

# **The Socio- Economic Impacts and Satisfaction of Farm- Stay Tourism: A Case Study of Kapoe Community in Ranong Province, Thailand**

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## **Abstract**

This Study examined local people's perception on socio- economic impacts of farm- stay tourism in their community and their satisfaction. The case study of this research was Kapoe Community, Ranong Province, Thailand. The objectives were to examine positive and negative of socio- economic impacts of Farmstay in the perception of local people, and to survey their satisfaction. The study applied quantitative method utilizing questionnaire as a data collecting tool with 100 samples who were local people in Kapoe Community. The scope of research was Baan Rai I Arun Farmstay in Kapoe Community. Farmstay tourism is a new alternative of Thailand for tourists who want to relax and close to nature. Farm tourism encompasses a set of economic activities with a tremendous potential for future domestic earnings and regional development, drawing on services provided by local governments and regional communities. The results of the research are useful in developing an interpretive and tour management model which will help to sustain rural communities in farm environments through tourism, and engage the support of the locals.

*Keywords:* Baan Rai I Arun, farm- stay tourism, socio- economic impacts, Kapoe Community, satisfaction

## **Introduction**

Farm- stay tourism, which is also known as "agritourism" has been defined as the opportunities for tourists to reside and sometimes participate in the working activities of farms and ranches (Kline and Cardenas, 2007). Tourism in rural areas is growing partly because economic developers are gradually embracing tourism and cottage industries as viable means for diversifying their investment and increasing wealth of farmers. Farmstay involves the farm owner opening their homes to guests from one person to a group or family, depending upon the operator's ability to

support the needs of their visitors. Farm tourism is found in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Malaysia and England. Farm- stay tourism is a new alternative of Thailand for tourists who want to relax and close to nature because Thailand has natural resources, culture and a simple way of life (Siriwannangkul, 2012). The main income of Thailand is from industrial and service sectors. Tourism industry is the main one that has an important role in generating income to the country as it induces expansion of the business, creates jobs for people in communities and generates income for the locals. Ranong Province of Thailand has abundant natural, the landscape is a hills making rainy and cold weather throughout the year. The current farm- stay tourism is the point of interest among tourists because tourist can exchange culture and do activities with the locals that makes tourists feel closer to the community and bound more with natural setting. Although, Thailand has many tourist attractions and activities but a limited research information and knowledge about farm- stay tourism. The farm- stay tourism has not received widespread attention and this makes the farm- stay tourism lack of opportunities to be developed and restricted income distribution to communities and to the business sector. However, this study will affect entrepreneurs to develop businesses, farm stays and can analyze the satisfaction of local people with farm stays in the community.

### **Literature Review**

The research study was based on the reviews of 5 papers. In “The Role of Agri-tourism’s Impact on the Local Community in a Transitional Society: A Report from Serbia” (Petrovic, Blesic, Vujko and Gajic, 2017), the objectives were to study impacts of tourism on the attitudes of residents in rural areas of Serbia and other Balkan transitional countries. The rural area is the basic resource for the development of agri-tourism and that it relies on the city residents need for peace and outdoor space for recreation. For conclusion, agri-tourism of Serbia in the international market will actually be the final result of transformation of interconnected quantitative and qualitative tourism resources in the regional tourism offer as well as the overall tourism product. Achieving a good position in the tourism market will enable identification of the objectives of tourism development that will contribute to the quantitative change of contemporary tourist offer. This study had the aim to give a contribution through an analysis and overview of agri-tourism aspects, such as its impact on residents’ attitudes. The second study was “Stated Economic and Social Motivations of Farm Tourism Operators” (Ollenburg and Buckley, 2007). The aim of this research was studying on motivations of farmers in starting tourism enterprises and how the government saw farm tourism as an economic lifeline for rural communities. Most farm tourism businesses are family businesses on family farms. In family businesses, decisions depend on family relationships, lifestyles, and property, as well as commercial considerations of growth, profit and may also have social goals. The conclusion of farm tourism operators focuses on income and social reasons as the main

motivations. Different farm tourism operators may have quite different reasons for starting farm tourism enterprises, even if the resulting farm tourism products appear similar to tourists and tourism promotion agencies. The third study was “Farm Tourism: A Preliminary Study of Participants’ Expectations and Perceptions of Farm Tours in Australia” (Coomber and Christine, 2004). The paper analyzed different aspects of visitors’ satisfaction and whether there were significant differences between the expectations and perceptions of participants of a guided tour in an organic farm. The study found the farm experience to be enjoyable and tourists felt comfortable with the farm environment. The study also showed that the guide provided to the tourists with good understanding of farm activities through effective interpretative tours. However, it also found that owners of small farm tourism businesses were often not aware of performance strategies to encourage interaction and involvement of participants. The fourth study was “Supply Analysis of Farm Tourism: Results from a Farmstay Survey in New Zealand” (Shakur and Holland, 2015). This paper analyzed the socio-economic aspects of the supply of farm tourism services in New Zealand. Farmstays provide mutual benefits for both the visitors about environment and the manager about social contact and increase income. The farmstay industry in New Zealand has a bounty of natural resources which continues to capitalize upon and develop. The fifth study was “Social Impact of Agro-Tourism on Local Urban Residents. Case study: Cameron Highlands, Malaysia” (Ling, Hafizol, Azyyati and Musthafa, 2016). This study aimed at identifying the social impacts of agro-tourism on local urban residents in Cameron Highlands based on the experience and perception of respondents. Agro-tourism is similar to eco-tourism, but it is more focusing on the use of agricultural resources as tourist attractions. In this context the tourists have the opportunity to learn how to farm as well as on the lives of local farmers and cultural exchanges that occur. One of the famous agro-tourism destinations in Malaysia is Cameron Highlands.

### **Methodology**

This research used quantitative method. The quantitative data was from questionnaires to survey perception of local people in Kapoe Community, Ranong, Thailand, on socio- economic impacts of farm- stay tourism in their community and their satisfaction. The areas in the scope of this research were Baan Rai I Arun Farmstay and the market of Kapoe Community. In this study, 100 samples were used.

## Results

Table 1-5 showed the results of the study of the local people's opinion on socio- economic impacts of Farmstay at Kapoe Community, and their satisfaction.

Table 1: Support for local tourism development

Attributes	Mean	Std. Deviation	Meaning
1. Farm-stay tourism encourages tourism in community	4.37	0.485	High level
2. Farm-stay tourism provides more jobs in community	4.28	0.604	High level
3. Government improves service in community due to farm tourism	4.13	0.734	High level
4. Farm-stay tourism can promote tourist attraction in <u>Ranong</u>	4.38	0.663	High level
5. Farm- stay tourism is vital for community	4.22	0.719	High level
6. Development of infrastructure	4.28	0.712	High level
7. Farm-stay tourism supports sustainable tourism	4.41	0.683	High level

Table 1 shows the support of farm-stay tourism for local tourism development. Farm-stay tourism support for sustainable tourism gains the highest score with a mean score of 4.41. The second high mean score is farm-stay tourism that can promote tourists attraction in Ranong province with a mean score of 4.38. The third high mean score is farm-stay tourism encouraging tourism in community with a mean score of 4.37. The fourth high mean score has two factors which are farm-stay tourism providing more jobs in community and development of infrastructure, both of which gain the same mean score which is 4.28. The fifth high mean score is the fact that farm-stay tourism is vital for community, with a mean score of 4.22. Lastly, the factor of government improvement of services in community due to farm tourism has the lowest mean score which is 4.13.

Table 2: Farm- stay tourism changes the community

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1. Increase in local products demand	4.03	0.797	High level
2. Increase of crime	1.35	0.479	Very low level
3. Decrease of local language	1.22	0.416	Very low level
4. Changing of religious values	1.29	0.456	Very low level
5. Farm-stay tourism increases garbage in community	1.25	0.458	Very low level
6. Farm-stay tourism disturbs the ecological balance in community	1.24	0.429	Very low level
7. Farm- stay tourism increases noise in the community	1.19	0.394	Very low level
8. Changing the way of life of locals after having farm-stay tourism	4.06	0.763	High level

Table 2 shows that farm- stay tourism can change the way of life of local people in the better way, and increases local products demand. Other attributes do not show significance as they receive very low mean score. For example, increase of crime receives a mean score of only 1.30.

Table 3: Cultural aspects

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1. Heritage conservation for next generation	4.30	0.732	High level
2. Effort of cultural uniqueness promotion	4.24	0.726	High level
3. Farm-stay tourism has conflicts with local culture	1.38	0.508	Very low level
4. Locals have problem in communicating with foreigners	4.21	0.556	High level
5. Farm- stay tourism can promote local food for tourists	4.07	0.782	High level

Table 3 shows the findings in the cultural aspects on farm-stay tourism that could have association with the socio- economic impacts. The highest score (4.30) is on heritage conservation for next generation. The second is effort of cultural uniqueness promotion in the community (4.24), followed by the attribute of local people lacking communication and language skill with foreigners (4.21). The people also perceive that farm- stay tourism increase revenue by promoting local food for tourists at high level (4.07). The lowest score (1.38) is on farm-stay tourism having conflicts with local culture.

The survey findings of local people’s satisfaction towards the farm- stay tourism in the community were reported in the socio- economic dimension, exhibited in Table 4.

Table 4: Satisfaction on social impacts

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1. Better education	3.87	0.734	High level
2. Better quality of life	4.23	0.633	High level
3. Preservation of culture	4.37	0.661	High level
4. Strengthening communities	4.46	0.593	High level
5. Better development in community	4.53	0.643	Very High level
6. Overall have satisfaction of farm-stay tourism on social impacts	4.49	0.577	High level

Table 4 shows that the highest score in the satisfaction is about better development in the community (4.53), followed by the satisfaction of local people in farm- stay tourism. Farm business is the factor to improve and has development in community by entrepreneurs and the government promotes the community’s tourist attractions.

Table 5: Satisfaction on economic impacts

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1. Income generation	4.36	0.628	High level
2. Selling in community	4.25	0.783	High level
3. Contribution to local economies	4.28	0.552	High level
4. Generation of employment	4.46	0.558	High level
5. Promote local business	4.45	0.657	High level
6. Overall have satisfaction of farm-stay tourism on economic impacts	4.55	0.609	Very High level

Table 5 shows that the satisfaction of local people on economic impacts. The highest mean score of 4.46 is on the satisfaction of local people on generation of employment. The second mean score is on promoting local business with a mean score of 4.45. The third high mean score is income generation with a mean score of 4.36. The fourth high mean score is contribution to local economics with a mean score (4.28). The lowest mean score in this Table is selling in community with a mean score (4.26). Overall satisfaction of local people receives a mean score of 4.55.

### **Conclusion**

The study found that farm tourism has benefited to the community in that it creates more farm- stay tourism- related jobs for local people. Farm tourism focuses not only on profit income on their business but also on building an awareness how to improve the community to be a well-known tourist attraction among tourists and to be developed and promoted. The positive and negative socio- economic impacts as a result develop tourist attraction in the community and create sustainable development of farm- stay tourism. The local people were reported to have the highest level of satisfaction with the farm- stay tourism. This resulted in local people having more opportunities in selling their products and showing the tradition as an activity for tourists. In terms of social and cultural impacts, farm- stay tourism can provide entertainment opportunities for local people and opportunities for them to meet new people from outside the community. Moreover, it can point out that crime shows less significance with the very low mean score. This implies that that

there is low degree of criminal issue in the community and probably it is after having the farm-stay tourism in the community, because this makes the community become more open and welcoming increased number of tourist and therefore the degree of security management is increased.

### **Discussion and Recommendation**

Kapoe Community is the community where the local people have the simple way of life and most of local people are farmer. Agriculture is the basis of the important economy in the community. The products that generate income of locals are oil palm, rubber, fruits and vegetables. Ranong Province of Thailand has abundant nature, with a hill landscape, resulting in rainy and cold weather throughout the year. The current farm- stay tourism is interesting among tourists because tourists can exchange culture and do activities with the locals, which makes tourists feel closer to the community and bound more with natural setting. Farm- stay tourism operators have a passion to promote the area and the community. However, fair benefit sharing will gain satisfaction from all local people and will as a result encourage them to support tourism management and environmental preservation.

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