



The Buddhist Tourism Management Model in the Era of Covid-19 of Temples in Nong Khai Province

¹Phra Wanchai Phurithatto (Anontree), ²Phramaha Mit Thitapanyo*, ³Phramaha Daosayam Vajirapañño,
¹²³Faculty of Buddhism Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Khon Kaen Campus, Thailand
E-mail: ¹Wanchai.ano@mcu.ac.th, ²mit.wan@mcu.ac.th, ³starsiam45@gmail.com
*Corresponding Author E-mail: mit.wan@mcu.ac.th

Abstract

The objectives of this research were: 1) to study tourism in the Covid-19 era, 2) to study the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province; 3) to propose a Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province. This study was carried out by means of qualitative research by conducting in-depth interviews with 26 key informants. The obtained data were interpreted by descriptive analysis. The research results were as follows: Tourism in the COVID-19 era: in the tourism situation in the Covid-19 era, it is necessary to understand the various situations that affect the tourism sector in a wide area. For tourism management under the situation of the Coronavirus Disease 2019, the government has managed remedies or solved problems for entrepreneurs in the tourism business in the form of tax remedies and guidelines for facility owners or operators to ensure safety for all staff and visitors. The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: there were tourist places organized for Dhamma practice and chanting activities for tourists. The public health officers or volunteers were organized to monitor at various points and perform duties. There were QR code scanning points and screening points for spraying disinfectant and measuring body temperature with sticker marking, sinks with clean water or hand sanitizer, ATK checks, and publicity at each point. Presentation of the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: there is an organization of meetings with various sectors involved in tourism in the form of online or on-site. The warning signs in every part of the tourist area, screening points, QR codes as well as wearing protective gear at all times are provided and encouraged. The equipment and personnel at a screening point to distribute protection equipment for those who want free ATK detectors, operators, and tourists are managed. There is a disinfectant sprayer.

Keyword: COVID-19 Era, Buddhist Tourism, Management Model

1. Introduction

Buddhist tourism is regarded as one type of tourism that both domestic and international tourists attach great importance to tourism. Because it makes visitors feel happy both physically and mentally whether it is a tour of art that is of historical value, charity to uplift, chanting, or traveling for meditation. Buddhist tourism means traveling to a religious place to visit or worship sacred things, worship religious places, and monks who practice well and cover buildings related to religion [Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2006: 28] [1] Religious tourism is travel primarily for religious reasons. It is a practice from the earliest times where the real reason for travel may not be tourism involved. But nowadays, this type of travel often includes activities other than Buddhist activities. People of different religions tend to believe in religious activities, which may include traveling to worship sacred objects or performing rituals [Sapalak Akkarangoon, 2008: 99] [2] Buddhist tourism has many related components, for example, 1) In the part of the temple that encourages tourism: The temple must manage the location, the personnel of the temple, organizing activities within the temple, organizing a program of tourism in the temple, management of advertising

and public relations, providing staff to coordinate with other development agencies and conduct assessments 2) In the area of provincial culture must act as the center of management and promoting Buddhist activities within the province 3) In the departments, organizations of all sectors, communities such as government, private and educational institutions need to support factor fand manpower 4) In the Department of Religious Affairs, preparing a framework for the implementation of various pilot projects, preparing a manual for promoting Buddhist tourism, asking for cooperation with all relevant agencies, budget allocation to support Buddhist tourism projects, etc. [Department of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Culture, 2014: 33-43] [3].

In the tourism situation in the COVID-19 era, it is necessary to understand the various situations that affect the tourism sector, it should be managed appropriately in order to benefit tourism as much as possible. COVID-19 is an emerging disease around the world and Thailand is experiencing a cessation of the epidemic that cannot be predicted. It has forced most people to stay in place to protect themselves from this contagious disease. This has caused the tourism sector in Thailand to suffer. Tourism management under the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19 Situation, managing remedies or solving problems for entrepreneurs related to the tourism business will be in the form of tax remedies. Allowing juristic groups able to postpone filling tax returns first so that juristic groups can bring money to circulate to create liquidity as much as possible [Ekachai Chamnina, 2022] [4] The global outbreak of the Coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19 since January 2020 has forced many governments to take measures to contain the disease from spreading and reduce the number of serious infections. However, temples or religious places have become more and more tourist attractions that people pay attention to. But the temple had to adjust its role to fit the situation. The adaptation of the role of temples in the dimension of tourism without losing its original condition is also in line with the operational guidelines for the Pilgrimage Tourism Promotion Project in the religious dimension by the Department of Religious Affairs under the Ministry of Culture that supports the cultural capital of each locality as a tourist attraction.

The researchers are interested in studying the whole of the temple about the Buddhist tourism management model in the era of Covid-19 in order to develop or adapt to be consistent with the current situation. Because all three temples consist of Wat Phochai, What Srichompootue, and Wat Phrathatbangphuan, they are places where tourists are interested and popular in order to create a form for nearby temples to be used as a guideline for further development.

2) Research Questions

- 2.1) How is tourism in the Covid-19 era?
- 2.2) How is the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province?
- 2.3) How to propose the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province?

3) Research Objectives

- 1) To study tourism in the Covid-19 era
- 2) To study the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province
- 3) To propose the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province

4) Research Method

The title “The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 Era of temples in Nong Khai Province”, this research is qualitative research. The researchers define the research method as follows;

- 3.1) This study is a documentary study and collecting data is from relevant documents and evidence from Tripitaka, books, and research reports. The document associated the relationship with the concept, The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 Era of temples in Nong Khai Province.

3.2) Data from in-depth interviews with 26 sets consisting of 1) 6 monks 2) 5 religious scholars 3) 9 local leaders 4) 6 tourists. The total is 26 monks/persons. These groups are active and relevant in Nong Khai Province which includes two districts, namely Mueng District, Mueng Sub-District, Phra Thatbangphuan Sub-District, and Thabor District, Nammong Sub-District, 3 temples consisting of 1) Wat Phochai is a royal temple of the third class, common type under the Mahanikaya, located at 783 Ban Khum Phochai, Prajak Sillapakhom Road, Mueng Sub-District, Mueng District, Nong Khai Province 2) Wat Srichomphootue, it is a Mahanikaya, located at 1 Moo.8 Ban Nammong Thabor District, Nong Khai Province and 3) Wat Phrathatbangphuan, it is a private temple under Mahanikaya, located at 172 Moo.3 Phrathatbangphuan Sub-district, Mueng Nong Khai District, Nong Khai Province.

3.3) Data is from observation participants, and focus groups with the key informants regarding the Buddhist tourism management in the era of Covid-19 of temples in Nong Khai Province. Then the data were analyzed descriptively.

5) Expected benefits

- 5.1) To know about tourism in the Covid-19 era
- 5.2) To know the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province
- 5.3) Able to propose the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province

6) Research Results

The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province can be summarized in In-Depth Interview as follows;

6.1) Tourism in the Covid-19 era: In the situation of tourism in the COVID-19 era, it is necessary to understand various situations that affect tourism in a wide area. Tourism management under COVID-19, the state has remedies for tourism business operators in the form of taxes. It is a guide for place owners and the safety of all employees and tourists. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an emerging disease around the world. It cannot foresee the end of the epidemic. Most people have to stay in place to protect themselves. Tourism management under the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation, the government has managed the following remedies;

6.1.1) There is a clear entrance-exit and staff screening, staff and tourists are ready to mark those who passed the screening. If it is found that there is a fever or temperature of 37.5 degree Celsius or higher, together with cough, runny nose, sore throat, no smell, tongue loss of taste, rapid breathing, labored breathing, or difficulty breathing either and may also have diarrhea, they will be notified to suspend participation in the event and advised to see a doctor.

6.1.2) There is a measure for all staff and tourists to wear a cloth mask or face mask at all times when entering tourist attractions.

6.1.3) To provide clearly spaced symbols and supervise everyone to maintain a distance between people of at least 1 meter.

6.1.4) To provide a handwashing station with soap and hand sanitizer gel for service in different areas adequately.

6.1.5) Cleaning the area, common area, and facilities that serve tourists at least twice a day and may increase the frequency as more people use the service by emphasizing areas and equipment that are shared services such as tourist centers, bathrooms, toilets, elevators, doors, handrails resting seats, etc.

6.1.6) Ensuring that there is an appropriate number of tourists who use the service in each area to prevent overcrowding by considering the potential of each area/type of activity (1 tourist per area 4 square meters per round/time period)

6.1.7) To determine guidelines for conduct for tourists, and employees, and organize public relations and campaigns to educate tourists, such as prohibitions and guidelines for tourists, how to wash your

hands, closing the toilet seat cover before flushing the sewage, etc. To prevent and reduce the risk of spreading disease from service workers and tourists strictly follow.

6.1.8) In the case of a closed area, it must provide good ventilation if air conditioning is used. There must be some breaks to ventilate including cleaning the air conditioner regularly.

6.1.9) Clean the bathroom, and toilets with cleaners always clean or at least 2 times a day and may increase the frequency of cleaning and may kill germs with disinfectants in risky areas such as doorknobs, faucets, sinks toilet seat cushions, flushing the toilet or urinal water spray line, sufficient hand washing soap must be provided.

6.1.10) There are enough garbage bins in good condition and with lids at tourist sites, sort waste at least into general waste and recyclable waste, collected at the garbage shelter to be disposed of properly every day.

6.1.11) It is advisable to use technology to support the work such as using electronic documents to introduce tourist attractions via QR Code, ticket sale and electronic payments (e-Payment), etc.

6.1.12) There are measures to track information of service users such as the use of applications specified by the government or providing a book for registration.

6.2) The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province:

There is a place to travel in Dhamma practice and prayer activities for tourists, organizing public health officers or volunteers to monitor at various points and perform duties. There is a QR code scanning point, screening points for spraying disinfectant and measuring body temperature with stickers who wash their hands with clean water or hand sanitizer, check the ATM and there is publicity at each point. There is a form of providing a full range of services from the entrance to the place of mediation according to the government policy for the safety of those who come to practice.

6.3) Propose the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: Organize meetings with various sectors that are involved in tourism in the form of online or onsite, and make warning signs in every part of the tourist area. There is a screening point, scan the QR code, wear a mask all the time, and place equipment and personnel at various points which is a screening point to distribute protection equipment for those who want to have free ATK detractors for workers and tourists. There is a disinfectant sprayer.

7) Discussion

Tourism in the Covid-19 era: In the tourism situation in the COVID-19 era that requires an understanding of the situation that affects the tourism sector in a wide area. Tourism management under the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) situation, the government sector has managed remedies or solved problems for entrepreneurs in the tourism business in the form of tax remedies. It is consistent with [Jutatip Junead, 2017] [5] study "Integrated strategic plan for sustainable tourism development in Samutsongkhram Province". It was found that it will create a natural tourism brand, touching the environment, Buddhist way, and local culture, developing the mind is a tourism development strategy to conserve the environment, and local economy and generate income for the community.

The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: There is a place to travel in Dhamma practice and prayer activities for tourists, organizing public health officers or volunteers to monitor at various points and perform duties. There is a QR code scanning point, screening points for spraying disinfectant and measuring body temperature with stickers who wash their hands with clean water or hand sanitizer, check the ATM and there is publicity at each point. It is consistent with [Phrapalad Boonleard Katapunno (Suttimal), 2017] [6] study "Buddhist tourism management: A case study of Wat Yai, Bangplakod". It was found that the attitudes of tourists toward management revealed that in aspects of Buddhist arts, they suggested that Wat Yai is a suitable place to be the learning center of local art and culture, a relaxing and admirable place, preserving Buddhist art inside the temple. In the aspect of service, it totally was in high level (= 4.10) in items that there are enough trash bins covering all areas of the temple. In the aspect of convenience for tourists, it was in high level (= 4.04) on 'Temple toilets are cleaned and good to be tourist temple with sufficient parking area.' In the aspect of the useful learning center, it was in high level (= 3.96).

Propose the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: Organize meetings with various sectors that are involved in tourism in the form of online or onsite, and make warning signs in every part of the tourist area. There is a screening point, scan the QR code, and wear a mask all the time. It is consistent with [Phrasamu Anurak Dhirasakko [Changmeang], 2011] [7] study “The monastery development for Buddhist tourism in Samutsakhon Province”. It was found that the people’s opinions on the monastery development for Buddhist tourism in Samutsakhon Province found that people’s opinions about the development of temples were found to be at a high level in all aspects; sorted as follows 1) Activities 2) Religious places 3) Religious people 4) Environment 2) People’s opinions towards the development of temples of Buddhist tourism for Buddhist tourism in Samutsakhon Province were significantly different at the statistical significance level of 1.01, which accepted the hypothesis 3) Problems in developing the temple are problems with cleanliness, dog droppings, bird droppings, bathrooms, toilets are not clean, there are few trees, not very smooth, the temple staff cleaning in different spots are few, and not politely dressed.

8) New Explicit Knowledge

The study of the Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province creates a body of knowledge to organize research methods and research procedures that can be known and understood until written as a working model as follows;

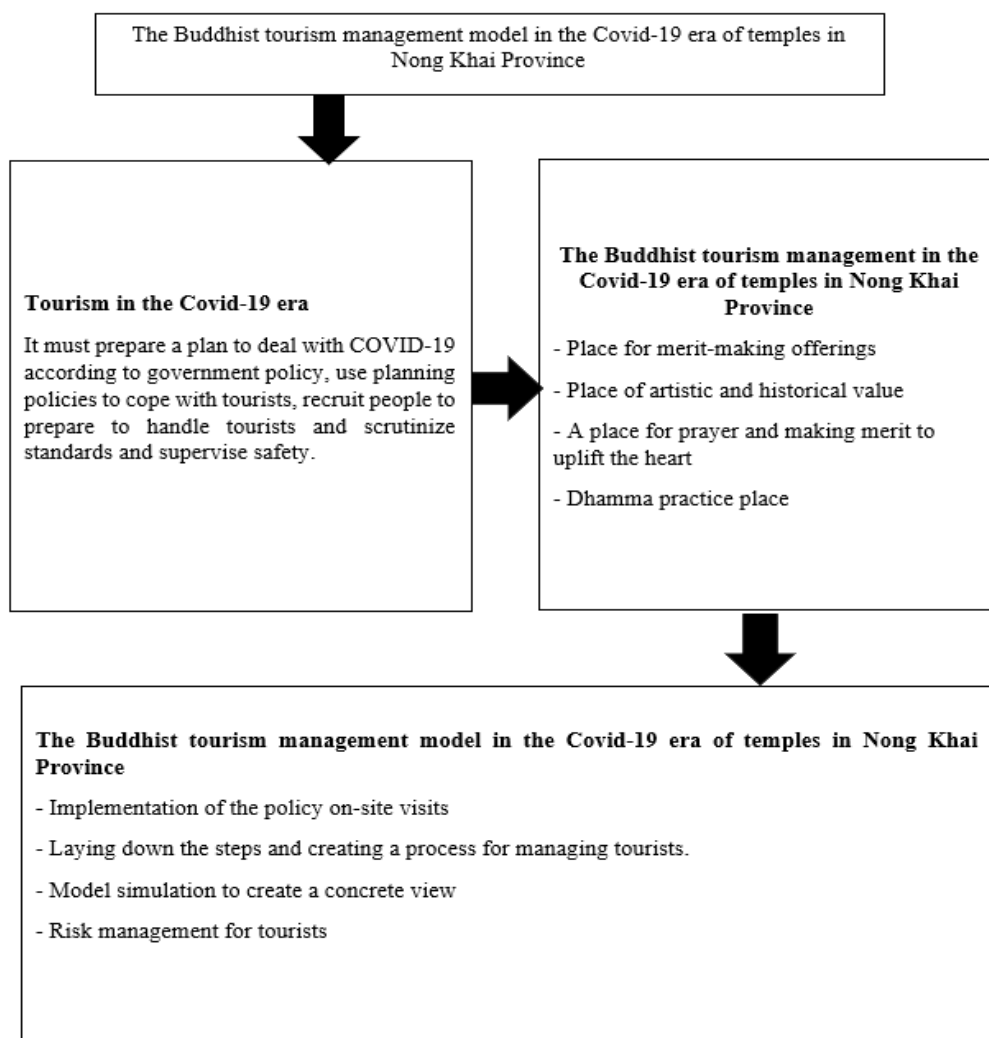


Figure 1 New Explicit Knowledge

9. Conclusion

The Buddhist Tourism Management Model in the Era of Covid-19 of Temples in Nong Khai Province found that Tourism in the COVID-19 era: in the tourism situation in the Covid-19 era, it is necessary to understand the various situations that affect the tourism sector in a wide area. For tourism management under the situation of the Coronavirus Disease 2019, the government has managed remedies or solved problems for entrepreneurs in the tourism business in the form of tax remedies and guidelines for facility owners or operators to ensure safety for all staff and visitors. The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: there were tourist places organized for Dhamma practice and chanting activities for tourists. The public health officers or volunteers were organized to monitor at various points and perform duties. There were QR code scanning points and screening points for spraying disinfectant and measuring body temperature with sticker marking, sinks with clean water or hand sanitizer, ATK checks, and publicity at each point. The Buddhist tourism management model in the Covid-19 era of temples in Nong Khai Province: there is an organization of meetings with various sectors involved in tourism in the form of online or on-site. The warning signs in every part of the tourist area,

screening points, QR codes as well as wearing protective gear at all times are provided and encouraged. The equipment and personnel at a screening point to distribute protection equipment for those who want free ATK detectors, operators, and tourists are managed.

10. Recommendations

10.1) Recommendations for Policy

1. Related agencies, including government, private, and state enterprises, the Department of Religious Affairs under the Ministry of Culture National Office of Buddhism is a unit directly under government.

2. National Office of Buddhists, The Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand, Buddhist universities, Organizations of universities, and other internal departments related to Buddhism should jointly formulate a strategy for the development of Buddhist tourist attractions.

10.2) Recommendations for Applying the research results

1. The information obtained from the research study can be used for the management of Buddhist tourism in other provinces.

2. Promote Buddhist tourism activities to understand and value customs and traditions and community culture to remain sustainable.

10.3) Recommendations for Implication

1. Eco-tourism should be done for the preservation of ancient sites.

2. Should do cultural tourism and other traditions.

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