



The Impact of Green Hotel Operation Effected to the Community Surrounding Area in Koh Lanta, Krabi Province

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Abstract

The purpose of this work is to study the impact of green hotel operations effected to the community surrounding area in Koh Lanta, Krabi province. The qualitative research methodology and the semi-structured interview was the research instrument to collect data. The key informants were the executive and the staff of the hotel who were responsible for green hotel standards. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample. The content analysis was used to analyze the data. The result of the study found the green hotel standard generates a positive impact in every dimension (environmental, social, economic), it's not beneficial only to the hotel but also to the local community surrounding area. The environmental impact is the most effect on the local community, the hotel effort to cooperate with the local community, educate, and raise awareness of protecting the community and environments through the activity or project. Meanwhile, the green hotel standard also generates positive social impact and economic impact to the local community such as the local authority cooperating with the hotel to organize the activity to reduce pollution in the area and also the private sector that cooperates to promote sustainable tourism in Koh Lanta. However, the green hotel standard also generates income for the local community such as earning income from selling reusable trashes and souvenir and tourism activity.

Keywords: Green Hotel, Green Hotel Standard, Community Impact

Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the industries that generate more income for the economy from local to global. The report from the World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) and the World Economic Forum (WEF) show that the tourism industry could be impacted by the global economy. In 2022, the tourism industry all around the world was affected by the Coronavirus 2019, as a result, the world GDP decreased by around 50.4 % the tourism industry loss of revenue around USD 4.5 billion, and around 60 million people lost their jobs. After the situation was improved the world economy's GDP increasing more



than 20%. (WTTC, 2022; WEF 2022) Even the tourism industry impacts the world economy but on the other hand, it is another because that generates carbon dioxide (CO₂) which impacts global warming and climate change. (www.sustainabletravel.org, n.d.) It is compliant with the report of the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) expect that between 2016-2030 carbon dioxide emission will increase by 25% from the logistic of tourism. (UNWTO, 2019)

Thailand one of the famous tourist destinations even the business in tourism industry affected by Covid-19. However, Thailand still the top destination that the tourist chooses to visit after Covid-19. (Macus Lu, 2022) The information from trip advisor shows the popular cities in Thailand are Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pataya, and Krabi. (tripadvisor, 2023) It's consistent with the data of tourist arrival in Krabi show there were 288,375 tourists visit Krabi in February 2023 increase 41.66% from January. In Krabi there are famous tourist destinations such as Koh PiPi, Ao Nang Beach, Rairey Beach, Maya Bay, and Koh Lanta. (NNT, 2023)

Koh Lan, one of the famous islands in Krabi province, there are two small islands namely Koh Lanta Noi and Koh Lanta Yai. In order that, Koh Lanta Yai is the place where popular to the tourist, but the people refer to it simply as "Koh Lanta". (Wikitravel, 2023) There are many nature attractions such as Aow Nui, Tanod Cape Viewpoint, Kor Kwang beach, Khlong Dawn beach, especially Koh Ngai, Koh Kradan, and Koh Muk which are offer equally stunning beaches and snorkeling. Moreover, the tourist also can learn the way of life of the Moken at Baan Sriraya and Sea Gypsy at Baan Sangka U. (tourismthailand, 2023) However, the tourism can generate more income to Koh Lanta but in other hand also create the negative impact such as waste pollution, waste water pollution, and cost of living. The hotels were established to accommodate the tourist as well as the restaurant, tour operator and other facilities. According to the report of Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action Program (CHENACT) show the hotel business contributing 6% of carbon dioxide emission. (Caribbeanhotelandtourism, 2012) To reduce the pollution which is generated from hotel, the green hotel standard was implemented to operate and promote sustainable tourism in the area. Therefore, the researcher is interesting to find out the impact of green hotel operation effected to the community surrounding area in Koh Lanta, the action of the hotel, the impact which is generated by the green hotel standard as well as the impact affected to the local community.



Objective

To study the impacts of green hotel standard operation effected to the community surrounding area.

Literature review

The Green Hotel

The hotel business is considered one of the important chains in the tourism industry. However, the hotel industry is an industry that depends on energy from natural resources to operate. The energy consumption depends on the size of the hotel. (Bechen & Patterson, 2006; Kasim, 2007) Green hotels refer to hotels that are managed with consideration to the impact on the environment. Consider energy saving and use resources for maximum efficiency Reduce the generation of garbage, wastewater, recycling, and use environmentally friendly materials and equipment. Promoting a healthy environment and various activities that have a negative effect on the ecosystem and environment including purchasing environmentally friendly raw materials. (Ecomall, 2000; Green Hotels Association, 2002) An increase in the number of hotels that have implemented environmental management systems or various innovations used to demonstrate the operation of a hotel business that is environmentally friendly including receiving the environmental standard mark to increase the number of customers who value the environment. (Han and Chan, 2013; Verma and Chandra, 2016) The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) is considered a prototype of green hotel standards that various organizations or agencies can use to develop further, such as Centara Earth Care, Green Globe Standard, Green Star Hotel Standard, etc. In summary, the Green Hotel Standard is considered a standard that is established to certify the standards of operating a hotel or accommodation that can be managed. and use resources most efficiently to reduce negative impacts and create positive impacts that occur in the area with assessment criteria covering all 3 dimensions, namely environmental, social, and economic dimensions, including sustainable management plans Environmental management Promotion and public relations human resource development, and participation with local communities.

Tourism impact

Tourism impacts refer to the impact of tourism operations that affect the tourist destinations both positively and negatively such as employment, investment in tourism in the area, cultural exchange, and environmental deterioration. Natural resources are destroyed, change of traditional culture, or crime. (GSTC, 2022) For sustainable tourism development, it was found that tourism can create different impacts on tourist destinations under 3 dimensions, namely the social dimension, environmental dimension,



and economic dimension. (Confente & Scarpi, 2020; Kim et al., 2013) In the social dimension, it causes development or enhances the development of infrastructure and facilities including the opportunity to meet new people. for learning and cultural exchange. In the economic dimension, employment occurs, income of people in the area has increased. A new career including creating the value of resources in the area. In the environmental dimension, tourism can create awareness of the sustainability of natural resources including encouraging the local community to focus on the importance of protecting and preserving the beauty of resources. (Amuquandoh, 2010; Kim et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2015) Therefore, it can be concluded that tourism impact means positive impact and negative impacts caused by tourism development or travel activities. Those impacts will affect tourist attractions covering 3 dimensions, including social impacts, economic impacts, and environmental impacts.

Materials and Methods

Semi-structured interviews were employed as the research instrument to gather data for this study, which followed a qualitative approach. Two executives and four employees who were in charge of the green hotel standards are among the key informants from two hotels that certified the Green Hotel Standard. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample. The content analysis was used to analyze the data.

Results

The result of the study shows that there are two hotels in Koh Lanta that certified the green hotel standard in both national and international certification such as the Green Hotel Standard, and the Green Globe International Standard for Sustainable Tourism. In summary, the indicators for sustainability criteria are consisting of sustainable management policy, community cooperation, environmental and energy management, green purchasing, and human resource development. Moreover, the result also shows that the vision of the green hotel is not only business and taking care of their guest but also concerned with preserving the environment surrounding the area and sharing benefits with the local community. Sustainability management was the main policy to operate the hotel such as setting a team to respond to any sustainable activities of the hotel, staff training, and promoting and cooperating with the sustainability policy to the guest and staff. At the same time, the hotels are using the innovation for a part of environmental and energy management such as the electricity system control in the room, wastewater system, solar energy, and waste management system. However, the green hotel standard is not only focused on hotel management but the social dimension is one of the criteria that the



hotel needs to support and cooperate with the local community located surrounding area. The hotels launched many projects to support the local community as follows:

Waste Management Program: The hotel is concerned about waste pollution in Koh Lanta; thus, the waste management program has been launched by inviting the local schools to join weekly garbage pickup. The hotel uses this event to strengthen their bond between the hotel and local communities. They educate on waste management such as waste separation, making souvenirs from trash, and giving separate trash bins to local schools so that children will learn to separate trash, as a result, the children start to learn the habit of cleaning up their community and earn the income from selling reusable trashes and souvenir. In 2019, the hotel and local authority launched the trash sculptures contest to increase the value of trash and create awareness of waste pollution among the local people and tourists.

The Little Scientist House: Little Scientist House is Princess Sirinthorn's project to encourage Thai students to study more sciences through science experiments since there was research confirmed that cultivating positive attitude in scientific learning skills and scientific process to children since primary level (age 3-6 years old) will help to increase learning capability and recognizing. The hotels became a local network leader in 2014 and invited 11 schools in Koh Lanta to join the Little Scientist House program. All 11 schools will have to pass Her Royal's Assessment which includes completing at least 20 scientific activities and 1 scientific project per year in order to receive Her Royal Trophy.

Support local business: The green hotel in Koh Lanta also supports local businesses such as encouraging our guests to visit the community surrounding area visit Old Town Lanta, visit the Lanta Community Museum to learn ways of traditional living on Lanta Island, buy souvenirs and have local food. Extensively promote mangrove forest tour on a gondola boat, a tour is organized by Tung Yee Peng Villagers as well as cooperate with Koh Lanta's Sheriff and Koh Lanta Travel Association to create a day tour package for fishing and squidging on Koh Por, which is a small island near Koh Lanta.

Rak Lanta Project: After Koh Lanta became a famous tourist destination, the increasing number of tourists arriving has affected waste management and waste pollution become a major problem. The Rak Lanta project has been launched to raise awareness of the local community to protect their hometown by reducing waste pollution both on land and sea.

According to the result above, the green hotel standard generates a positive impact in every dimension (environmental, social, economic), it's not beneficial only to the hotel but also to the local community surrounding area. The environmental impact is the most effect on the local community, the hotel effort to cooperate with the local community,



educate, and raise awareness of protecting the community and environments through the activity or project. Meanwhile, the green hotel standard also generates positive social impact and economic impact to the local community such as the local authority cooperating with the hotel to organize the activity to reduce pollution in the area and also the private sector that cooperates to promote sustainable tourism in Koh Lanta. However, the green hotel standard also generates income for the local community such as earning income from selling reusable trashes and souvenir and tourism activity.

Conclusions and Discussion

The green hotel in Koh Lanta has launched many activities and projects to achieve the green hotel standard criteria. The operation of green hotel standards it's not only beneficial to the hotel but also sharing with the local community. The hotel activities and projects are generating positive impacts including environmental impact, social impact, and economic impact to the local community. The social impact is the most effective for the local community, most of the projects create a relationship between the local community with the hotel and also harmony in the community. However, education on waste management is raising awareness in the local community to protect their hometown. Moreover, the Project Green Hotel also generates income from selling reusable trashes and souvenir and tourism activities. Therefore, the green hotel standard will not be achieved without cooperating with the local community, the positive impact which is generated from the green hotel operation is the factor that confirms it's the right tool to reduce pollution from tourism and make it sustainable.

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