



Potential and development approach for multicultural tourism in Samut Sakhon Province

Samran Phondee, Benjarat Sutjakul*

Department of General Education, Faculty of Sciences and Health Technology, Navamindradhiraj University, Bangkok 10300, Thailand

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Abstract

This research aims to examine a body of knowledge related to ethnic diversity and the state of “multicultural society” in Samut Sakhon and to analyze the potential of multicultural tourist attractions, including to analyze an approach for the multicultural tourist attraction development in the area. The research was conducted by a mixed-method approach using qualitative research, data collection and documentary research, field study, interviews, and quantitative research. The data were analyzed and presented using an analytical description. The results showed that Samut Sakhon is a “multicultural society” with a diverse ethnic establishment, including the Thai, Chinese, Mon, and Lao Song. It has allowed the diversity of cultural areas which are capable of tourist attraction development, categorized in three directions. such as, cultural learning centers/cultural wisdom heritage, history and belief-related cultural areas and religion and belief-related cultural areas. According to the field survey, the potential analysis of multicultural tourist attractions through the interviews showed that the overall results were high in all aspects. The result from the questionnaire completed was also high. When considered individually, tourist attraction value was the highest, followed by the popularity of tourist attractions, and convenience of accessibility, respectively. The important approach for this consists of; (1) Establishing a joint department to achieve a visible improvement in multicultural tourism development; (2) Developing potential for multicultural tourist attraction systemically; (3) Managing tourism service-oriented towards network area; and (4) Developing a definitive and original multicultural tourist attraction to help increase the popularity.

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: benjarat@nmu.ac.th (Sutjakul, B.).

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Introduction

Samut Sakhon province spans 872.347 square kilometers and sits alongside the Tha Chin River near the Gulf of Thailand's estuary (Niemmanee et al., 2015). Comprising three districts—Muang, Ban Phaew, and Krathum Baen (Khongouan et al., 2021)—the area relies heavily on the Tha Chin River, often likened to a life-giving artery for locals (Rachasak et al., 2010; Chengcharoen et al., 2013; Vorasiha, 2018). The population, primarily Thai Chinese and Thai Raman, embraces diverse belief systems and cultural traditions, boasting 113 religious sites, including Buddhist temples, Christian churches, mosques, and numerous shrines (Samut Sakhon Provincial Office, n.d.). The province hosts four main ethnic groups—Thai Chinese, Thai Raman-Mon, Lao Song or Thai Song Dam, and Thai Phuen Thin (Duangwiset, 2018). This amalgamation of cultures creates a harmonious, adapted lifestyle (Miscevic, 2001; Herrmann, 2010), making Samut Sakhon a multicultural hub within Thailand's central region. This multicultural aspect is not just socially valuable but is also seen as “cultural capital”, ripe for economic growth, particularly in the development of multicultural tourist attractions (Mungkalakeeree et al., 2018).

Upon examination of the Samut Sakhon Provincial Development Plan spanning 2018 to 2022, significant emphasis was placed on ecotourism and the province's historical significance (Samut Sakhon Provincial Office, n.d.). Samut Sakhon features a diverse array of cultural attractions, suggesting considerable potential for the expansion of multicultural tourism. Given its status as an ancient province steeped in rich historical heritage and hosting a multifaceted multicultural society, there exists a belief that these facets could allure a distinct set of visitors seeking a distinctive provincial experience (Sriwichien et al., 2013). However, the full exploitation of Samut Sakhon's local multicultural identity to optimize its tourism potential has been lacking, leading to missed opportunities for the communities central to this cultural wealth and adversely impacting local economic value.

Data from the Samut Sakhon Provincial Tourism and Sports Office depict noteworthy fluctuations in tourist and sports visitation from 2019 to 2022, attributed to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The statistics indicate a marked decline in visitor numbers: 1,515,458 tourists in 2019, 475,829 in 2020, 134,414 in 2021, followed by a resurgence to 552,886 in 2022 (Samut Sakhon Provincial Tourism and Sports Office, online).

This substantial decline during the pandemic, succeeded by a notable rebound in 2022, signifies a critical juncture for the province to advance its tourism prospects across various facets. The surge in visitor numbers presents a pivotal moment to formulate strategies tailored to accommodate the growing tourist influx and explore potential tourism avenues. Of particular interest is the concept of fostering multicultural tourism within the province, representing a promising avenue for its development. Hence, this research did not exclusively concentrate on existing tourist destinations but instead encompassed the entirety of the cultural landscape to assess the overall potential for future developmental approaches.

Literature Review

The examination of the literature review distinctly segments the content into three principal divisions:

Tourism Space Utilization in Samut Sakhon Province

Rungratri Ungcharoen and Chawalee Na Thalang's pivotal work titled “Study of the Ecological Potential of Samut Sakhon Province” provides crucial insights into the governmental policies and guidelines crucial for effective tourism management within the province. Similarly, Sunthon Wattanaporn's research on “Integrated Tourism Strategy Management in Samut Sakhon Province” (Wattananaphon, 2012) comprehensively elucidates the province's distinctive geographical features, shedding light on its innate tourism potential, notably encompassing ecotourism opportunities.

Society, Culture, and Tourism in Samut Sakhon Province

Exploring this domain reveals the significant contributions of Chaisingkananont et al. (2016) “*Interaction between ethnic communities in Mueang District, Samut Sakhon Province.*” Their findings underscore the continual influx and settlement of diverse ethnic groups in the region, profoundly reshaping the cultural landscape of Samut Sakhon Province. Additionally, the study by Duangwiset (2018), titled “Sakhonburi from the Villagers' Way of Life: Transition from Local Way of Life in the Tha Chin River Basin, Samut Sakhon Province”, offers a comprehensive portrayal of the province's societal diversity and the burgeoning multicultural milieu.

Tourism Development Guidelines in Samut Sakhon Province

Suthorn Wattanaporn's seminal work on "Integrated Tourism Strategy Management in Samut Sakhon Province" provides a detailed exploration of tourists' perspectives on prevailing issues and obstacles in managing tourism within the region.

The literature substantiates the significant tourism potential inherent in Samut Sakhon Province, encompassing diverse natural landscapes, geographic allure, and a culturally rich society. Despite these attributes, its complete potential remains untapped. Consequently, this research endeavor seeks to address these gaps in academic comprehension.

Theoretical Framework

The fundamental framework comprises three primary dimensions:

1. **Tourism Management Concepts:** Encompassing six essential facets, this domain includes considerations such as physical attributes, the perceived value of tourist sites, factors affecting accessibility, available amenities, the appeal to tourists, and the degree of involvement from both visitors and local residents.

2. **Multicultural Society Concept:** This sphere delves into a thorough understanding of a multicultural society, encompassing definitions, interpretations, classifications, constituent components, and the intricate interplay of ideas and beliefs shaping cultures. Moreover, it examines the impact of diverse populations on the social fabric of a multicultural society in Samut Sakhon Province.

3. **Participation Concepts:** Exploring involvement in varied forms and attributes, this segment contemplates the engagement of relevant sectors across diverse dimensions. It critically assesses participation from both the public and private spheres, emphasizing the existing level of benefits derived from managing tourism.

Conceptual Framework

The researchers have established the conceptual framework of the research as follows (Figure 1).

Methodology

This research employed mixed-method research consisting of qualitative and quantitative research as follows:

1. **Qualitative Research:** The instrument used is an interview form divided into three parts: Part 1 General information on multicultural tourist attractions, Part 2 Potential of multicultural tourist attractions and Part 3 Approach for multicultural tourist attractions.

2. **Quantitative Research:** The instrument used is a questionnaire through the Google form system by collecting data from tourists who have traveled to cultural tourist attractions in Samut Sakhon Province. Within six dimensions, domain includes considerations such as physical attributes, the perceived value of tourist sites, factors affecting accessibility, available amenities, the appeal to tourists, and the degree of involvement. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: Part 1 Basic information including gender, age, educational level, income, occupation, visitation frequency,

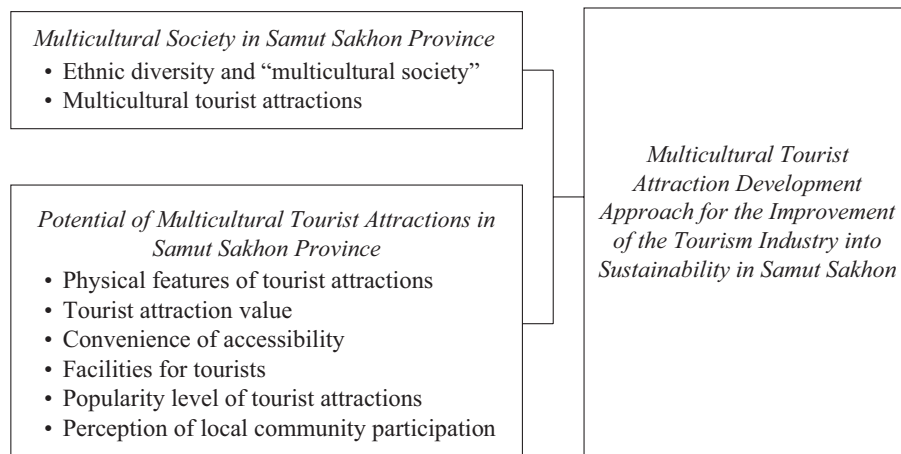


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

and purpose of visit. Part 2 Level of opinion on the potential of multicultural tourist attractions in Samut Sakhon, including physical features, tourist attraction value, the convenience of accessibility, facilities for tourists, popularity level of tourist attractions, and perception of local community participation. And, Part 3 Suggestions.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies have been systematically employed adhering to academic protocols, encompassing five key stages: firstly, the analysis of data; secondly, the development of research instruments; thirdly, rigorous evaluation by experts to ensure quality; fourthly, testing with specific target cohorts; and finally, the application to a representative sample group.

Scope of Research

Scope of area covers all three districts in Samut Sakhon consisting of Muang, Krathum Baen, and Ban Phaew and the scope of content is divided into three main parts, which comprise the state of a multicultural society, the potential of multicultural tourist attractions, and the development approach.

Population and Sample

The qualitative research involved 15 participants representing various aspects of provincial culture, including local administrators, a local philosopher, and members of the private sector. These individuals were purposefully selected due to their relevance and involvement in the subject under study. The quantitative research comprised 402 randomly chosen individuals from tourists who visited diverse cultural attractions in Samut Sakhon province. The questionnaire was distributed using the Google form system. As the total tourist population was unknown, the sample size was calculated utilizing Yamane's formula at a 95 percent confidence level and a margin of error no greater than 5 percent, resulting in a sample size of 384 individuals.

Results

The research result was divided into three parts according to the research objectives as follows:

Part 1: Ethnic Diversity and the State of “Multicultural Society” in Samut Sakhon

Ethnic diversity can be separated into four major groups:

The Thai Phuen Thin

This group lived around the area. Most of them chose to settle in fertile areas, especially on the banks of lateral canals, for example, Thai Phuen Thin Khok Kham, Khok Krabue, Khlong Na Khwang, Khlong Phaew, Rong Khe, Don Yao, etc. (Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, Public Organization, n.d.). Subsequently, they had grown in numbers and assimilated into other ethnic groups.

The Thai Chinese

This group had the greatest number of people. Most of them were “Teochew people”, who settled densely in the area of Tha Chalom, Mahachai, and Tha Chin Estuary (Baffie, 2003). In earlier times, these people were skilled laborers in the production sector, having the liberty of travel and settlement (Rappa, 2022; Silapacharanan, 2013). They played an important part in royal commerce, tax collection, foreign commerce, building wooden fishing vessels as well as ocean navigation (Kanoksilpatham, 2016). The people had spread across the provincial area including Ban Phaew and Krathum Baen.

The Thai Raman-Mon

The people of this group had arrived in the early Rattanakosin period, some of them scattered throughout the Northern and Central regions, fleeing from war and finding work opportunities (McCormick, 2014; Watson, 2016; Suvarnathong et al., 2022). In general, they tended to take up residence around the watershed and fertile area (Van Roy, 2010). The earliest Mon groups were in Tambon Ban Ko and Tha Sai while the rest had spread across Tha Chin riverbank, Maha Chai, Sunak Hon, and new canals (Chaisingkananon & Phothimani, 2018). Some of them could preserve their language and cultural identities despite globalization (Chaichana et al., 2018). According to an interview with Mr. Pramote Chaomuangkhong, the largest group lived in Ched Riew and Ban Phaew (P. Chaomuangkhong, personal communication, October 26, 2021).

The Thai Song Dam or Lao Song

Originally emigrated from Laos, these people were a part of the group that had moved in from Khao Yoi, Petchaburi Province (Kaewboucha, 2008; Chaityatorn et al., 2010). The main group settled in Ban Phaew, Nongsonghong, with a small number of people living together with the Thai and Thai Chinese (P. Chaomuangkhong, personal communication, October 26, 2021). Since they had married people

across different ethnic groups and had a similar culture to the Thai, and, also adjusted themselves to others harmoniously, the culture of the Lao Song in Samut Sakhon had become the least distinguishable (Kethhao, 2018)

Despite the diversity of ethnic groups in the Samut Sakhon area in terms of different ways of life and cultures, the people could adjust themselves and live together harmoniously and peacefully, bringing the state of a “multicultural society” to fruition. As the cultural area has an interesting uniqueness, regarding economic aspects, this could be developed into multicultural tourist attraction (Jiratham et al., 2020). The area can be categorized into three groups of “Multicultural Tourist Attractions” by Ethnic Diversity in Samut Sakhon as follows:

Group 1 Cultural Learning Centers/Cultural Wisdom Heritage

Tha Chalom Fishing Village, Tambon Tha Chalom, Muang, Samut Sakhon Province; Benjarong Village, Tambon Don Kai Dee, Kratum Ban; Samut Sakhon Cultural Learning Center, Tambon Maha Chai, Muang; Thai Song Dam Cultural Preservation Center; Tambon Nong Song Hong, Ban Phaew, etc.

Group 2 Legend and History Related Cultural Area

Wichien Chodok Fortress and City Pillar, Tambon Mahachai, Muang Samut Sakhon; Phan Thai Norasing Shrine, Tambon Phan Thai Norasing, Muang Samut Sakhon; HRH Prince Admiral Chumphon Khet Udomsak Royal Palace; Wat Sri Sutharam (Wat Kam Phra), Tambon Bang Ya Phraek, Muang Samut Sakhon, etc.

Group 3 Religion and Spirituality Related Cultural Area

Wat Krok Krak, Wat Yai Chom Prasat, Kuan Yin Religious Park, Wat Chong Lom, Guan Yu Shrine, Pun Thao Kong Shrine, Tha Chalom, Wat Ketmadi Sri Wararam, Wat Khok Kham, Wat Bang Ya Phraek, Wat Sri Buranawat, Wat Pa Chai Rangsi, Thousand-Hand Kuan Yin Shrine on Khlong Chak, Pun Thao Kong Shrine on Khlong Maha Chai, Wat Ko and Wat Bang Krachao

in Samut Sakhon area, Wat Ched Riew and Wat Rat Satthakayaram in Ban Phaew, and Wat Tha Mai, Wat Nang Sao in Krathum Ban, etc.

Nevertheless, these areas have not been designated as tourist attractions; they were primarily intended to be cultural activity spaces for each ethnic group. There are some areas already developed into tourist attractions, most of which are religious shrines and temples (Runra & Sujachaya, 2019). The most obvious form of cultural tourism in Samut Sakhon was expressed through cultural activities organized by the government and private sectors, primarily during festive seasons.

Part 2: Potential of Multicultural Tourist Attractions in Samut Sakhon

According to a field study and interview with key informants, the aspects of physical features, value, convenience of accessibility, facilities, popularity, and local participation in tourist attractions were ranked high.

Quantitative information obtained from questionnaires completed by 402 tourists, 121 male and 281 female participants, found that the majority of responders were at the age of 21–30, 298 persons, 74.13 percent, while the minority were 61 and older, 2 persons, 0.5 percent. Regarding education levels, the majority were holding a bachelor’s degree, 287 persons, 71.39 percent; the minority were doctorates, 4 persons, 1.0 percent. On the subject of income, the majority earned 10,001–20,000 per month, 192 persons, 47.76 percent while the minority earned 30,001 and higher, 31 persons, 7.71 percent. Considering the occupations, most of the participants were students, 197 persons, 49 percent. On visitation frequency to Samut Sakhon for travel, 2 times or more was answered by 176 persons, 43.78 percent, and the purpose of visit to cultural tourist attractions for recreation was answered by 216 persons, 53.73 percent.

Regarding opinions of tourists on the potential of multicultural tourist attractions in the Samut Sakhon area, the overall level was high, $\bar{x} = 3.89$, $SD = 0.80$, as follows (Table 1).

Table 1 Tourist attraction potential scores and ranks by aspects

No.	Aspects of Tourist Attraction Potential	\bar{x}	SD	Level of Potential	Rank
1.	Physical Features of Tourist Attractions	3.91	0.78	High	4
2.	Tourist Attraction Value	3.99	0.78	High	1
3.	Convenience of Accessibility	3.73	0.87	High	5
4.	Facilities for Tourists	3.85	0.78	High	6
5.	Popularity of Tourist Attractions	3.93	0.77	High	2
6.	Local Community Participation Perception	3.91	0.81	High	3
Total		3.89	0.80	High	

When considering each aspect in order, it was found that:

1. Physical features of tourist attractions were generally ranked high, $\bar{x} = 3.91$, $SD = 0.78$. The state of being the highest potential tourist attraction with pertinent cultural activities was at the highest level, $\bar{x} = 4.00$, $SD = 0.78$ while the beauty, impressive extraordinary features were ranked the lowest, $\bar{x} = 3.83$, $SD = 0.75$, yet this was considered a high level.

2. Tourist attraction value was ranked high collectively, $\bar{x} = 3.99$, $SD = 0.78$. On the issue of being tourist attractions emphasizing significant historical value with interesting educational background information, the result was high, $\bar{x} = 4.02$, $SD = 0.79$. Regarding the issue of being tourist attractions with aesthetics and extraordinary features, the score was at the lowest level, $\bar{x} = 3.94$, $SD = 0.80$, yet this was considered a high level.

3. Convenience of accessibility was ranked high, $\bar{x} = 3.73$, $SD = 0.87$. The availability of comprehensive traffic/information signs for tourists was considered the highest potential; the score received was at a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.80$, $SD = 0.86$. The potential of a security system for the safety of tourists within tourist attractions was scored the lowest but still considered a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.64$, $SD = 0.88$.

4. Facilities for tourists were generally ranked high $\bar{x} = 3.85$, $SD = 0.78$. The potential for the availability of adequate and convenient food and beverage shops was scored the highest, $\bar{x} = 3.92$, $SD = 0.76$. The potential for the availability of adequate space for tourists such as visiting space, benches, or rest areas within the attractions received the lowest score but was still considered a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.84$, $SD = 0.79$.

5. Popularity of tourist attractions was scored high, $\bar{x} = 3.92$, $SD = 0.77$. The potential for becoming generally recognized popular tourist attractions showed a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.98$, $SD = 0.80$ while the potential for crowdedness of tourists was scored the lowest but still considered a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.87$, $SD = 0.8$.

6. Local community participation perception was ranked high, $\bar{x} = 3.91$, $SD = 0.81$. The potential for the perception of local friendliness through hospitality and facilitation for tourists showed the highest level, $\bar{x} = 3.98$, $SD = 0.83$. The potential for the preparedness of the host communities on services and facilitation for tourists was scored the lowest but still considered a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.86$, $SD = 0.79$.

The overall level of potential for cultural tourist attractions in Samut Sakhon Province was high in every aspect. This reflected that the attractions in the studied area were optimized for the improvement or development

into full-fledged cultural tourist attractions, which would be aimed at the improvement of the travel industry in Samut Sakhon to sustainability.

Part 3: Development Approach for the Improvement of Multicultural Tourist Attractions in Samut Sakhon Province to Sustainability

It is imperative for all stakeholders to collaborate in order to take action, with the Samut Sakhon Provincial Tourism and Sports Office serving as the primary operational agency. The collective endeavor aims to develop multicultural tourist attractions in the region and elevate the standards of the tourism industry in Samut Sakhon Province, utilizing four distinct approaches as outlined below:

1. Establishing a collaborative agency comprising representatives from the public, private, and local sectors is recommended for the targeted development of multicultural tourist attractions. This agency will oversee multicultural tourism management initiatives within both the province and the local vicinity. It will function as a committee, engaging in decision-making processes pertaining to planning, implementation, and result evaluation. The overarching objective is to enhance the standard of multicultural tourism across the entirety of the Samut Sakhon region.

2. Development of multicultural tourist attractions should encompass various dimensions. This includes enhancing support for tourists across physical characteristics, cultural values of tourist attractions, and access to facilities. Such support can be facilitated through collaborative agencies established for public relations. In the broader context of development, a central committee can oversee the overall progress. However, for localized development efforts, specific committees from respective areas should be engaged in the process.

3. Designing a networked system for multicultural tourism activities is recommended given the relatively small size of Samut Sakhon Province and its convenient transportation routes. Being in close proximity to the Bangkok area and not classified as a long-distance travel destination, a networked approach or a unified database to refer tourists can significantly enhance the tourism value. Such a tourism network would consolidate various information sources, including destinations, travel routes, and tourism activities, thereby augmenting the overall tourism experience. This network can take various forms, such as electronic databases or printed materials provided by local tourist attractions, and should be managed by a collaborative agency involving all relevant sectors.

4. The initiative to develop the Tha Chalom Subdistrict area as a prototype for multicultural tourism within the province is proposed. The selection of Tha Chalom Subdistrict as a development model stems from its inherent potential and the presence of key elements conducive to multicultural tourism. The aim is to elevate this area to the status of a primary travel destination and subsequently expand its tourism footprint or systematically guide tourists to networked regions. The initial phase entails extending the focus to areas previously overlooked as tourist attractions, yet possessing the essential characteristics of multicultural tourism destinations. Such locales include the Tha Chalom fishing village, Benjarong Village, Wichian Chodok Fortress, City Pillar Shrine, Wat Yai Chom Prasat, among others.

However, ensuring the sustained development of multicultural tourism in Samut Sakhon Province hinges significantly on involving local inhabitants or custodians of the culture across all facets, particularly in cultural management. This active engagement is crucial for the preservation of these local cultures in their genuine essence, leading to long-term sustainability.

Discussion

The analysis of each issue according to the research objectives is presented as follows:

The Examination of a Body of Knowledge Related to Ethnic Diversity and the State of “Multicultural Society” in Samut Sakhon Province

It was revealed that there have been different ethnic groups settled in the province long time ago. The most prominent groups were the Thai Phuen Thin, Thai Chinese, Thai Raman-Mon, and Thai Song Dam or Lao Song. Each group had a distinguishable social and cultural identity, living together harmoniously in the state of a “multicultural society.” This corresponded to an explanation given by Sirisakdamkoeng (2006) that a “multicultural society” comprises two cultural groups and more, each has its own identity and community. Moreover, such also agrees with the conceptual framework of Weerasai and Nuansakul (1983) who explained that a multicultural society consists of diversity of races and religions within the same nation, culture or subculture of different races or religions, conflicts in races and religions and power of control in the hands of some dominating racial and cultural groups over others.

The value of the “multicultural society” of people in Samut Sakhon could be regarded as “capital resources” in the development of the area into multicultural tourist attraction. This would increase economic value for the local communities, especially in responding to the demand for multicultural tourism. Pawa-Thongsawang and Charoenvisal (2020) described that multicultural tourism is the examination of the knowledge of the area which has significant historical and cultural features portraying the process of social and human development through history, affecting culture, knowledge, and social value appreciation. It would manifest through the lives of people in different periods in terms of economy, society, and tradition. Roengsumran (2016) suggested that sustainable development could be possible when each individual realizes their potential.

The unique and outstanding “multicultural society” in Samut Sakhon could be transformed into “economic capital” if its potential was developed or improved. Thus, the improvement of income, quality of life, tourism industry, and the local economy would lead to sustainability (Yusuf et al., 2021).

The Potential Analysis of Multicultural Tourist Attractions in Samut Sakhon

Through the survey, interviews, and data collection from questionnaires on six important aspects consisting of physical features, tourist attraction value, the convenience of accessibility, facilities, the popularity of tourist attractions, and host community participation, the qualitative research revealed that the overall assessment was at a high level in all aspects while the quantitative research showed a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.89$, $SD = 0.80$. This was in accordance with potential assessment principles on multicultural tourist attractions featured in the works of Silpa-acha (2012). The aforementioned results could be interpreted as the essential elements of multicultural tourism in Samut Sakhon having the potential and readiness for the development and improvement of the tourism industry. Considering the results individually, it was found that several issues, whose data were collected from qualitative questionnaires completed by tourists, could be discussed.

Potential for tourist attraction value, whose overall result was at a high level and was higher than the rest, $\bar{x} = 3.99$, $SD = 0.78$, was interpreted as the state of multicultural society not yet having been transformed for economic benefits; it only served the purpose for the demand in the lives of people. Therefore, cultural values still remained strong in every aspect. The level of

potential complied with the principles conceived by Silpa-acha (2012), who described that the essential elements reflecting cultural tourist attraction value consisted of the value of identity, wisdom and knowledge, aesthetics, history, and society. It was found that the cultural area in Samut Sakhon had all of them contained completely. These identified values possess the potential for further development, evolving into tourist attractions, souvenirs, and educational resources that facilitate the exploration of the aforementioned values.

The following potential focusing on the popularity of tourist attractions showed a high level, $\bar{x} = 3.93$, $SD = 0.77$. If cultural tourism development in Samut Sakhon was needed, it was imperative to increase promotional activities, emphasizing both tangible and intangible cultural resources since the image in the perception of tourists was significant and outstanding (La Ghezza, 2022). The level of potential corresponded to the research by Khuiwao, who found that the level of provincial travel policy perception was high, especially regarding travel services and resources (Khuiwao, n.d.). This implied that tourism management in Samut Sakhon had been effective in the perception of tourists.

On the potential for local community participation perception, it was found that the overall result was high, $\bar{x} = 3.91$, $SD = 0.81$; the interesting aspect was that the pattern of collateral benefits such as selling goods, souvenirs, etc. were operated by government and private sectors. This was interpreted as the host community not having realized the potential benefits of the development of the area into a tourist attraction, so the level of enthusiasm for tourism participation remained low. This corresponded to the study by Watthanaphon (2012) on the Strategic Management of Integrated Tourism in Samut Sakhon. It was found that tourism management in Samut Sakhon was operated through functional structure and personnel in the government, private and public sectors, with the budget allocated mainly for the government sector. In problems and obstacles, it was shown that the lack of close cooperation from every sector and the preparedness of each department were important issues that needed to be solved. Part of the issue was that the provincial tourism industry had not yielded gaining benefits as much as the industry, agriculture, and fishing had.

Although the overall potential level of the Samut Sakhon area was considered high, $\bar{x} = 3.89$, $SD = 0.80$, there were many elements, especially the uniquely beautiful cultural value which promises that the cultural area in Samut Sakhon could be developed into

multicultural tourism to improve the tourism industry in Samut Sakhon to sustainability. Muangmee (2020) suggested that the traditional way of life of the local community could be utilized as a selling point. The most important approach is that every sector joins the cooperative efforts systemically.

Analysis of Multicultural Tourist Attraction Development Approach in Samut Sakhon for the Improvement of the Tourism Industry to Sustainability

The research results suggested four important guidelines as follows:

1. Establish a joint department of government and private sectors with host communities.
2. Government and private sectors with host communities participate in tourist attraction potential joint development for tourist reception in every aspect.
3. Administrate travel activities and network systemically.
4. Develop an original model for multicultural tourism areas. The prime objective was to establish sustainability for cultural tourism and the locals. This corresponded to the definition from the World Tourism Organization which described that sustainable tourism takes full account of the equality in current and future economy and environment, and, also includes society, culture, and people of all generations. It incorporates respect for socio-cultural authenticity and tradition of host communities as well as the adjustment and understanding of cultural differences of each community, and sustainable and stable economic promotion. Sustainable tourism should provide fairly distributed benefits to all tourism stakeholders and also increase employment and income-earning opportunities for host communities, and contribute to poverty alleviation (World Tourism Organization, 2004).

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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