, which led to the creation of a diverse community. As a result, today, the village is home to approximately 2,000 residents spread over 600 households, originating from more than 40 provinces across the country. Around 70% of the population of Ban Ruam Thai Village relies on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods, while the rest are employed across various other sectors. Tourism serves as a supplementary source of income, particularly during off-season periods following the harvest.

With regard to tourism, in 2006, conservation tourism in Ban Ruam Thai Village started with the formation of the “Kuiburi Wildlife Ecotourism Club”, which was established to lead tourists on wildlife tours in Kui Buri National Park. Moreover, in 2013, the “Chang Pa Kui Buri Homestay” group was formed to support wildlife enthusiasts seeking overnight accommodation in a local and natural community. By 2016, growing demand for souvenirs from visiting tourists led to the creation of a local manufacturers’ group that produced crafts made from pineapple leaves, such as paper products, marking another step forward in the development of the village’s tourism appeal.

Today, Ban Ruam Thai Village is recognized as a model for community-based tourism (CBT) in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The village offers a range of tourism activities, including wildlife watching in Kui Buri National Park and participatory learning experiences centered around the community’s local products, such as paper-making from pineapple leaves, mulberry cultivation and mulberry leaf tea production, and fabric dyeing using clay-based colors. These initiatives align with the principles of creative tourism, as Ban Ruam Thai Village has attempted to integrate hands-on, culturally rich activities into its tourism offerings.

Kui Buri National Park, established in 1999, spans 969 km² in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, and is located approximately 85 km southwest of the popular tourist destination of Hua Hin. The park’s geography is characterized by dense mountain ranges that form a natural border with Myanmar. This area encompasses a variety of ecosystems, including tropical moist evergreen forests, dry evergreen forests, and mixed deciduous forests, which serve as habitats for diverse wildlife. With regard to tourism, Kui Buri National Park is famous for its wildlife watching activities. This is mainly because it offers the opportunity to tourists to observe wild elephants and other animal in their natural habitat. Additionally, the park features nature trails and waterfalls, further enhancing its appeal as a destination for nature enthusiasts.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework used for this research.

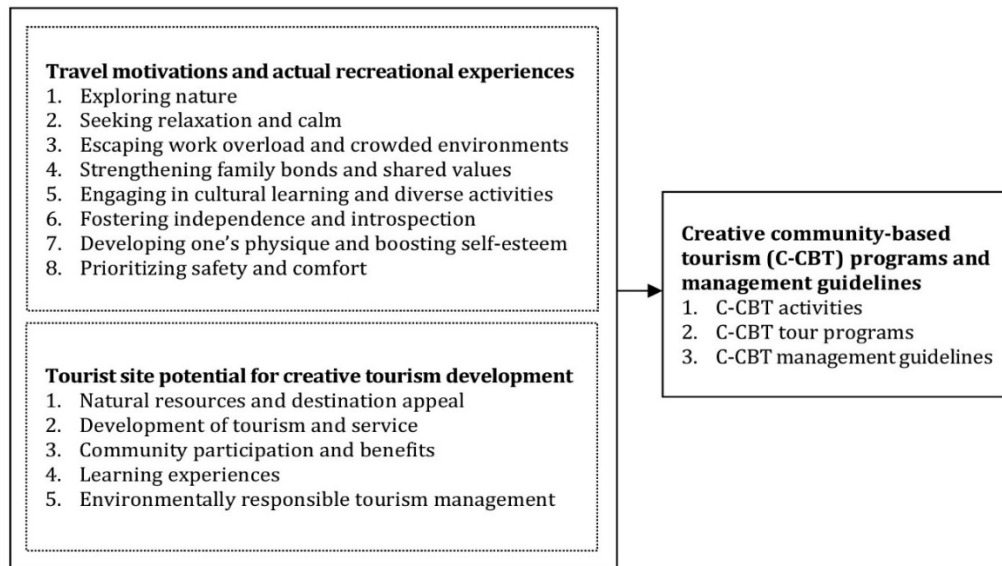


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed method approach. The quantitative method was applied first to facilitate a comparative analysis of the differences between tourists' motivations and their actual recreational experiences. Subsequently, a qualitative approach was adopted to gather suggestions on setting up a program and guidelines for managing creative community-based tourism. The materials utilized in this study included: 1) a questionnaire assessing the travel motivations of tourists and their actual recreational experiences, and 2) an assessment of the potential of the tourist site to offer creative tourism.

To measure the motivation and experience levels, a four-point scale was employed to clearly differentiate between the varying levels of motivation and experience without offering a neutral midpoint so that the respondents' definitive preferences or experiences could be identified (Quee, 2002). Regarding the measurement of the tourists' satisfaction and intention levels when visiting Kui Buri National Park, a ten-point scale was utilized to capture a more nuanced range of tourists' subjective feelings, which led to greater precision and sensitivity when describing how they felt (Dawes, 2008). Furthermore, the employment of a diverse range of scales when assessing psychological variables has several methodological advantages. Specifically, this approach enables effective measurement of multifaceted psychological constructs, it also enhances the overall reliability and validity of the data collected, and it allows for more sophisticated analytical procedures (Embretson & Reise, 2000). When assessing a tourist site's potential, a simplified three-point scale was chosen to provide clear and distinct evaluative categories, with the aim of minimizing ambiguity. This simplified approach enhanced the consistency and reliability of the assessments, streamlined the decision-making processes, and was particularly beneficial for facilitating involvement from stakeholders who in turn possessed varying levels of expertise (Preston & Colman, 2000).

Data on travel motivations and actual recreational experiences were derived from a previous study conducted by Charoensit et al. (2022). The quality of the questionnaire used to gather this data was evaluated through two processes: content validity and reliability. Content validity was evaluated through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), while reliability was determined using Cronbach's Alpha. The study used a sample size of 1,000 Thai and foreign tourists and was conducted across seven study sites, including Ban Ruam Thai Village. Subsequently, stratified random sampling with proportional allocation was employed. As a result, based on the population of each study site, questionnaires were sent out, which led to 112 usable questionnaires being collected from Ban Ruam Thai Village, which were subsequently analyzed using t-tests and descriptive statistics. The actual recreational experiences were determined through the same questionnaire items used for travel motivations, which covered eight motivational factors. After completing their visit, respondents were asked to rate the degree to which each of these experiences was actually realized during their trip. This allowed for a direct comparison between expected motivations and actual experiences.

The potential assessment form was developed based on a comprehensive literature review (Khowinthawong, 2016; Phumsathan et al., 2015; Tanakanjana et al., 2006) and included 32 indicators divided

into five categories. A total of 30 assessors were selected through purposive sampling, with representatives from four distinct groups: 1) scholars, 2) officers from Kui Buri National Park, 3) members of Ban Ruam Thai Village, and 4) tourists. The evaluation of C-CBT programs was carried out by three key stakeholders: 1) an expert in the field of creative tourism, 2) a tourism business owner from Prachuap Khiri Khan province, and 3) a tourist who had visited Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park. For the data analysis of the assessments, descriptive statistics was employed, and a content analysis was used to propose guidelines for the development of C-CBT.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Travel motivations and actual recreational experiences

5.1.1 Demographics of the respondents

A descriptive analysis of the sample ($n = 112$) revealed that the gender distribution of the respondents consisted of 75.9% identifying as female, 22.3% as male, and 1.8% as other. The average age of the respondents was 30.68 years. Of the total sample, 69.6% were domestic tourists, while 30.4% were international tourists from various countries. In terms of education, the majority of respondents (51.8%) held a bachelor's degree, followed by 27.7% who had attained an educational degree beyond a bachelor's degree. Meanwhile, 20.5% of respondents had education levels lower than a bachelor's degree.

Regarding occupation, the majority of respondents were students (41.1%), followed by enterprise employees (21.4%), civil servants (16.1%), and private business owners/self-employed individuals (14.3%). A smaller percentage (7.1%) reported occupations which were categorized under "other". Among international tourists, nearly half (41.2%) reported earnings more than US\$ 4,001 per month, while 32.4% earned US\$ 2,500 or less. Moreover, 26.5% reported incomes between US\$ 2,501 and US\$ 4,000. In contrast, the largest group of Thai tourists (41.0%) reported a monthly income of THB 15,000 or less, while 32.1% earned between THB 15,001 and THB 30,000. Furthermore, 26.9% earned more than THB 30,001.

In terms of travel experience, 76.8% of respondents were first-time visitors to the site. The majority (67.0%) had opted for a one-day trip, while 33.0% had chosen to stay overnight. However, interviews with overnight tourists revealed that they did not use community accommodation services, as their primary focus was wildlife viewing, which appeared to be the sole activity in their travel itinerary.

5.1.2 Analysis of tourists' travel motivations and their actual recreational experiences

The biggest motivation for visiting among tourists was found to be exploring nature ($M = 3.30$, $S.D. = 0.56$), followed by seeking relaxation and calm ($M = 3.25$, $S.D. = 0.59$), and escaping work overload and crowded environments ($M = 3.22$, $S.D. = 0.76$). Prioritizing safety and comfort ranked lowest among the motivations for visiting ($M = 2.62$, $S.D. = 0.65$). These results were consistent with the qualitative data from the questionnaires, in which tourists similarly indicated that their most significant motivation was to explore nature and closely observe wild animals. Some tourists also reported that their motivations centered on relaxation during holidays, engaging in activities with family, and discovering new places. Another notable factor cited by respondents was the desire to learn about nature, wildlife, and local communities, including the issues that the locals faced with regard to animals. Additionally, some tourists mentioned that visiting a community adjacent to the national park was part of their motivation.

In terms of actual recreational experiences, the most popular sought experiences were seeking relaxation and calm ($M = 3.25$, $S.D. = 0.62$), escaping work overload and crowded environments ($M = 3.25$, $S.D. = 0.71$), and strengthening family bonds and shared values ($M = 3.25$, $S.D. = 0.70$), all with identical averages. Exploring nature followed closely as another actual recreational experience ($M = 3.24$, $S.D. = 0.58$). Similar to the motivation results, prioritizing safety and comfort ranked lowest for the actual recreational experiences ($M = 2.75$, $S.D. = 0.65$). The qualitative data indicated that tourists' most notably anticipated experiences included seeing wildlife as expected, immersing themselves in nature, enjoying fresh air, tranquility, and scenic beauty, escaping daily pressures, seeking adventure, and learning about rural community life, native plants, and wildlife. Overall, the quantitative and qualitative findings were well-aligned.

When comparing the mean scores between the tourists' travel motivations and their actual recreational experiences, there was a statistically significant difference for the factor of prioritizing safety and comfort at a level of 0.05 ($t = -2.785$, $p = 0.006$), with the actual recreational experiences surpassing the travel motivations. For all other factors, no statistically significant differences were found (Table 1). Moreover, it should be noted that tourists reported a high level of satisfaction ($M = 7.64$, $S.D. = 1.77$) and a strong intention to revisit ($M = 7.37$, $S.D. = 2.01$) (Table 2).

These findings are consistent with several previous studies on nature-based tourism. For instance, the motivations such as "exploring nature," "seeking relaxation," and "escaping work overload" align with

research by Budruk and Stanis (2013) and Kaewuthai (2012), which emphasize the interest in experiencing the restorative and experiential dimensions of natural settings when travelling. The alignment between tourists' motivations and their actual experiences also supports the notion of congruence between expected and realized benefits, which is a key aspect of tourist satisfaction as identified in studies on recreational behavior (Lee & Jan, 2015; Pomfret & Bramwell, 2016). However, the relatively lower ratings for physical skill development and introspection reflect the more casual or recreational profile of most tourists that visit the site, as physical skill development tends to be more related to more adventure-oriented ecotourism contexts (Whiting et al., 2017).

Table 1: Travel motivations and actual recreational experiences (n = 112)

Motivations / Experiences	Travel motivations		Actual recreational experiences		t	p
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1. Exploring nature	3.30	0.56	3.24	0.58	1.226	.223
2. Seeking relaxation and calm	3.25	0.59	3.25	0.62	-.039	.969
3. Escaping work overload and crowded environments	3.22	0.76	3.25	0.71	-.616	.539
4. Strengthening family bonds and shared values	3.21	0.67	3.25	0.70	-.768	.444
5. Engaging in cultural learning and diverse activities	3.09	0.67	3.03	0.68	1.160	.249
6. Fostering independence and introspection	2.93	0.67	2.95	0.65	-.464	.644
7. Developing one's physique and boosting self-esteem	2.71	0.59	2.76	0.62	-1.044	.299
8. Prioritizing safety and comfort	2.62	0.65	2.75	0.65	-2.785*	.006

*p < 0.05

Table 2: Satisfaction and intention to revisit (n = 112)

Satisfaction and intention to revisit	Mean	S.D.	Level
Satisfaction	7.64	1.77	High
Intention to revisit	7.37	2.01	High

Note: 8.21–10.00 = very high, 6.41–8.20 = high, 4.61–6.40 = moderate, 2.81–4.60 = low, 1.00–2.80 = very low

In summary, the wildlife tourism organized and offered collectively by Kui Buri National Park and Ban Ruam Thai Village successfully aligns with tourists' travel motivations across all components. Notably, tourists reported receiving higher levels of safety and comfort as part of their actual experience compared to their initial expectations. Consequently, tourists expressed a high level of satisfaction and a strong intention to revisit the site. However, they also provided recommendations which were based on the following requirements: 1) an increased demand for English-speaking local guides, and 2) a desire for the sale of souvenirs related to elephant conservation. Tourists noted that purchasing souvenirs sold by the national park or conservation foundations would allow them to feel actively involved in conservation efforts.

In light of these findings, future tourism development should continue to prioritize providing experiences that focus on offering opportunities for exploring nature, seeking relaxation and calm, escaping work overload and crowded environments, as well as strengthening family bonds and shared values. However, it is advised that highly physical or skill-intensive activities are not provided. Instead, the community may consider offering more learning-based activities, as suggested by qualitative data from tourists. Additionally, efforts to exceed tourists' expectations by enhancing their actual experiences beyond their initial motivations or making them feel more involved in the park's conservation efforts could further elevate their overall satisfaction.

5.2 Assessment of the tourist site potential for the development of creative tourism

For this process, a panel of 30 assessors was set up, which was composed of 8 scholars (26.7%), 5 Kui Buri National Park officers (16.7%), 10 members of Ban Ruam Thai Village (33.3%), and 7 tourists (23.3%). The panel had an equal gender distribution, with 50% male and 50% female. Most assessors (66.7%) were between the ages of 31 and 45, and 40.0% held education levels higher than a bachelor's degree.

This potential assessment was conducted for Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park, which for the assessment were treated as one tourist site. Overall, the site's potential was rated at a high level (M = 2.46, S.D. = 0.26). When looking at specific aspects that contributed to the site's potential, the highest mean score was found for environmentally responsible tourism management (M = 2.59, S.D. = 0.35). The second highest score was for the potential of the natural resources and destination appeal (M = 2.56, S.D. = 0.32), as it also ranked at a high level. The potential for tourism and service development received a similarly high rating (M = 2.53, S.D. = 0.32), as did the potential for local community involvement (M = 2.43, S.D. = 0.36). However, the potential for offering learning experiences to tourists was rated the lowest, although still at a moderate level (M = 2.21, S.D. = 0.36) (Table 3).

Table 3: The assessment of the tourist site potential for the development of creative tourism (n = 30)

Indicators	Respondents	Mean	S.D.	Level
Part 1 Natural resources and destination appeal		2.56	0.32	High
1. Attractiveness of the destination	30	2.60	0.56	
2. Uniqueness of the destination	30	2.47	0.51	
3. Ecological fertility of natural sites	30	2.73	0.45	
4. Scenic beauty of landscapes	30	2.80	0.41	
5. Presence of distinctive wildlife species	30	2.63	0.61	
6. Abundance of wildlife	30	2.60	0.56	
7. Biodiversity of plant species	28	2.21	0.57	
8. Availability of nature trails for wildlife observation	28	2.46	0.69	
Part 2 Development of tourism and service		2.53	0.32	High
1. Diversity of tourist activities	28	2.50	0.69	
2. Accessibility to natural site	30	2.50	0.63	
3. Linkage with other tourist destinations	30	2.57	0.57	
4. Security and safety measures	29	2.76	0.51	
5. Development of tourist facilities	30	2.50	0.51	
6. Impact of external factors on tourism development	26	2.54	0.58	
7. Quality of tourism services	30	2.40	0.56	
8. Facilitation of creative tourist activities	30	2.47	0.51	
Part 3 Community participation and benefits		2.43	0.36	High
1. Involvement of local communities in tourism management	25	2.20	0.65	
2. Distribution of tourism revenue to local communities	28	2.50	0.69	
3. Community development supported by tourism	25	2.60	0.50	
Part 4 Learning experiences		2.21	0.36	Moderate
1. Availability of information and public relations for tourists	29	2.66	0.61	
2. Adequate number of park staff and local guides	30	2.40	0.56	
3. Competence of local guides	30	1.90	0.48	
4. Clarity of interpretive signage	30	2.03	0.72	
5. Participatory learning of local people and tourists	30	2.07	0.64	
Part 5 Environmentally responsible tourism management		2.59	0.35	High
1. Maintenance and restoration of tourist destinations	30	2.67	0.55	
2. Tourism zoning	27	2.81	0.40	
3. Tourist capacity limits	27	2.59	0.69	
4. Scheduling and duration of wildlife tourism activities	30	2.90	0.31	
5. Waste management systems	29	2.45	0.57	
6. Pollution control measures	28	2.21	0.57	
7. Sustainable tourism activity management	29	2.59	0.57	
8. Behavioral regulations for tourists	30	2.47	0.68	
Total potential mean score		2.46	0.26	High

Note: 2.35–3.00 = High, 1.68–2.34 = Moderate, 1.00–1.67 = Low

Upon reviewing the individual indicators in relation to the appeal of the natural resources and the destination, the most notable were found to be the scenic beauty of the landscape ($M = 2.80$, $S.D. = 0.41$), followed by the ecological fertility of natural sites ($M = 2.73$, $S.D. = 0.45$) and the presence of distinctive wildlife species ($M = 2.63$, $S.D. = 0.61$). Concerning the potential for tourism and service development, the highest rating was attributed to the measures towards ensuring security and safety ($M = 2.76$, $S.D. = 0.51$), followed by the linkage of tourist destinations ($M = 2.57$, $S.D. = 0.57$) and the impact of external factors on tourism development ($M = 2.54$, $S.D. = 0.58$). Due to the involvement of local people, tourism helped the site excel in supporting community development ($M = 2.60$, $S.D. = 0.50$), increasing the income distribution among the local community ($M = 2.50$, $S.D. = 0.69$), and involving the locals in tourism management ($M = 2.20$, $S.D. = 0.65$).

With regard to the offering of learning experiences to tourists, despite a moderate overall rating, the site stood out for its provision of public relations and tourist information ($M = 2.66$, $S.D. = 0.61$), followed by the adequacy of park staff and local tour guides availability ($M = 2.40$, $S.D. = 0.56$). Notably, the potential of local tour guides received the lowest mean score ($M = 1.90$, $S.D. = 0.48$). As a final point, in relation to environmentally responsible tourism management, the highest score was for the scheduling and duration of wildlife tourism activities ($M = 2.90$, $S.D. = 0.31$), followed by tourism zoning ($M = 2.81$, $S.D. = 0.40$), and the maintenance and restoration of the tourist destinations ($M = 2.67$, $S.D. = 0.55$).

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park exhibit high potential for creative tourism development in all areas except for providing learning experiences to tourists, as this factor was only ranked at a moderate level. This suggests that while the site is well-suited for creative tourism, efforts to enhance the learning experience, such as improving the potential of local guides, should be prioritized.

Based on an interview with the superintendent of Kui Buri National Park, it can be confirmed that the partnership between the local community and the national park with regard to managing wildlife tourism is still ongoing. It was also shared that past experiences have consistently shown that tourism has been a powerful means of enhancing community awareness regarding nature conservation. Moreover, perceptions of the locals towards the challenges posed by elephants to their daily lives have notably become more positive.

In order to increase community interest in tourism development programs or expanding into other nature-based recreational activities beyond wildlife observation, Kui Buri National Park has expressed a willingness to provide support. This support includes offering knowledge, training, improving the readiness of park officers to help and share their experience with the locals, and ensuring there is coordinated assistance.

Meanwhile, interviews with the leader and members of the Kui Buri Wildlife Ecotourism Club indicated that tourism had provided substantial benefits to the community. For instance, local residents had been able to generate additional income through tourism-related activities. A portion of the revenue earned through the tourism-related activities was allocated to community funds, which were then used for community development programs such as the offering of scholarships, providing support to people with disabilities and the elderly, and the maintenance and renovation of basic infrastructure. Although the issues with elephants persist, their effect has now lessened, as those affected are now given priority in tourism-related employment, including positions as local tour guides, safari vehicle operators, and homestay hosts.

Currently, the community is eager to expand its tourism activities to create more income-generating opportunities for its members. To achieve this, they are prepared to offer new creative tourism experiences, such as crafting paper from pineapple leaves and T-shirt dyeing using natural colors. The community's homestays can host up to 70 guests. However, there is still a need for external collaboration to provide knowledge transfer, particularly in areas such as handicraft skills to enhance the production of local goods and gain agricultural expertise to improve the offering of local agricultural products. This knowledge could not only create additional employment and income for community members but also enrich the range of tourism activities available to visitors.

5.3 Recommendations for C-CBT programs and management guidelines

The findings from the travel motivations analysis and the tourist site potential have been used to formulate the following guidelines for C-CBT development:

5.3.1 C-CBT activities

Based on the findings, the following suggestions with regard to two primary approaches related to creative tourism activity implementation can be made: 1) employing creativity as part of the main tourist activity, and 2) utilizing creativity in the background to enhance the tourism experience. Additionally, the tourism activities can be designed to encompass a wide range of creative experiences, aligning with the four levels of involvement on the spectrum of creative tourism: buying, seeing, tasting, and learning. This approach ensures a diverse and engaging experience for tourists, while promoting deeper connections with the local culture and environment. The details of the proposed creative tourism activities are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Creative tourism activity suggestions

Creative experience	Tourism activities	Details of activities
1. Learning	Trekking along nature trails	Tourists trek along a 2-kilometer nature trail guided by Kui Buri National Park rangers, immersing themselves in the park's natural beauty while learning about the forest ecosystem and its wildlife. The trail features traces of wild animals, such as elephant footprints, and notable plant species like sandalwood, an auspicious wood used in royal ceremonies. A key highlight of the trek is the discovery of the renowned sandalwood tree, whose wood was employed to craft the royal urn for King Rama IX in 2017.
	Cleaning water pans for wild elephants	Water pans provide essential hydration for wildlife, especially during droughts when natural sources run dry. In this conservation activity, tourists clean existing water pans by draining old water and removing animal waste before refilling them with fresh water, ensuring the animals have access to clean and safe water.

Table 4: Creative tourism activity suggestions (continued)

Creative experience	Tourism activities	Details of activities
	Constructing and maintaining elephants' artificial saltlick	This conservation activity provides hands-on experience in building or maintaining artificial saltlicks for elephants. Tourists venture deeper into the National Park, where they are briefed on the elephant ecosystem and the importance of saltlicks to their survival. Participants engage in constructing the saltlick by excavating the site, adding sodium chloride and dicalcium phosphate, and finally pouring water into the excavated area to activate the saltlick, making it accessible to wildlife in the area.
	Planting grasslands to support gaur populations	In this conservation-focused activity, tourists help clear and maintain grassland areas to facilitate the growth of food sources for gaurs. By understanding the grazing habits of these animals and their ecosystem, participants actively contribute to improving the habitat and increasing the availability of food for the park's gaurs.
	Gaining insights into camera trap techniques for tracking wild animals	Tourists learn about setting up camera traps, a key tool in wildlife monitoring. These infrared cameras detect and capture images of wildlife movement, helping conservationists track population densities and manage ecosystems more effectively. This educational experience introduces tourists to the scientific tools used in wildlife conservation.
	Storytelling: A conservation community	This activity offers tourists an opportunity to learn about the local community's conservation efforts through storytelling. Community representatives share their history, especially with regard to the issues with elephants that led to the village's conservation efforts, and the guidelines and activities they've developed to protect the environment.
	Discovering local ways of life and knowledge	Tourists gain local knowledge through hands-on workshops that showcase traditional practices. These include cultivating mulberry plants, producing mulberry leaf tea, vermicomposting, silkworm farming, silk reeling, crafting paper from pineapple leaves, and T-shirt dyeing using natural clay-based colors. These activities demonstrate the community's efforts to create supplementary income through sustainable practices.
	Homestay experience	Tourists can extend their stay by spending the night at a community-run homestay. This offers additional opportunities to experience local life and support the community economically, while deepening their engagement with local traditions and practices.
2. Tasting	Savoring local specialties made from the community's agricultural products	Visitors can enjoy meals prepared by community members using locally grown agricultural products. Tourists staying overnight at the homestay will be treated to a full local menu for dinner, which offers a taste of the region's delicious culinary traditions.
	Visiting pineapple orchards and tasting fresh, locally grown fruits	Tourists are invited to visit local pineapple plantations, where they can purchase fresh fruit directly from the growers, learn harvesting techniques, and engage in conversations with the farmers. This activity promotes direct interaction between tourists and local agriculturists, and fosters cultural exchange.
3. Seeing	Wildlife watching and photography	Wildlife watching is the main attraction in the area, offering tourists the chance to observe wild elephants and gaurs in their natural habitat. Led by a local guide, tourists are introduced to the ecosystem, conservation efforts, and the importance of preserving both the flora and fauna. Photography is predicted to be a popular activity as it allows tourists to capture their experience in the lush greenery of the park.
4. Buying	Shopping for the conservation of elephants and the community	Tourists can support the local community by purchasing handmade souvenirs, many of which symbolize wildlife conservation efforts, including items related to elephants and gaurs. Some products are sold to raise funds for conservation, giving tourists a chance to contribute to the ongoing protection of the region's wildlife.

5.3.2 C-CBT tour programs

Based on the proposed tourism activities, a thematic program titled "Nature Exploration with Local Experience in Creative Style" is suggested. This program will encompass the following four tour packages:

5.3.2.1 Program I: Exploring wildlife

Arrival: Tourists are welcomed at the tourist service and information center for a wildlife observation experience. **Learning:** Introduction to human-elephant coexistence, with a local tour guide who provides information on wild elephant conservation in the National Park and the community's conservation efforts. **Participation:** Tourists are encouraged to take on a conservationist role by following guidelines on what they can and cannot do during the wildlife visit. **Wildlife Observation:** Safari pickups, provided by the community, take tourists to observe wild elephants and gaurs, while the local guide offers insights and

information throughout the journey. Memories and Souvenirs: Tourists can admire the natural scenery, take photographs, and enjoy a refreshing herbal drink post-tour. Community-made souvenirs are also available for purchase.

This program represents the highlight of Ban Ruam Thai's tourism offerings. It aligns strongly with the primary motivation of the destination's core target group, namely, "exploring nature". It is particularly well-suited for tourists who seek immersive encounters with wildlife, enjoy learning about natural ecosystems, and prefer peaceful environments as a retreat from urban life. The experience offers low to moderate physical intensity, making it accessible to a broad range of nature-oriented visitors.

5.3.2.2 Program II: Immersing in local culture

Arrival: Tourists are greeted at Chang Pa Kui Buri Homestay with a warm welcome. Cultural Experience: Visitors discover the local way of life and traditional knowledge through engaging storytelling sessions with community members. Workshops: Take part in hands-on creative workshops, including crafting paper from pineapple leaves, vermicomposting, silkworm farming, silk reeling, cultivating mulberry plants, producing mulberry leaf tea, and T-shirts dyeing with natural clay-based colors. Guests can select activities that align with their interests. Lunch: Enjoy a locally prepared lunch featuring local specialties made from the community's agricultural products.

This program directly responds to the motivations of "strengthening family bonds and shared values" and "engaging in cultural learning and diverse activities". It exemplifies the principles of creative tourism by encouraging active participation in cultural meaningful experiences. The program is suitable for a wide audience, including general tourists, families with children, school or educational groups, and international visitors. Its low physical intensity activities make it ideal for those interested in engaging creative and cultural activities through hands-on workshops and storytelling activities.

5.3.2.3 Program III: Experiencing local-style leisure activities

Arrival: Check-in at Chang Pa Kui Buri Homestay, followed by a local-style dinner in the village's backyard. Relaxation: Free time for relaxation and enjoying the local atmosphere. Morning Excursion: Wake up early for a scenic trip through a tree tunnel and grass fields ("1,500 rai"), concluding with coffee and breakfast while watching the sunrise at a scenic viewpoint.

This theme is particularly relevant to community-based tourism (CBT) visitors, as it resonates with motivations such as "seeking relaxation and calm", "escaping work overload and crowded environments", and "strengthening family bonds and shared values". Closely aligned with the creative tourism concept, this program offers low-intensity experiences that encourage tourists to extend their stay in the community. It is ideal for general leisure travelers, family groups, and international tourists who seek serene, restorative experiences with a cultural dimension.

5.3.2.4 Program IV: Trekking along nature trails

Arrival: Tourists are welcomed at the Kui Buri National Park office and introduced to the park's rangers. Conservation Education: Learn about the conservation of natural resources, the park's role in conserving the natural environment, and the duties of the rangers. Trekking: Immerse yourself in nature by trekking through the wilderness. Engage in conservation efforts such as constructing artificial salt licks, maintaining water pans for wild elephants, gaining insights into camera trap techniques, and planting grasslands to support gaur populations.

While this program aligns well with creative tourism objectives through experiential learning and conservation-focused activities, it may not appeal to all CBT tourists due to its relatively high physical intensity. However, it presents an opportunity to attract new target segments, including adventure tourists, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) participants, volunteers, and educational groups. The program is best suited for visitors with a strong interest in nature immersion, ecological learning, and physically engaging activities that promote environmental awareness.

The four programs can be combined to create flexible itineraries, such as half-day tours, full-day tours, and two-day, one-night tours. Tourists can select and customize programs based on their interests, with Program I: Exploring Wildlife being a mandatory afternoon activity.

5.3.3 C-CBT management guidelines

5.3.3.1 Development guidelines for some activities:

1) Storytelling: A conservation community - The storyteller should be a prominent figure from the community, such as the community chief, a local elder, or one of the first inhabitants. These individuals can provide an authentic narrative and are more able to enhance the atmosphere and foster a more immersive and creative experience for tourists.

2) Discovering local ways of life and wisdom - For activities like crafting paper from pineapple leaves or dyeing T-shirts with natural clay-based colors, tourists should be actively encouraged to engage in the process and create their own distinctive pieces. This hands-on approach will enrich their creative learning experience and strengthen their emotional connection to the destination. Taking home a personally crafted souvenir will leave them with lasting memories of their visit. The instructor should be a member of the community or a local activity expert. The essence of these activities lies in the participatory learning experience shared between locals and tourists, which is a vital aspect that tourism managers and developers should emphasize.

3) Tasting local foods - To enhance the potential of this activity, the community should strategically incorporate gastronomy tourism principles and adopt the farm-to-table concept. This approach emphasizes the provision of authentic culinary experiences by highlighting unique local ingredients, showcasing traditional cooking techniques, and promoting regional food heritage. As a result, this will enhance tourist satisfaction and the appeal of the destination. Moreover, the farm-to-table concept supports environmental sustainability and local farmers, ensures the provision of fresh ingredients, and makes tourists feel more connected with local agricultural traditions. The community should closely collaborate with local producers for fresh and seasonal ingredients, offer interactive culinary workshops, clearly communicate the origins of food items, facilitate direct interactions with farmers, and ensure adherence to sustainable food preparation methods and food safety standards to make this activity a success.

4) Photography - To strengthen the learning experience of the "Photography" activity, the community is encouraged to develop it into a structured nature and wildlife photography experience. The wildlife photography experience can be enhanced by incorporating basic photography training sessions that focus on natural light, composition, subject framing, and ethical wildlife photography practices. Led by experienced local photographers, national park rangers, or conservation officers, the activity would begin with a short tutorial followed by a guided field session through which tourists can practice the photographing of wildlife and landscapes in their natural setting. Participants can receive feedback on their photos and receive on how to improve their technique. This activity aligns with the principles of creative tourism by promoting learning through doing and deepening the visitors' appreciation of the natural environment. It also appeals to a new niche segment of photography enthusiasts and eco-tourists who seek both skill development and environmental engagement.

5.3.3.2 Guidelines for the potential development and management of tourism activities:

1) Building a cooperative network - The most crucial challenge in developing C-CBT is establishing a cooperative network. It is essential for Ban Ruam Thai Village to collaborate with both governmental and private sectors to enhance tourism management in the community. For example, Ban Ruam Thai Village should formalize partnerships with Kui Buri National Park and WWF for wildlife tourism activities, especially for activities such as nature trails, for which national park rangers are needed to guide tourists and lead activities. Additionally, Ban Ruam Thai can collaborate with academic institutions like universities to provide expertise and support so that they can enhance local product quality and create new products and jobs for the community.

2) Increasing the learning experience potential - The assessment revealed that the provision of learning experiences for tourists was rated at a moderate level, while other aspects were ranked as high. Specifically, the potential of local tour guides received the lowest score, which also aligned with the qualitative feedback from tourists. To address this, Ban Ruam Thai Village should prioritize the development of local tour guides. Therefore, collaboration with external organizations is important as it can help the village tourist managers and developers organize training sessions with a particular focus on nature-based tourism, getting the most out of the resources at Kui Buri National Park, and improving the English communication skills of the villagers. Governmental agencies often provide budgets for community development, meaning that financial investment by the community may not be necessary to provide this training.

3) Knowledge transfer for tour guide development - The community itself can enhance the skills of local tour guides through knowledge transfer from senior to junior guides. Ban Ruam Thai could organize orientation programs led by senior guides to train new tour guides. These sessions should cover common questions from tourists, operational procedures specific to Kui Buri National Park, and strategies for handling common problems and challenges during tours. This direct, experience-based knowledge is invaluable for developing new guides within the community and should be taken advantage of.

4) Improving the ability to interpret signs and documents among tourists to enhance their learning - The ability to interpret information, both in documents and signage, plays a key role in enhancing tourists' learning experiences, yet it was rated only moderately in potential. Nonetheless, Ban Ruam Thai should ensure the availability of interpretive signs at each learning activity station in the community. In Kui Buri National Park-related tourism activities, local guides can gather feedback from tourists regarding the quality and

adequacy of these interpretive signs. This data can then be used in collaboration with Kui Buri National Park to improve the interpretive signs for a better learning experience. Furthermore, the issue of limited foreign language proficiency among local tour guides has been acknowledged as a key challenge in delivering high-quality learning experiences for international tourists. To address this, the development of English-language media and signage throughout both community-based and nature-based activity sites that can be inherited is recommended. For instance, materials, such as brochures, infographics, educational panels, and QR-code-linked digital content, can serve as supplementary tools that could be used to enhance understanding among tourists, bridge language gaps among tour guides, and encourage self-guided exploration. This approach not only improves the accessibility of information to foreign visitors but also reinforces the learning component of creative tourism without placing additional pressure on local guides as visitors will be able to gather information and explore certain areas by themselves.

5) Establishing a community check-in point - Ban Ruam Thai Village should establish a designated check-in point within the community to function as an interpretive hub, which is able to offer tourists insights into the site's history, culture, and key attractions.

5.3.3.3 Guidelines for creative tourism marketing:

1) Website and activity guidebook development - Ban Ruam Thai Village should develop a comprehensive website that provides up-to-date information about the community's creative tourism initiatives and activities under the C-CBT framework. The website should be user-friendly and regularly updated. In addition, a guidebook for creative tourism activities should be produced, which could provide details of the history of the community, highlight the significance of Kui Buri National Park as a learning destination, and explain the unique creative tourism opportunities offered by the community.

2) Establishment of a tourist information center - Ban Ruam Thai Village should establish a tourist information center that serves not only as a hub for providing information but also as a knowledge exchange atelier. This center could function as a mutual learning space where both local residents and tourists share knowledge and experiences, which in turn could lead to the enrichment of the tourism experience among visitors and increased community engagement.

3) Enhancing community products and souvenirs - Ban Ruam Thai Village can upgrade the products on offer that are created and offered by the community to increase their value and appeal by focusing on the packaging design and create more products that can be seen as souvenirs that can help visitors remember their experience in Ban Ruam Thai Village. Moreover, the community could organize participatory activities, which would allow tourists to contribute to the design process of these souvenirs, which in turn would create a sense of connection and ownership. Additionally, the community could develop souvenirs symbolizing wildlife conservation, such as products that feature wild animals native to the area. In addition, Ban Ruam Thai Village might launch fundraising campaigns through the sale of these souvenirs, with a portion of the proceeds supporting wildlife conservation foundations. This approach aligns with the principles of creative tourism, whereby tourist shopping contributes to both community development and wildlife preservation, which are factors which would encourage some tourists to buy those products. Moreover, all commerce that takes place within Kui Buri National Park should at all times adhere to park regulations to ensure sustainable and responsible tourism practices among both the locals and visitors.

6. CONCLUSION

This study concentrated on the development of C-CBT by drawing on insights from an experience-based analysis of tourist behavior and an assessment of the tourist site potential. The study was conducted within the context of Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park. Findings indicated that tourists were primarily motivated by "exploring nature", while "prioritizing safety and comfort," ranked as the least motivating factor.

Regarding actual recreational experiences, the factors "seeking relaxation and calm", "escaping work overload and crowded environments", and "strengthening family bonds and shared values" received the highest average ratings, whereas "prioritizing safety and comfort" remained the lowest. A comparison between travel motivations and actual recreational experiences revealed that "prioritizing safety and comfort" was the only factor with a statistically significant difference of 0.05.

In addition, tourists reported high levels of satisfaction and a strong intention to revisit the destination. The assessment looking into the potential of the tourist site revealed that Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park possess high potential for creative tourism development, as most indicators ranked highly, except for the "learning experiences for tourists", which was rated as moderate. Based on the collected data,

this study proposed a range of creative tourism activities organized into four programs: exploring wildlife, immersing in local culture, experiencing local-style leisure activities, and trekking along nature trails.

7. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Implications

The findings of this study yield several implications and recommendations for the enhancement of community-based tourism and wildlife management:

7.1.1 Theoretical application

The insights regarding travel motivations and actual recreational experiences can be instrumental in understanding wildlife tourists' behaviors. Other wildlife tourism sites may utilize this database to design activities and formulate tourism management plans that align with their tourists' needs. The assessment criteria developed in this study can also be adapted for use in other destinations that emphasize wildlife tourism management and community participation. Wildlife tourists are commonly categorized into three groups, which are ecotourists, general nature tourists, and casual wildlife observers, based on their levels of motivation, knowledge, and engagement (Ballantyne et al., 2009; Tapper, 2006). Based on the findings from this study, particularly due to the high frequency of first-time visitors, most motivations to visit the site centered on relaxation and nature exploration, and preferences for short, low-intensity visits. It appears that the majority of Thai tourists visiting Ban Ruam Thai Village and Kui Buri National Park fell into the two categories of general nature tourists or casual wildlife tourists rather than just ecotourists. This group only tends to seek recreational enjoyment of natural environments with moderate levels of interest in wildlife or conservation.

7.1.2 Guidelines for tourism activity development

The guidelines for developing tourism activities, derived from the analysis of travel motivations, the tourists' actual recreational experiences, and the assessment of the potential of the tourist site, can provide a framework for communities aiming for tourism development, especially those located near protected areas.

7.1.3 Implementation of C-CBT programs

Ban Ruam Thai Village should consider integrating the proposed C-CBT programs into the community's tourism offerings. Nevertheless, the successful organization of these programs will require thorough preparation and readiness from the community. This includes expanding collaborative networks with external stakeholders, clearly defining roles and responsibilities among tourism club members, and in particular enhancing the skills of local tour guides, which were highlighted as a significant area for improvement. Such preparations will enhance service quality and, ultimately, tourist satisfaction.

7.1.4 Role of Kui Buri National Park

Kui Buri National Park can utilize the study's findings to encourage community participation in tourism management and natural resource conservation efforts. The data collected regarding tourists' preferences can inform Kui Buri National Park about the unique requirements and needs of wildlife tourists, which are the main target demographic for the area. Additionally, Kui Buri National Park should ensure an adequate number of officers or rangers are available to lead activities at various nature sites. It should also serve as a knowledge hub for the community, focusing on ecosystem management, natural resource conservation, and addressing the impacts of tourism.

7.2 Recommendations for future research

Future research initiatives could focus on the following areas:

7.2.1 Program effectiveness evaluation

Subsequent studies should assess the effectiveness of the proposed tourism programs outlined in this research. Evaluations could involve experts using predefined criteria. Additionally, pilot tours based on the proposed programs should be organized, after which participating tourists should be able to give feedback. These assessments would address the current study's limitation in terms of the theoretical nature of program proposals by providing empirical evidence of their feasibility, appeal, and impact. Longitudinal research could also be conducted to examine how these programs could influence tourist satisfaction, learning outcomes, and community benefits over time.

7.2.2 Enhancement of learning experiences

Given the identified weaknesses in providing adequate learning experiences, particularly with regard to interpreting the meaning of the message from local tour guides and their overall capabilities, future

research should investigate strategies to improve the quality of local guiding services and how messages are interpreted. Future research could look more into how to develop local tour guides' skills, enhancing foreign language proficiency, refine interpretive signage related to nature and culture to be clearer, and create comprehensive guidebooks for the community. These efforts would directly address the current study's limitations identified in this study regarding language barriers and uneven interpretive quality, thereby enhancing the accessibility and inclusiveness of creative tourism experiences for both domestic and international tourists.

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