

Holistic Development of Wellness Tourism in Buddhamonthon

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Agenda

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Background of the Study

- Trend of wellness tourism
- Combination of religious and wellness activities in Buddhamonthon
- Opportunity to develop this religious tourism destination as the place for wellness tourism

Background of the Study

- The importance of Buddhamonthon
 - Established in 1957 to celebrate the 2500th year of Buddhism
 - Most important attraction of Buddhamonthon was the Buddha image named “Phra Sri Sakkaya Thosapol Yan Phratan Buddhamonthon Sutas”
 - Several Buddhist ceremonies and festivities celebrated in Buddhamonthon regularly

Objective of the Study

- Studies related to wellness tourism generally focused on the journey of the people to the tourism destinations that could improve or enhance their physical health, body fitness, or beauty care.
- Less numbers of the studies highlighted on the mental health of the people.

Objective of the Study

- Many activities held in the Buddhamonthon area could contribute to the wellness of the people both physically and mentally.
- This study aimed to investigate how to develop and promote Buddhamonthon as the wellness tourism destination.

The Potential Wellness Tourism Sites in Buddhamonthon

- The Standing Buddha Image
- The Temple of Marble Pali Canon (Tripitaka)

The Potential Wellness Tourism Sites in Buddhamonthon

- The Four Commemorative Sites
- Veruwan Garden (Bamboo Garden)

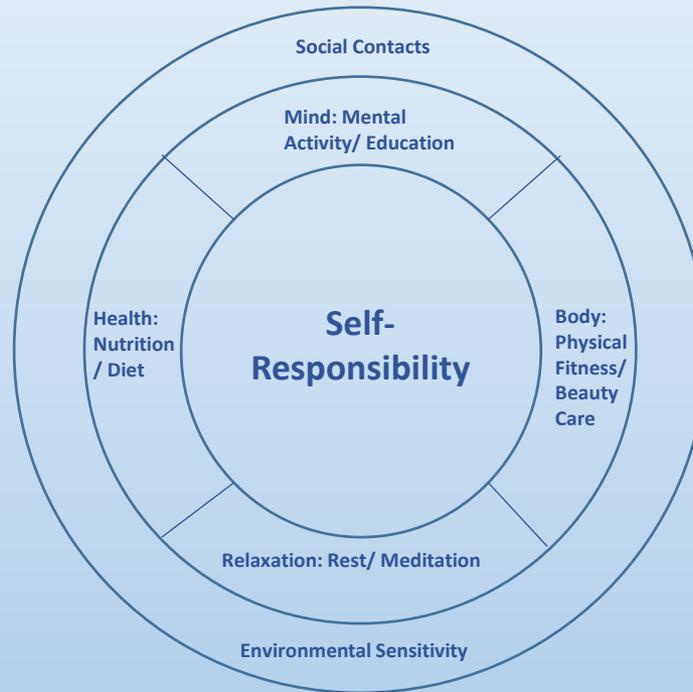
Religious Tourism

- The religious tourism was one kind of tourism in which the tourists visited to the religious site could be related to the tourists' faith or others (Raj and Morpeth, 2007).
- Religious tourism became one of the important areas of tourism since the tourists would visit and appreciate in the beauty and design of the religious sites (Drule, Chis, Bacila, and Ciornea, 2012).

Wellness Tourism

- Wellness was “the key importance of life style, self-responsibility for health, the multi-factoral roots of health as well as the exploitation of our potential for a better quality of life” (Hertel, 1992).
- Based on the books of Ardell in 1977 and 1986, Mueller and Kaufmann (2001) defined the wellness tourism that “wellness tourism is the sum of all the relationships and phenomena resulting from a journey and residence by people whose main motive is to preserve or promote their health”.

Wellness Tourism



Expanded Wellness Model (Mueller and Kaufmann, 2001)

Research Methodology

- This research was conducted by implementing the in-depth interview to gather the data from the informants to understand more on the potentials of Buddhamonthon for wellness tourism
- The purposive sampling method was implemented and the samples were divided into two groups.
 - Ten samples from the professionals in the tourism field and local government officials for the first group
 - Ten samples from the visitors of Buddhamonthon in the second group

Results: In-depth interviews from the professionals in the tourism field and local government officials

The List of Interviewees from professionals in the tourism field and local government officials

List of Sample Number	Professionals in the Tourism Field and Local Government Officials
1	Local Government Officials
2	Local Government Officials
3	Professionals in the Tourism Field
4	Professionals in the Tourism Field
5	Professionals in the Tourism Field
6	Professionals in the Tourism Field
7	Local Government Officials
8	Local Government Officials
9	Professionals in the Tourism Field
10	Professionals in the Tourism Field

Results: In-depth interviews from the professionals in the tourism field and local government officials

- Buddhamonthon was capable in promoting the wellness tourism in the Buddhamonthon area.
- People visited Buddhamonthon did not only pay the respect to the religious sites but they also came for exercise in the Buddhamonthon area by walking, running, or biking around the religious sites in Buddhamonthon.
- Many meditation activities were held in Buddhamonthon regularly for both student group and ordinary people.

Results: In-depth interviews from the professionals in the tourism field and local government officials

- Insufficient efforts to promote the tourism or any activities that would be taken place in Buddhamonthon
- Lacking of well-established facilities (e.g. signboards and street signs) to effectively promote tourism in Buddhamonthon

Results: In-depth interviews from the visitors of Buddhamonthon

The List of Interviewees from visitors of Buddhamonthon

List of Sample Number	Visitors of Buddhamonthon
1	Visitor, Male, Age below 20 years old, Student
2	Visitor, Male, Age between 20 and 30 years old, Student
3	Visitor, Male, Age between 31 and 40 years old, Merchant
4	Visitor, Male, Age between 31 and 40 years old, Merchant
5	Visitor, Male, Age between 51 and 60 years old, Government Officer
6	Visitor, Female, Age below 20 years old, Student
7	Visitor, Female, Age between 20 and 30 years old, employee
8	Visitor, Female, Age between 31 and 40 years old, Employee
9	Visitor, Female, Age between 51 and 60 years old, Housewife
10	Visitor, Female, Age between 51 and 60 years old, Government Officer

Results: In-depth interviews from the visitors of Buddhamonthon

- Visitors came to visit the Buddhamonthon for respecting the religious sites in the Buddhamonthon area and relaxing themselves with their friends and family by exercising around the religious sites and participating the meditation activities.
- More public relations to promote tourism events and activities in Buddhamonthon should be implemented.
- The basic infrastructures and facilities including quality of the road, street signs, and signboards in the Buddhamonthon area should be improved.

Discussions

- Buddhamonthon became one of the important sites for the religious purpose.
- Buddhamonthon was also the important site for the people to create the wellness in their lives by exercising and participating the meditation activities in Buddhamonthon.
- The findings showed that Buddhamonthon could be developed and promoted to be one of the wellness tourism sites in Thailand.

Discussions

- These findings were supported by (Mueller and Kaufmann, 2001) that wellness tourism resulted by a journey of the people who had the motives to preserve or promote their health.
- Based on the expanded wellness model from (Mueller and Kaufmann, 2001), the visitors of Buddhamonthon could achieve the wellness by having their health featuring the harmony of their bodies, minds, and relaxations with their self-responsibility to have a better quality of life.

Discussions

- More financial supports and efforts from the related tourism parties for public relations and fundamental facilities improvements should be initiated to develop and promote Buddhamonthon to be a good place for wellness tourism in Thailand.

Conclusion and Recommendations

- This research revealed the significant findings to develop and promote Buddhamonthon as the wellness tourism destination.
- The related tourism parties should pay more attention for developing Buddhamonthon as the wellness tourism destination by providing more financial supports and public relations activities.

Thank You for Your Attention