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**PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF NAKHON SI THAMMARAT
RESIDENTS TOWARDS TOURISM IMPACTS AND
DEVELOPMENT**



PATCHAREE SUMETHOKHUL (91892)

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2016**

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DEVELOPMENT**



PATCHAREE SUMETHOKHUL (91892)

**A Thesis submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of
Government
in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

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ABSTRACT

In Thailand, tourism is viewed as a tool for community development, especially in the rural areas, and is often considered as an instrument in revitalizing the local economy, facilitating the improvement of the quality of life and safeguarding the natural and cultural resources. However, studies suggest that tourism development brings environmental, sociocultural and economic impacts to the community. Thus, it is vital that the planners and the stakeholders of tourism understand the local residents' perception of tourism and its impacts and must engage them actively during the planning stage of tourism development. The study examines how the residents of Nakhon Si Thammarat province in Southern Thailand perceive the impacts of tourism and how this relates to their support for future tourism development. This study used mixed methods, combining a survey using questionnaires, in-depth qualitative interviews, and participant observation. A total of 544 usable questionnaires were analyzed and the respondents of the study were divided into two groups; tourism participants and tourism non-participants. While for the in-depth qualitative interview, 12 community leaders were involved. Findings of this study show that the residents recognize several positive impacts of tourism, such as; better standards of roads and other public facilities, preservation of heritage attraction and cultural festivals. While the negative impacts of tourism are; poor air quality, crowded areas during the cultural festival, construction of large hotels, resorts and tourists' attractions has destroyed the natural environment. There are eight research hypotheses in this study. Results of the hypothesis testing found some significant differences in perception between residents grouped by their participation in tourism, their employment, and length of residency; towards the positive and negative impacts of tourism. The study also found that the residents who perceived positive impacts of tourism will support for additional tourism development while those who perceived negative impacts will support for restricted tourism development. This study thus contributes to the theoretical advancement in the field of residents' attitudes studies. Specifically, the study findings demonstrate that residents' perceptions on the impacts of tourism can serve as a valuable concept in evaluating residents' support for future tourism development.

Key Words: Residents' Perception, Tourism Impacts, Residents' Support, Tourism Development, Southern Thailand.

ABSTRAK

Di Thailand, pelancongan dilihat sebagai satu cara untuk membangunkan masyarakat, terutamanya masyarakat luar bandar. Pelancongan juga sering dianggap sebagai instrumen untuk memperkukuhkan ekonomi tempatan, di samping membantu meningkatkan kualiti hidup dan melindungi sumber alam semula jadi dan budaya masyarakat setempat. Pada masa yang sama, terdapat kajian yang menunjukkan bahawa pembangunan pelancongan membawa kesan kepada alam sekitar, sosiobudaya dan ekonomi masyarakat tempatan. Oleh itu, adalah penting bagi para perancang dan pihak yang berkepentingan dalam pelancongan untuk memahami persepsi penduduk tempatan terhadap pelancongan dan juga kesannya. Penduduk tempatan mestilah dilibatkan secara aktif pada peringkat awal perancangan pembangunan pelancongan. Kajian ini mengkaji persepsi penduduk wilayah Nakhon Si Thammarat di Selatan Thailand terhadap kesan pelancongan dan kaitannya dengan sokongan mereka kepada pembangunan pelancongan pada masa hadapan. Kajian yang dijalankan ini menggunakan kaedah gabungan, iaitu dengan menggabungkan kajian menggunakan borang soal selidik, temubual kualitatif secara mendalam, serta pemerhatian secara penyertaan. Sebanyak 544 borang soal selidik telah dianalisa dan responden kajian ini dibahagikan kepada dua kumpulan; iaitu mereka yang terlibat dalam pelancongan dan yang tidak terlibat dalam pelancongan. Manakala untuk temubual kualitatif secara mendalam, kajian ini telah melibatkan seramai 12 orang pemimpin komuniti. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa penduduk telah mengenalpasti beberapa kesan positif pelancongan, seperti; tahap jalan raya dan kemudahan awam yang lebih baik, pemeliharaan tarikan warisan dan perayaan kebudayaan. Manakala kesan negatif pelancongan adalah; kualiti udara yang teruk, kesesakan semasa pesta kebudayaan, kemusnahan alam sekitar akibat dari pembinaan hotel-hotel besar, pusat peranginan dan tempat tarikan pelancong. Terdapat lapan hipotesis penyelidikan dalam kajian ini. Keputusan ujian hipotesis menunjukkan terdapat beberapa perbezaan persepsi yang signifikan antara penduduk yg terlibat dan yang tidak terlibat dalam pelancongan, pekerjaan mereka, dan tempoh menetap; terhadap kesan positif dan negatif daripada pelancongan. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa penduduk yang berpandangan pelancongan memberi kesan positif akan menyokong kepada pembangunan tambahan pelancongan manakala mereka yang berpandangan sebaliknya akan menyokong kepada pembangunan pelancongan yang terhad. Kajian ini sekali gus menyumbang kepada kemajuan teori dalam bidang kajian sikap penduduk. Secara khususnya, hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa persepsi penduduk terhadap kesan pelancongan boleh digunakan sebagai satu konsep untuk menilai sokongan penduduk terhadap pembangunan pelancongan pada masa hadapan.

Katakunci: Persepsi Penduduk, Kesan Pelancongan, Sokongan Penduduk, Pembangunan Pelancongan, Selatan Thailand.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In many developing nations, including Thailand, the role of tourism in socioeconomic development is well-established. Tourism is such industry which is able to generate significant income for the country and, for many years, tourism had been the largest source of income for Thailand in relations to other economic sectors. In 2012, tourists' arrivals to Thailand had for the first time exceeded the 20 million mark. This was made possible through Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)'s various tourism promotional activities and its slogan: "*Amazing Thailand: It begins with People*".

The use of tourism for regional development has become a popular strategy for many communities. Scholarly literature tracing the evolution of tourism planning offers a widening view of tourism as a resource-based industry, with the host community at the nucleus of the product. Thailand has 77 provinces and Nakhon Si Thammarat is one of the provinces in Southern Thailand. It is known for its historical, cultural and natural tourist attractions scattered all over its 23 districts. This study aims to explore how the general residents of Nakhon Si Thammarat province in Southern Thailand perceived the impacts of tourism in their province and their support for future tourism development. It is at this level of the destination community that the impacts of tourism are most intense.

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