Tourism Impacts on the Ayutthaya World Heritage Site:

Measuring the Perceptions of the Host Community

ผลกระทบของการท่องเที่ยวต่อแหล่งมรดกโลกอยุธยา:

การวัดการรับรู้ของชุมชนท้องถิ่น

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the Ayutthaya local communities' values with regards to heritage and tourism and to measure the perceptions of the local communities toward the impacts of tourism on the Ayutthaya World Heritage Site and on the local community of Ayutthaya within which they live.The methodology proposed in this study was a community-based process that begins with the values of the local communities and relates these to all the tourist activities in Ayutthaya to generate a matrix that measures the perception of impacts on the local community. The results revealed that overall perceptions of the impacts of tourism received quite a positive response and were regarded as having a positive relationship with community values. The impacts of tourism on economic values were perceived as highly positive, followed by socio-cultural and environmental values which were in varying degrees less so. On the other hand, the impacts of tourism on environmental values was perceived as being highly negative followed by socio-cultural and economic which were seen as less negative.

Keywords: Ayutthaya, community, heritage, tourism impacts, perception

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งค้นหาคุณค่าของชุมชนท้องถิ่นในอยุธยา และวัดการรับรู้ของชุมชนท้องถิ่นใน
อยุธยาที่มีต่อผลกระทบของการท่องเที่ยวต่อเมืองมรดกโลกอยุธยาและต่อการคุณภาพชีวิตของ
ชุมชนท้องถิ่นเอง ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยที่ใช้ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้เป็นกระบวนการศึกษาที่ใช้ชุมชนเป็นฐาน
ซึ่งเริ่มด้วยการค้นหาคุณค่าของชุมชนท้องถิ่น และสร้างเครื่องมือวิจัยที่เป็นตารางความสัมพันธ์
ระหว่างคุณค่าดังกล่าวกับกิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยวในอยุธยาซึ่งจะนำไปใช้ในการวัดการรับรู้ของชุมชน
ท้องถิ่นของอยุธยานั้นเอง ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ชุมชนท้องถิ่นส่วนใหญ่รับรู้ว่าการท่องเที่ยวส่งผล
กระทบด้านบวกมากกว่าด้านลบ โดยรับรู้ว่ามีผลกระทบด้านบวกต่อเศรษฐกิจมากที่สุด ตามมาด้วย
สังคมวัฒนธรรม และสิ่งแวดล้อมตามลำดับ ในทางตรงกันข้าม ชุมชนท้องถิ่นเห็นว่าการท่องเที่ยว
ส่งผลกระทบด้านลบต่อสิ่งแวดล้อมมากที่สุด ตามมาด้วยด้านสังคมวัฒนธรรม และด้านเศรษฐกิจ
ตามลำดับ

คำสำคัญ: อยุธยา, ชุมชน, มรดก, ผลกระทบของการท่องเที่ยว, การรับรู้

INTRODUCTION

Heritage is our legacy from the past,

what we live with today,

and what we pass on to future generations.

(UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 1992-2012)

UNESCO World Heritage Centre (1992-2012) mentions, "Heritage" means cultural
and natural heritage that are irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. Some heritage
sites are valuable for all mankind or well known as "The World Heritage".

Historic City of Ayutthaya is one of The World Heritage Sites in Thailand, located in
Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province. Historic City of Ayutthaya is an ancient city that used
to be the capital city of Thailand (or Siam in the past) for 417 years. The city was founded
by King Rama I (King U – Thong) on April 3, 1350 and ruled by 33 kings of five dynasties
until 1767 (Ayutthaya Provincial Office 2007). The city itself is surrounded by 3 major rivers,
the Lopburi on the north, the Pasak on the east and the Chao Phaya on the south and the
west.

On December 13, 1991, The Historic City of Ayutthaya and Associated Historic Towns were granted Cultural World Heritage status by the World Heritage Committee following the cultural criteria (iii) which is *"to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared"*.

Since UNESCO declared Ayutthaya Historical Park to be a World Heritage Site, the numbers of tourists from around the world were increasing. Department of Tourism (2011) reported the number of visitors to Ayutthaya increases from 2,025,937 visitors in 1997 to 3,659,402 visitors in 2008 (786,158 were foreigners and 2,873,217 were Thai) (Department of Tourism, 2011).

The rapidly growth of tourism in Ayutthaya lead to a growth in the economy and the development of infrastructure in the city, but some problems have also emerged. Ayutthaya Fine Arts Department's officers (cited in Charassri, 2004) mentioned that the road infrastructure and its proximity to the sites also present some critical issues regarding pollution and damage as exhaust fumes and vibrations from passing traffic endangers the fragile monuments, more modern constructions have been added in recent years, the designs of the new buildings is not in harmony with most Ayutthaya monuments.

Tourism development and heritage conservation are very interrelated and encourage each other. Heritage plays a role as a tourist attraction while tourism can generate income for heritage conservation funds. On the other hand, tourism can impact negatively on heritage. Both heritage and tourism are highly valued by local communities. Therefore the task is always to attempt to find a balance between heritage conservation, tourism development, and quality of life of the local community. It is important to understand the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the heritage as perceived and valued by the host communities.

This research aims to measure the perceptions of the host community with regards to both the negative and positive impacts of tourism on the Ayutthaya World Heritage Site. The methodology proposed in this study is a *community-based* and *values-based* methodology. This methodology was first developed by Bushell, R., Scott J., Knowd I., and Simmons B. (2005) for the seaside community of Manly in Sydney, Australia. The research instrument in this study *originated from the host community* that, in turn, was used for measuring the perception of the host community. So the methodology used in this research is fundamentally different from previous studies that usually use the global indicators that

have been generated by experts, scholars or the researchers in the abstract and unrelated to the particularities of individual sites and communities. This research uses local indicators that emerge from local community itself. The methodology is also based on the sustainable development concept that recognizes that economic, environmental and socio-cultural issues are important and need to be integrated into both heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development in Ayutthaya.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the Ayutthaya local communities' values with regards to heritage and tourism.

2. To measure the perceptions of the local communities toward the impacts of tourism on the Ayutthaya World Heritage Site and on the local community of Ayutthaya within which they live.

3. To analyse the accordance between the tourism activities and the perception of tourism impacts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is widely perceived as a potential economic base, providing elements that may improve quality of life such as employment opportunities, tax revenues, economic diversity, festivals, restaurants, natural and cultural attractions, and outdoor recreation opportunities. There are concerns, however, that tourism can have negative impacts on quality of life. These can be in the form of crowding, traffic and parking problems, increased crime, increased cost of living, friction between tourists and residents, and changes in hosts' way of life (Ap and Crompton, 1993). Community consequences emerging from tourism development are often divided into three categories. First, economic, including elements such as tax revenue, increased jobs, additional income, tax burdens, inflation, and local government debt. Second, socio-cultural, including elements such as a resurgence of

traditional crafts and ceremonies, increased intercultural communication and understanding, increased crime rates, and changes in traditional cultures. Third, environmental, including elements such as protection of parks and wildlife, crowding, air, water and noise pollution, energy consumption, food production, waste management, wildlife destruction, vandalism, and litter (Andereck, 1995; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf and Vogt, 2005). A thorough understanding of each component of the tourism phenomenon is essential so that those involved with planning, management, and policy determination have a basis for decision-making.

In the destinations tourists encounter and interact with the local community and the local environment. This interaction leads to impacts on the local population, the environment and also on the tourists themselves. The impacts of tourism can be positive or beneficial, but also negative or detrimental. Whether impacts are perceived as positive or negative depends on the value position and judgement of the observer of the impacts (Mason, 2003).

In attempting to understand resident reactions to tourism, researchers have been applying these precepts. Earlier research has recognized that the elements being exchanged by the host community residents include not only economic components but also social and environmental factors (King, Pizam, and Milman, 1993; Milman and Pizam, 1988). Residents appear to be willing to enter into an exchange with tourists if they feel the transaction will result in a gain (Pizam, 1978). As some studies have found that residents are more likely to support tourism if they stand to benefit from it through employment for themselves or family members. Or they believe the benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts. Some studies show that people who do not benefit from tourism support the industry regardless. Some research has reported local concern over the impact of tourism development on property prices, access to recreation, traffic congestion, quality of life, salaries and higher prices. Other research shows little relationship between tourism development and indicators such as the quality of life (Pedesen, 2003). Prior studies have shown that economic gain, along with social and environmental factors, affects resident perceptions of tourism and their support of or opposition to tourism (Jurowsky, Uysal and Williams, 1997).

Lankford and Howard (1994) developed a tourism impact scale to detect opinions held by residents who live in destination areas. Their research showed that residents' attitudes are quite diverse depending on how tourism personally impacted on their own

lives. Those who work in the industry tend to be more accepting of and positive toward tourism. Those whose personal lifestyle may have changed in a negative way (i.e. crowding at their favourite recreation site) tend to be less positive (Vogt, et al., 2004). As well, Madrigal (1993 cited in Vogt, et all, 2004) found that residents who were economically dependent on tourism held stronger positive feelings about tourism. Residents' negative perceptions of tourism were less tied to economic dependency and instead was more a function of the level of tourism development in a community (more development, stronger negative attitudes). This shows that the impacts of tourism are concerned with the residents' feelings, attitudes or perceptions. Another study by King et al. (1993) reported residents of an area in Fiji, most of whom worked in the tourism industry, recognized "the good and the bad" impacts brought on by tourism. Economic benefits were desirable and residents felt social costs were brought on by outsiders to their homeland, including drug addition, organized and individual crime, and alcoholism (Vogt, et al., 2004: 242). Most researchers have demonstrated that economic benefits positively impact on resident perceptions of tourism and that social and environmental detriments have the opposite effects (Ap, 1992; Liu and Var, 1986; Pizam, 1978).

A study by Liu and Var (1986) demonstrated this complexity. They found that residents regarded environmental protection as more important than economic benefits of tourism but that they were unwilling to sacrifice their standard of living for environmental conservation. The complexity and dynamism of the exchange process suggests that our understanding of resident reactions to tourism would be enhanced by an analysis of *the interplay of values* residents place on the elements being exchanged and their perceptions of how tourism impacts upon *what they value* (Jurowsky, Uysal and Williams, 1997). This concept is very much the concern of the approach used in this research. The local community perceptions of how tourism impacts upon what they value is very important. The principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism, sufficient economy, and heritage conservation all, in their own ways, emphasize the balance between the triple bottom line values namely; economic values, environmental values, and socio-cultural values. And these triple bottom line values should not be just those of experts but include local community values because the local community always want to protect their values and the ways they can fulfil these values. Heritage and local community values can overlap because in many definitions, heritage refers to something inherited from the past that people would like to keep for the future generations, like values that people would like to

protect. Although this cannot be take for granted, especially if economic values over-ride conservation values. From a tourism perspective, local community perceptions of how tourism impacts upon their values that they want to protect is important if tourism is to enjoy the benefits arising from heritage places when those heritage places are within existing urban environments. Ayutthaya plays many roles and two of them relate to it being a World Heritage Site and tourist destination, as well as being a local community that values Ayutthaya heritage for tourism. So the local community may want to protect Ayutthaya for two reasons; firstly, because of the heritage values of Ayutthaya, and secondly, because tourismgeneratesmoreincomeandemployment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research method was mainly qualitative in orientation, whereas quantitative methods played a supporting role.

The research was carried out during November 2006 through March 2007 in the Historic City of Ayutthaya. The data collection was mainly achieved through qualitative methods. Three major techniques were used in this research; archive material research, in-depth interviews, and questionnaire.

The population of this research were local community or people living in Ayutthaya and other stakeholders namely; government agencies (e.g. Provincial officer, Municipality officer, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Tourist police, Department of Fine Art, etc.), and tourism related business (e.g. hotel managers, restaurant managers, travel agents, etc.). 40 stakeholders were collected by purposive sampling and 334 local communities were collected by accidental sampling.

Process of the Study

1. Finding heritage and tourism issues by the local community. In this stage, there are two sources of data i.e.

a. Secondary data: reading any archive material generated within the city of Ayutthaya, for example, local newspapers (Siam News and Muanchon), provincial minute of meeting, the periodical of Ayutthaya Municipality, the four year plans of the province, the periodical of Ayutthaya Chamber of Commerce, Ratchabhut University News Letter, local research papers and anything that is produced by local groups.

b. Primary data: site survey and interviews with stakeholders. During interview with stakeholders, the critical thing is just let's them talk about tourism in Ayutthaya and then seeing what issues come up. There should not be a question because that leads the discussion in a particular direction. The 40 stakeholders were chosen by purposive sampling. In-depth interviews were used to collect data from the stakeholders in Ayutthaya. Information was obtained from interviewing 40 stakeholders, for example: the Provincial Officer, Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) **Central Region office: Region 6,** Tourist Police, Clerk of the Municipality, Deputy District Chairman, Director of Chankasem Museum, Director of Chaosamphraya Museum, Editor of local newspaper; Siam News and Muan Chon, the Manager of Elephant Kraal and Elephant village, an Officer in the Department of Fine Art, an Officer in the Historical Education Centre, people in *wats*, hotel or guesthouse staff, abbots or monks, restaurant managers, boat tour businesses, some tuk-tuk and motorcycle drivers, souvenir vendors at *wats* and other tourist destinations, food and drink vendors at *wats* and other tourist destinations. The interviews were conducted with not only these stakeholders, but also with people who were not directly involved with tourism, for example, some shop-keepers in the modern part of the city; some academics; some students; and people who live in Ayutthaya.

2. Specifying the local community values by turning the issues into a series of values. In this step, the issues were turned into a series of *values*. For example, taking the following issues – "police were strict for traffic regulations in order to reduce road accidents" and "the government generated many campaigns to reduce accidents on the road", the <u>value</u> was – "traffic safety". An issue like – "police try to reduce crime rate during the World Heritage festival" can be expressed as a value: - "secure and

a safe community". Issues like – "bicyclists take their bicycle to everywhere, sometimes damaging to the site" and "somebody destroys, walks or climbs in forbidden areas" can be expressed as a <u>value</u>: – "conservation of the historical building or heritage site". Then showing the list of values to a number of stakeholders in Ayutthaya to check that the values make sense to people living in Ayutthaya and that the list covers all the tourism issues. There were 32 validated values listed as follow:

Environmental values

1) Clean Environment
2) Fresh Air
3) Quiet and Peaceful Environment

Socio-cultural values

4) Well Planed Riverside Landscape
5) Good City Plan and Zoning
6) No Conflict Over Land Use
7) Good Quality of Road
8) Good Traffic Movement
9) Traffic Safety
10) Parking Availability
11) Good Quality of Public Utility Infrastructure
12) Protection of the Place From Flood
13) Good Supervise on Entertainment/ Nightlife
14) Security/ Safety Community
15) Effective Co-ordination Between Government Agency
16) Community Participation in Tourism Planning
17) Effective Co-ordination Between Government, Private Sector, and Community
18) Human Resources Development in Tourism
19) Conservation of the Historical Building/ Heritage Site
20) Preservation of Local Culture, Tradition, Way of Life
21) Recovery and Preserving the Local Folk Wisdom
22) Proud in Local Identity
23) Raise Local Awareness and Understanding on World Heritage

24) Respecting the Sacredness/Holiness of Place and Respecting
    Customs/Rituals at the Temple

25) Fair Prices for Goods and Services

26) Good Image Community

27) Improvement and Development of Tourism Attraction and Facility

Economic values

28) Investment of Tourism Related Business

29) Encourage Local Product, Art and Craft, Local Food

30) Income Generation

31) Job/ Employment Generation

32) Financial Benefit Widely Distributed to Local Community

These values emerged from the local community them self. The list of validated values indicated that the stakeholders in Ayutthaya valued socio-cultural outweigh economic and environmental.

3. Specifying the tourism activities by recording all the activities that undertaken by tourists at the World Heritage Site and in the city of Ayutthaya. There were 25 tourist activities recorded in Ayutthaya as follows:

1) Visiting Ancient Ruins

2) Making Pilgrimage to a *wat*

3) Visiting Museum or Historical Study Centre

4) See the Way of Life and Handicraft Manufacture

5) Shopping

6) Visiting Events or Festivals

7) study tour

8) Night Life, Pub, Disco, Karaoke

9) Staying Overnight in Hotel or Guesthouse

10) Eating at Restaurant

11) Riding Elephant

12) City Tour by Coach

13) Using Bicycles

14) Using Cars and Car Parking

15) City Tour by Tram

16) Walking

17) Boat Trip

18) Using Public Transport/ *tuk-tuk*

19) Escorted Tour

20) Un-escorted Tour

21) Group Tour

22) FIT (Free Independent Traveller)

23) Visiting Wihara Pra Mongkhonbophit

24) Visiting Wat Chaiwatthanaram

25) Visiting Wat Yai Chaimongkhon/ Wat Phananchuang

4. Developing a matrix from the values and activities lists that have been made. A matrix was developed with <u>Tourist activities</u> on the 'y' or vertical axis and the <u>Values</u> on the 'x' or horizontal axis. This was done on a spreadsheet. For example, see Figure 3.

5. The matrix is then given to the local community or a variety people living in Ayutthaya. 334 respondents were collected by accidental sampling. The aim is to record the community perceptions of the impacts of tourism. Respondents were asked to record one of four possibilities relationship between a particular activity and value: a positive impact; a neutral; a negative impact or no relationship (that is, no impact either positive or negative). Respondents were asked to fill in the matrix by using "**+**" for positive impact; "**0**" for neutral impact; "**-**" for negative impact; and just leave it blank "__" for no relationship. For example, the value on the matrix may be "quiet and peaceful environment" on the vertical axis and, "visiting an ancient ruin" on the horizontal axis. The impacts of visiting an ancient ruin on a quiet and peaceful environment will be likely to be neutral or even positive (it adds to quiet and peaceful environment) so the answer may be a "**+**" or "**0**". However, "visiting events or festivals" may get a "**-**", because this activity may have a very big negative impact for a quiet and peaceful environment.

Values / Tourist activities	Clean Environment	Fresh Air	Quiet and Peaceful Environment	Well Planned Riverside Landscape	Good City Plan and Zoning	No Conflict Over Land Use
Visiting an ancient ruin						
Making Pilgrimage to a *wat*						
Visiting Museum or Historical Study Centre						
See the Way of Life and Handicraft Manufacture						
Shopping						
Visiting Events or Festivals						

Figure 3 The example of the matrix

6. The data gathered by means of the qualitative approach were combined, analysed, and categorized to describe the findings against the research objectives. For the data obtained quantitatively, this was processed through frequency distribution for data description by percentages.

The uniqueness of this research was that the research instrument came from local communities. The previous research about tourism impacts was based on an indicators approach. Although World Heritage embodies outstanding universal values, heritage places also have unique features valued by local communities. It is therefore more appropriate to generate a research instrument that captures directly the particular values associated with individual heritage sites. This was the first time such a methodology has been used in an Asian context for the study of the heritage-tourism-community interaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overall perceptions of the impacts of tourism received quite a positive attitude. No one strongly believed the costs of tourism outweighed its benefits. This suggested that the residents of Ayutthaya held quite positive attitudes towards tourism's impacts on their community (see figure 4). The results show that the local communities agree that tourism is good for Ayutthaya. At present, Ayutthaya is a major attraction, and the city continues to promote tourism as do the major tourism players in the creation of tourism images and tourism promotion, players like the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai Airways. Ayutthaya is a World Heritage Site and has numerous historic sites that attract tourists. The agreement by local communities about the positive nature of tourism in Ayutthaya is beneficial for the tourism industry and relevant agencies. However this support may not be beneficial for heritage management agencies that must not only safeguard the heritage values of the World Heritage site but contend with the issues tourism can pose for fragile archaeological sites (*World Heritage*, No.58, 2010)
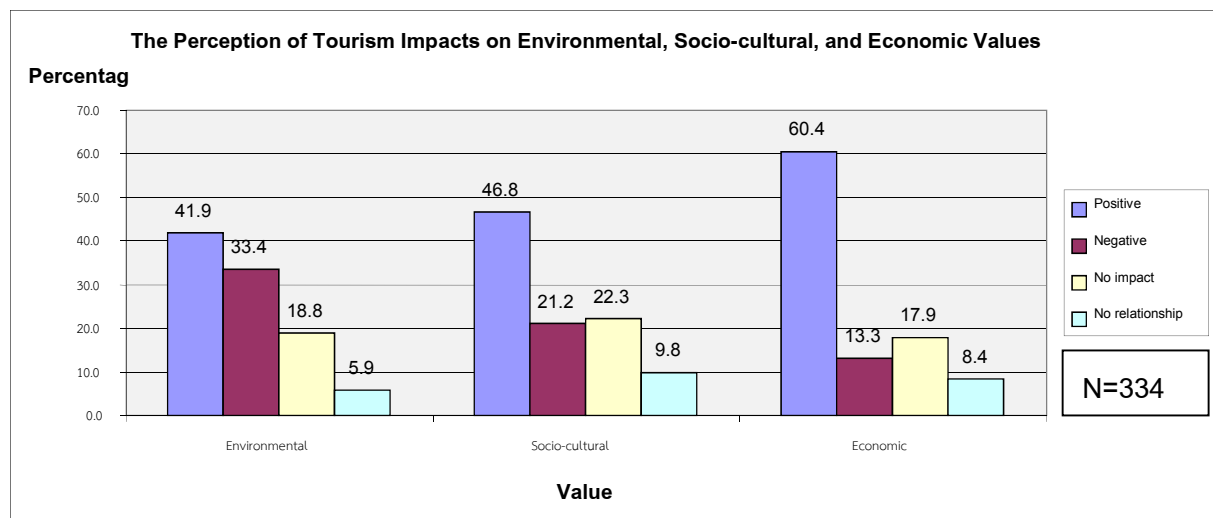

Figure 4 The Perception of Tourism Impacts on Environmental, Socio-cultural, and Economic Values

The overall results revealed that most of the host community perceived that tourist activities had positive impacts on the local community. Considered in the context of the sustainable development concept, that is, by grouping residents' responses using the triple

bottom line categories used in sustainable development research, the most positive value was economic, followed by socio-cultural and environmental values. On the other hand, the most negative value was environmental, followed by socio-cultural and economic (see figure 4).

In detail, all the values were seen to be positively impacted upon or enhanced except well planned riverside landscape which was neutral. The most positive responses were for income generation, job and employment generation, a good community image, and conservation of the historical heritage site. However, the values that had high negative responses (but still less than the positive ones) were the way tourism impacted on the quiet and peaceful environment, on a clean environment, on fresh air, on good traffic movement, and on security and safety for the community.

All the tourist activities were seen to have a mostly positive impact except night life (e.g. pub, disco, karaoke which was) perceived mostly negatively. The most positive tourist activities included visiting Wat Chaiwatthanaram, visiting Wat Yai Chaimongkhon or Wat Phananchuang, visiting the museum or Historical Study Center, visiting Wihara Pra Mongkhonbophit, visiting the ancient ruins, and making a pilgrimage to a *wat* (see figure 5).

The perception of tourism impacts on environmental values

The perceptions of impacts of tourism on the environment were a mixture of both positive and negative responses. The majority of respondents perceived more positively than negatively, that mean the respondents thought the tourism activities contribute to the environmental improvement, for examples, income from tourism can be used in the care of the place, and tourism could force related agencies to keep the environment clean because tourists will visit the destinations if the destinations is beautiful and clean. The results were consistent with Minakan's (2004) study on sustainable tourism development in Ayutthaya where all stakeholders confirmed that tourism activities in Ayutthaya had brought more improvements to the natural and the built environment. The beautification of tourism site emerged along with the cleanliness of the general and surrounding environment.
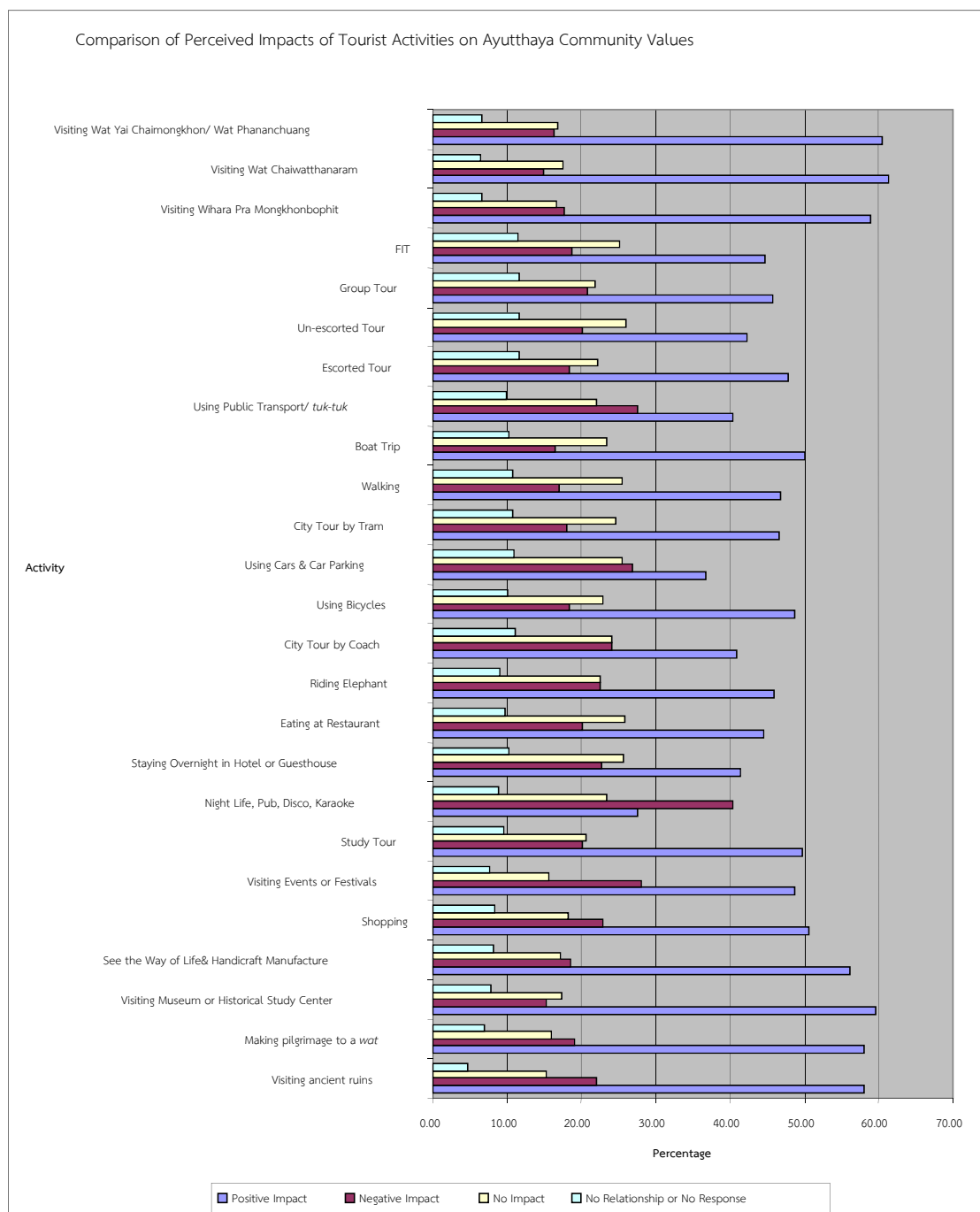
Figure 5 Comparison of Perceived Impacts of Tourist Activities on Ayutthaya Community Values

Ayutthaya is a World Heritage Site that has regulations for planning and management of the area and has to maintain a cleanliness of the area. By observation, although there were some dirty areas, there was overall cleanliness. It is difficult to say

whether Ayutthaya was clean because of it is a World Heritage Site or because of tourism. However the host community perceived and linked those environmental benefits to tourism. It is possible that the residents perceived a World Heritage Site and tourist destination is the same thing which is not surprising given the way Ayutthaya is promoted within the tourism industry. This would require further research but it is significant that local people blur the distinctions between heritage and tourism. This blurring accords with the way Ayutthaya is represented in guide books like those published by Lonely Planet: it is presented as an 'ancient city' and the archaeological remains are given as the reason to visit. In contrast, heritage management tends to regard tourism as a separate although powerful phenomenon (see *World Heritage Papers*, no.58, 2010).

The perception of tourism impacts on economic values

The results show that local communities strongly recognise the benefits of tourism in economic terms. During the survey and the interviews with local community members, one thing that almost everyone said was that tourism brought benefits in term of income generation and job opportunities. The respondents linked tourism to the revenue. This finding was consistent with Minakan (2004) who studied sustainable tourism development in Ayutthaya. He found that local people of Ayutthaya perceived that tourism provided them with a chance to earn more income and believed that if the economy of Ayutthaya was growing as a result of growth in tourism, then local people would receive the benefits.

The benefits of tourism on the economy are obviously a very important motivator for people to support tourism. And while economic benefits for locals is consistent with the principles of sustainable tourism this is not always the case because the situation is considerably complicated by foreign investment and the existence of transnational hotel chains and tour companies. Because many visitors to Ayutthaya are day trippers from Bangkok, economic leakage may not be as prevalent as in some heritage tourism destinations like Melaka in Malaysia where major international hotel chains are well represented with large multi-story properties. Tourism will only be sustainable if local communities including all stakeholders received benefits from tourism. Minakan (2004) stated that tourism helped improve the economic situation of Ayutthaya because when the financial status of local people was better, the economic situation of the province also better and the quality of life of the people would, it is assumed, be improved. The host

communities perceived that tourism had a positive effect on the economics of the city and the better economic situation helped improve their quality of life, so, logically, tourism was perceived to benefit their quality of life.

The results of the matrix survey indicated that tourism economic impact is directly related to local residents' own interests and it is easier to quantify, and measure such perceptions. On the other hand, desire for economic profits has been the target for tourism development, and economy-based policies made by local governments and media publicity have, furthermore, reinforced local residents' positive perception of tourism economic impact. At present, the tourism industry has become an important pillar to the economy of Ayutthaya and the survey shows that people are strongly aware of this. The implications for heritage conservation and management are clear: local people's economic welfare is a crucial part of their understanding of the heritage/tourism relationship and so conservation strategies and heritage management plans need to factor in this reality. The economics of heritage cannot be ignored.

The perception of tourism impacts on socio-cultural values

Residents tended to agree that tourism created both positive and negative community impacts. Ayutthaya residents felt most tourist activities could help enhance the community's socio-cultural values, by, for example, the enhancement of a good community image, the enhancement of the conservation of historical buildings and archaeological remains, and they think tourism could also enhance the preservation of local culture, traditions and the way of life. Tourism, it was found, made the local community proud of their local identity, and also raised awareness about and understanding of World Heritage. They felt tourism had a positive influence on community services offered, including items such as the good quality of roads and public utility infrastructure. Residents also thought tourism had a positive influence on respecting the sacredness and holiness of the place and respecting customs or rituals at the temples, for the recovery and preserving of local folk wisdom, and the improvement and development of tourist attractions and facility. In addition to these, Ayutthaya residents felt tourism exacerbates some community problems such as traffic movement, parking availability, traffic safety, and the security and safety of the community.

In Ayutthaya, socio-cultural values and its impacts were very important. During field studies and in the process of finding the values of the local community, many socio-cultural issues were mentioned by the local communities. When the issues were turned into values, organized so they corresponded to the triple bottom line categorization used in sustainable development measurements, environmental, economic, and socio-cultural indicators, there were just 3 values that were environmental in character, 5 values that were economic in character, and a massive 24 values that were socio-cultural in character. The local communities valued a lot in Ayutthaya that were social and cultural, obviously reflecting the cultural heritage significance of the city, its rich historical and cultural way of life and the place that Ayutthaya has in Thai history as a former royal capital which links the city to the traditions and symbolism of the Thai monarchy. It would be virtually impossible to live in Ayutthaya without some knowledge of the city's historical importance and some knowledge of the way the city is regarded by the present King, Rama IX, and the Royal Family. It is also a significant religious centre because Theravada Buddhism was the dominant religion throughout its history, from the time Ayutthaya rose to power until the present. More recently, the inscription of Ayutthaya onto the World Heritage list in 1991 has added to a local's perception of its importance.

All the tourist activities were seen to have a mostly positive impact except night life (e.g. pub, disco, karaoke which was) perceived mostly negatively (see figure 5). On the other hand, visiting wats (Wat Chaiwatthanaram, Wat Yai Chaimongkhon, and Wat Phananchuang) were seen to have a mostly positive impact. Those tourist activities were not only contrast in nature, but also contrast in the impacts perceived by the local community.

Visiting *wats* was always positive

The result show that the activities including visiting *wats*, making a pilgrimage to a *wat*, visiting Wihara Phra Mongkolbophit, visiting Wat Chaiwatthanaram, and visiting Wat Yai Chaimongkhon or Wat Phananchuang, were perceived as having positive impacts on all the values held by members of the community. Visiting a *wat* is the most important tourist activity of Ayutthaya. However, observations reveal that visiting a *wat* was likely to have a negative impact on some values, for example, valuing a quiet and peaceful environment because there were so many visitors visiting especially on the weekend. But

for residents the perception was that tourism activities had a positive effect on their values and this degree of positivity was always higher than negative effects, or responses that indicated no impact or no relationship between tourism and community values. From the survey it can be assumed that residents weighed up the relative relationship between certain activities and their core values. For example, when tourists visit a *wat*, they often come by car which had a negative impact on the quiet and peaceful environment of the heritage site, but the visit itself did not, it was believed, have a negative impact on the quiet and peaceful atmosphere of the temple precinct because the visitors simply looked or made a pilgrimage and within the temple precinct they are expected to control their behaviour when they make a temple visit. Therefore, in comparison with other activities, visiting a *wat* was perceived as a really peaceful activity, thus the reason why the respondents perceived visiting a *wat* as having a positive relationship to their values.

Night Life was always negative

Night life was the activity that was perceived negatively against almost all the values. There were 32 values in this study. Twenty-five values were perceived to be negatively impacted upon by night life. The values with perceived positive impact from night life were all economic values (investment in tourism related businesses, the encouragement of local product, art and craft and local food, income generation, job and employment generation, financial benefit being widely distributed to the local community). This is very important as the local residents clearly distinguish between one set of values (like economic values) and other sets of values. They recognized the economic contribution of night life but this was far outweighed by other values they held. Night life was the activity that was perceived as being contrary to visiting *wats* in because night life was linked to alcohol, drugs, temptation, accidents on the road, crime and so on. Because Ayutthaya is a historic city, the city of *wats*, a World Heritage site, and a sacred place for all Thai people, night life appeared, to the local community, to contradict the values represented by Ayutthaya.

CONCLUSION

The research results have indicated the complexity of perception. In some cases, the respondents perceived heritage and tourism as encouraging each other, while in some cases tourism was perceived as a source of problems. What is critical for both heritage and tourism management is to recognize this complexity and to understand that community values lie at the heart of any successful negotiation between heritage, tourism and the local community in all its complexity (Bushell and Staiff, 2012).

The findings have also shown that the local community blurs the distinctions between heritage and tourism. This is consistent with studies elsewhere in Southeast Asia (Bushell and Staiff, 2012; Staiff and Bushell, 2012). Ayutthaya is a World Heritage Site that has regulations for planning and management of the area and has to maintain a cleanliness of the heritage precinct. By observation, although there were some dirty areas, there was overall cleanliness. It is difficult to say whether Ayutthaya was clean because it is a World Heritage Site or because of tourism. However, the host community perceived and linked these environmental benefits to tourism. It is possible that the residents perceived a World Heritage Site and tourist destination as being the same thing which is not surprising given the way Ayutthaya is promoted within the tourism industry. This blurring accords with the way Ayutthaya is represented in guide books like those published by Lonely Planet: it is presented as an 'ancient city' and the archaeological remains are given as the reason to visit. In contrast, heritage management tends to regard tourism as a separate phenomenon. Ayutthaya takes the role of both a World Heritage Site and tourist destination. It would be far better for the authorities to integrate tourism and heritage management together (Bushell and Staiff, 2012).

In conclusion, there tended to be a consensus among local communities in Ayutthaya about the high desirability of tourism development and heritage conservation. The city it was believed needed both heritage conservation and tourism development. Heritage conservation alone without considering how to manage and develop tourism would not be desirable. The local community confirmed that tourism activities in Ayutthaya had brought more improvements to the economic, natural and the built environment, and the socio-cultural dimensions of Ayutthaya, and had improved the quality of life of their community. Thus from a local community perspective, heritage and tourism should be

developed and managed together; tourism was regarded as a source of benefits to heritage management and conservation and not a source of problems. Sustainable tourism management should therefore be used to achieve a balance between the three dimensions of sustainability: heritage conservation, sustainable tourism development, and the local communities' participation. The support of local people is especially important as recent heritage management directives from UNESCO make clear but such a support cannot be taken for granted despite the perceptions revealed in this research. The local community needs to understand the concept of heritage conservation, sustainable tourism and participated in heritage and tourism management, so it is important that in Ayutthaya there be ongoing education.

By the reason above, the related authorities namely; tourism authority of Thailand (TAT), the Department of Fine Art, and the Ayutthaya Municipality should understand that heritage and tourism can encourage each other. They should cooperate and working together because tourism, heritage conservation, and community development have to plan and manage together. The important thing is to educate local people about three dimensions and use the local communities' participation approach for planning and management.

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