



Fascinating klong-toey: The study of slum tourism development

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Abstract

Aim: The primary goal is to find the most effective strategies for boosting tourism in Klong-Toey District, Thailand's first slum. As part of the investigation into urban equality, researchers are looking into the potential for tourism development in Klong-Toey.

Method: In-depth interviews with community leaders and agents involved in slum tourism development, as well as Participant Observation in the communication process, are used as research methods.

Findings: The study shows that the number of people working in Thailand's agricultural sector is affected by urbanization. Bangkok had seen an influx of people from all over Thailand since 1938, when work began at the Port Authority of Thailand, drawing them in search of employment opportunities in the city's infrastructure development and construction industries. A country can increase its GDP relatively quickly and easily by investing in and promoting its tourism industry. Health tourism, agricultural tourism, and tourism to officially recognized historic sites are just a few examples of subsets within the broader tourism industry.

Implications/Novel Contribution: The findings of this investigation can be used to shape more effective tourism policies.

Keywords: Klong-toey, Slum, Bangkok

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INTRODUCTION

As a result of the National Economic and Social Development Plan-The Twelve Plan 2017-2021, the Thai government has recognized the potential of tourism as a tool for advancing the country's economy and society. According to the 2017 annual report published by the Tourism Authority of Thailand Council, the country received a total of 2.77 billion baht from 34,4 million non-Thai visitors. Annual domestic tourism is estimated at 154 million people, up roughly 6.2%, with an associated increase in revenue of 0.96 billion baht (Bariscil, 2017; Luekveerawattana, 2016).

Despite this, the most frequented tourist destinations are those close to nature and significant landmarks across the country. Popular destinations include Chinatown-Yaowarat, Silom Road, Soi 38 Sukhumvit, and temples like Wat Arun Ratchawaramahawihan, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, and the Grand Palace (Pathumporn & Nakapaksin, 2015; Weng & Yang, 2016).

However, many nations are also making efforts to attract visitors interested in another type of tourism: slum visits. Klong-Toey Slum is one of the largest slums in Thailand.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Thailand's Current Tourism

Between the years 2013-2017, the Compound Growth Rate of Foreign Tourist has increased by 9.88% every year. In 2017, the total number of foreigners who visited Thailand is 32,558,303 people, raised by 8.66% when compares the number in 2016.

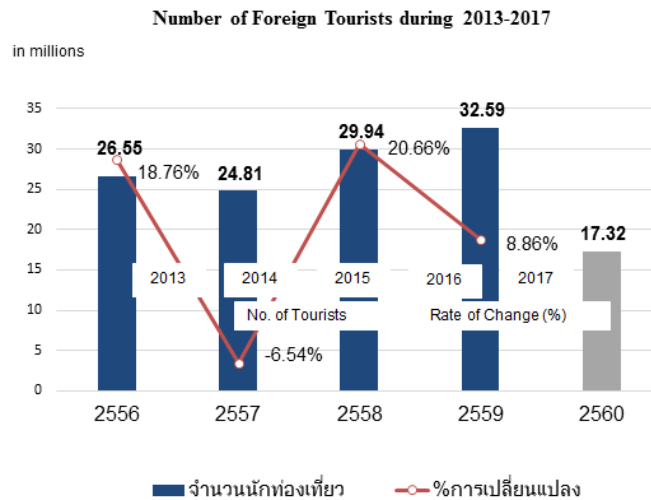


Figure 1. Department of tourism

For an international tourism, if we compare the number of foreign tourists between the first half year of 2017 and 2018, we will find that the total number has increased by 4.41% where the most visited period is in June with percent increased of 11.43. The rise in number is resulted from many factors, including Revisiting of Chinese tourists, Muslim tourists during the Eid al-Fitr, and also Russian tourists (Komaladewi, Mulyana, & Jatnika, 2017; Yang, Wu, & Lu, 2017).

The growth of Thailand income from tourism has annually increased by 13.65% during 2013-2016, in where the first half year of 2017 the total income from foreign tourists was 876,682 million baht.

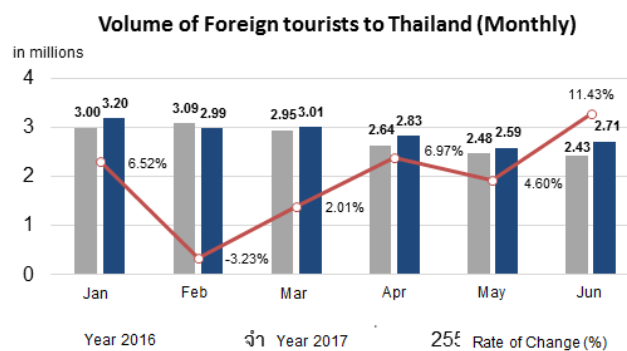


Figure 2. Department of tourism

Nevertheless, tourists from China, ASEAN countries, and Europe are the most frequently visitors during 2016 to June 2017. However, in the perspective of Growth rate, the tourists from Southeast Asia countries, for instance Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, has the highest growth rate of 8.1%, whereas the number of Chinese tourists has declined down by 3.8 percent (Buhalis, 1998; Tatiyanantakul, 2017).

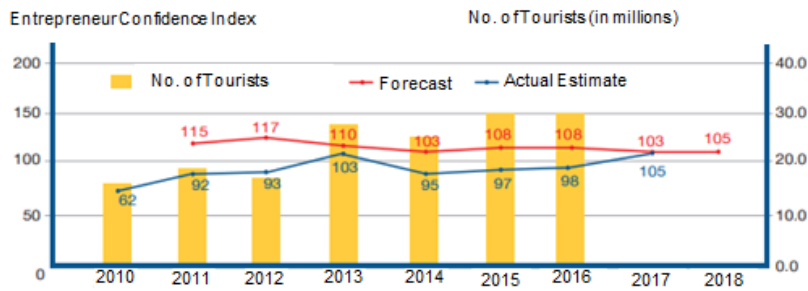


Figure 3. Entrepreneur confidence index between 2010-2018

Considering the growth rate trend accordingly to business types, we have found that in the year 2017, businesses have grown wealthier than usual, except for amusement and theme-park industry. Concentrating in Hotel industry, we have found that high-end hotel, with a price of more than 3,000 baht/night/room, has been estimated to grow better than others. However, in 2018, Businessmen have predicted the growth of business differently, and the most well-growth business of the year tend to be Spa Tourism.

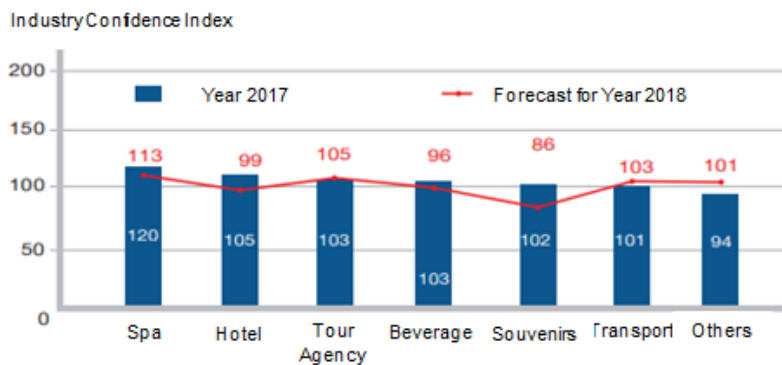


Figure 4. Thailand's industry confidence index during the year 2017-2018, by industry

Moreover, the businessmen have estimated that Thailand Tourism will grow in every region, especially in Bangkok and the south-eastern of Thailand. However, in 2018, it has been predicted that the business will grow slower than expected, whereas the businesses in Bangkok were believed to be the most reputable one.

Slum and Tourism

The World Tourism Organisation has defined Tourism as Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for no more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes and in order for tourism to happen, there must be a displacement, individual has to travel by using any types of transportation and there must be an expense. Therefore, the purpose of tourism is not only for business and permanent stays but for various purposes altogether (Rebollo, 2018). Tourism has gradually expanded because of the growth in the world economy and urban area. The urban area has become an identity which shows the relationship between each individual, defined by Stuart Hall, Ernest Burgess, Louis Wirth, and others. The study by Kumpetch (2012) has found that the growth into primate city of Bangkok, where the rise of the manufacturing industry impacts the tourism industry, especially the Hotel and Guest House business. The hotel industry has generated money flow within Bangkok for 34.2 thousand million baht in the year of 2010.

There are different categories of tourism, distinguished by the purposes, such as traveling for leisure, cultural tourism, health tourism, sport tourism, and seminar or conference tourism (Nasser, 2017).

Slum, defined by the United Nation (UN), is a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack on either durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions, sufficient living space, easy access to safe water at an affordable price, access to adequate sanitation in the form of

a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people, security of tenure that prevents forced evictions, or all of above. From the definition, slum can be implied to poor, immigrants, underprivileged people, and also epidemic.

Dr. Sopon Pornchokchai, the committee chairman of Thai Appraisal Foundation, estimated the urban area, where there were slums, and found that in 1985, Bangkok had 120 slums but there were only 27% of them that lack of safety and cleanliness, according to UNs criteria. In 2000, The number of Slum has reduced down to only 5.8% and gradually declined in 2005 as they demolished slum and built townhouses instead. The word "slum" gives an unpleasant impression toward people who live there and shows the inequality of lives. Therefore, the word crowded community is used to describe slum since May 27th, 1982 and has been approved by the Council of Ministers. However, in the East of Thailand, the word Slum implies to the semi-permanent household in the old area.

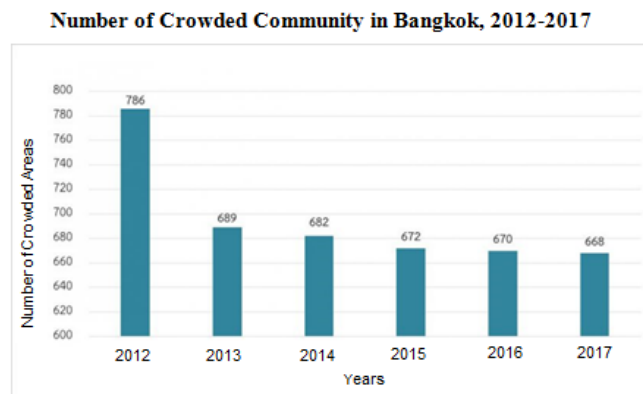


Figure 5. Bangkok metropolitan administration (2018)

The index has shown that the growth of an economy stimulates the consumption and population in Bangkok because of immigrants who come into the city for work and residing. However, the crowded community in Bangkok in 2017 has decreased down to 668 communities from 670 communities in 2016. Within a 6-year duration, 2012-2017, the number of the crowded communities declined over time.

Slum tourism is one type of urban tourism that is related to visiting the poverty-stricken area. Nowadays, slum tourism has become more widespread in many countries, including South Africa, Brazil, Poland, Kenya, Philippines, The United State of America, and etc.

METHODOLOGY

Fascinating Klong-Toey: The Study of Slum Tourism Development has used the methods of Qualitative Research, In-depth Interview with community leaders and agency who takes part in slum tourism development, and Participant Observation in the communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the government has expropriated land in Klong-Toey district and Bang-jark district in 1942, then Klong-Toey Slum has emerged with the area around 3,617,922 square kilometres. The area has been used for the logistic purpose and later developed into the Port of Thailand as the national enterprise under the control of Ministry of Transportation and Communication. Later the Port of Authority of Thailand had policy of transforming the land into harbour and warehouse for international transportation. However, during that period of time, the policy had not been carried out as planed because of the World War II until 1952. The Port of Authority of Thailand, therefore, began to continue the construction. In 1982, the port was large enough for 13 ocean liners to export products altogether at the same time. Therefore, the Port of Authority of Thailand out-performed other countries in Southeast Asia.



Figure 6. Klong-Toey District, Bangkok

The crowded community in the heart of the city has been interrupting city prosperity, including the port of Klong-Toey which is mainly used for crucial transportation. However, it seems to have a thin barrier that prevents the community to grow along with the outside and also creates many chronic problems.

Nonetheless, Klong-Toey crowded community is located on the property of the Port of Authority of Thailand within the area of 6.4 square kilometers, 41 communities, and 14,500 households. Therefore, Klong-Toey District is known to be the biggest crowded community in Thailand, and it has left a poor, drug-fullness, and undeveloped image to the society.

The tourism for Klong-Toey community is separated into two categories. First, the community itself. Everyone in the community generates ideas and work together in an operational system themselves, from pick-up and drop-off tourist to create activities for them. One of many highlight activities is the local product named Fee Mue, by Sikka Asia Foundation.



Figure 7. Fee Mue klongtoey

With a corporation with a Japanese designer, Fujita, who volunteered to help in products creation, which are garland, necklace, earrings, and button, that reflects another aspect of Klong-Toey. The products are inspired

through the lives in the community, including Thai traditional garland and Buddhism worship. Consequently, it becomes a social enterprise that allows housewife group to use the foundations facility. They, later, have found a new perspective from visitors. The tourists spread the world mouth-to-mouth after they have visited the community. However, in the beginning, Japanese tourists who traveled to Klong-Toey usually come after their trip to the Emquartier, shopping mall, and spend a day and having lunch in the community.



Figure 8. Feemue Klongtoy

The spot in the community might not be most beautiful for tourism but it is the real world, the lives that live in the urban area. Playground called Chan-sawang was built by a group of architectures and other parties with the purpose of improving people's living standard in the community. Therefore, Chan-sawang playground tells stories about the community and how they come together for better development.



Figure 9. Creative design

Nonetheless, the materials such as woods and metal that were used in the construction can be easily found in the community. Chan-sawang is not only a playground but also an area for expressing art which brings everyone together and encourages them to take participation in the process of developing the community. Another location in the community is called Story. An area was used during Thai's New Year, Songkran day, for activity named Klong-Toey Dee-Jai at Rong-Nhu community.



Figure 10. Rong-Nhu community

Rong-Nhu community is used to be a crowded area and there was a fire accident occurred a few years ago. Due to that, the area was abandoned and became a spot for drug-addicted teenagers, hence dangerous until the volunteer group came in. Music Sharing, a group of music teachers who have been developing the area for at least 7 years and manage an annual open-space music event called Klong-Toey Dee-Jang". This music sharing group uses music to create changes, inspire children, and teach them art. Furthermore, the area was refurbished into a community space, for community and external parties to put use into it. Palangpandin, a volunteer group invited artists to paint walls, build playground, and repair damaged area in Rong-Nhu community with the purpose of knowing each other better. Later, the event is more familiar to the public and Rong-Nhu community has closed down the area for this music event that is held 2 times a year, in April and October.

Local Alike is the social enterprise group who firstly presents tour for international visitors. The program is to take tourists to abandoned location, places where the fire had occurred, the community space, and show ways to the Port of Authority of Thailand, where many containers are arranged. Even though the tourism in Klong-Toey area is managed by a specific group, it has promoted Slum Tourism, an alternative way of traveling and learning about lives.

Slum Tourism in Foreign Countries

According to [Magombo and Rogerson \(2012\)](#), slum tourism tends to grow highly in South Africa because of the rich cultural resources and expansion of urban cities. Moreover, the study from [Frenzel and Koens \(2012\)](#) has shown that slum is a living space for human which has the power to encourage and inspire humankind. [Rolfes \(2010\)](#) has also said that in the mid-1990s, metropolis tourism was famous, and many urban cities have promoted this tourism. For instance, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, as well as Indian Metropolis.



Figure 11. Slumdong milloinair

Cape Town



Figure 12. Cape town

In Johannesburg, there are several slums located in the city because of immigrants that have moved from outside countries. These immigrants are unemployed, and they have no home, which results in a criminal act. Nonetheless, in Cape Town, the Khayelitsha slum is the most interesting slum in the eyes of tourists because there are 392,000 lives in Khayelitsha but the unemployment rate is at 80% and the people are facing poverty, disease, and crimes. Since the crimes tend to happen quite often, later the tour has moved to another slum, Langa Slum. Lastly, Cape Town was established in 1923 before Apartheid Policy in South Africa which is still happening nowadays.

Slumdog Millionaire, a movie by Danny Boyle, has explicitly opened the real aspects of Slum in Mumbai to the world. The movie is telling a story of Jamal Malik, an 18 years old boy from Sharavi Slum and works as an waiter.

Rainbow Village in Indonesia has been repainted to catch attention from tourists. The State Government put over 30,000 USD to develop Kampung Pelangi, where was a decadent slum in the south of Jakarta, into new photo spot. Moreover, tourism agency and departments have put afford to develop the village together with the State Government.



Figure 13. Colorful kampung pelangis Indonesia/

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Slum inhabitants were irresolute in regards to the voyagers' quality, and just two interviewees had gotten any financial advantages from the visits. Ghetto occupants likewise disdained how vacationers halted uniquely to glance around, rather than connecting with them. The travellers were exact in detecting this disquiet. In any case, in spite of this acknowledgement, most of the visitors. Strangely, how much travelers fell into the diversionary visitor class conceded by sex, with male travelers bound to look for entertainment only and fervor, and female sightseers bound to look for learning and a sincerely critical encounter. Travelers made clear qualifications between ghetto inhabitants and the destitute, with ghetto occupants producing more prominent oddity. While numerous travelers referenced that piece of their inspiration for taking the visit was to add to the government assistance of ghetto inhabitants, the mind greater part didn't give to the destitute back home.

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