

## Stakeholders Perception Toward Destination Brand Image Sustainability:

### The Case Study of Mae Kam Pong Community

#### การรับรู้ของผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียเกี่ยวกับภาพลักษณ์ตราสินค้าทางการท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน : กรณีศึกษา ชุมชนท่องเที่ยวแม่กำปอง

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### Abstract

The aim of this research is to measure sustainable community based on tourism brand images as viewed by stakeholders in tourism community which is followed by research questions: How is the sustainable community based on tourism brand image as viewed by stakeholders in destination of Mae Kam Pong tourists' community?

This study employed the qualitative approach involving the survey of stakeholder in Mae Kam Pong village, Chiang Mai, Thailand from February 2018 – May 2018. An interview was administered to twenty-two stakeholders and the data analyses performed using a content analysis.

The qualitative finding demonstrates that natural resources and peaceful to relax accommodations are the highlighted resource of Mae Kam Pong village. The village is the potential slow tourism and is the sustainability of the natural by the management system. The conceptual framework developed and tested in this study can be used as a guideline to

enable an appropriate community based on management strategies that promote slow tourism and sustainable destination to be developed.

**Keywords:** Destination Brand Image, Slow Tourism, Psychological Emotion, Sustainable Tourism Image

## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อวัดภาพลักษณ์ตราสินค้าทางการท่องเที่ยวแบบยั่งยืนในมุ่งมองผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนมองโดยมีคำถามที่เกี่ยวกับการวิจัยคือ ภาพลักษณ์ตราสินค้าการท่องเที่ยวของชุมชนอย่างยั่งยืนในมุ่งมองของผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในชุมชนเป็นอย่างไร การวิจัยครั้งนี้ใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงเชิงคุณภาพโดยสำรวจภาพลักษณ์ของแหล่งท่องเที่ยวของผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในหมู่บ้านแม่กำปอง อำเภอเมือง จังหวัดเชียงใหม่ โดยทำการวิจัยตั้งแต่เดือนกุมภาพันธ์ - เดือนพฤษภาคม 2561 โดยสัมภาษณ์ผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียจำนวน 22 คนหลังจากนั้นนำข้อมูลมาวิเคราะห์โดยใช้การวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า สิ่งดึงดูดใจด้านทรัพยากรธรรมชาติและที่พักที่เงียบสงบ ผ่อนคลาย เป็นสิ่งดึงดูดใจที่สำคัญของหมู่บ้านแม่กำปอง หมู่บ้านมีศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยวแบบเนินช้าและการพัฒนาอย่างยั่งยืนทางธรรมชาติโดยมีระบบการจัดการของหมู่บ้านเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญ ครอบแนวคิดที่พัฒนาและทดสอบในการศึกษานี้ สามารถใช้เป็นแนวทางในการสร้างกลยุทธ์ทางการจัดการที่เหมาะสมของชุมชนโดยส่งเสริมการท่องเที่ยวแบบเนินช้าและการท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน

**คำสำคัญ :** ภาพลักษณ์ตราสินค้าทางการท่องเที่ยว การท่องเที่ยวแบบเนินช้า จิตวิทยาการมั่น ภาพลักษณ์ การท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน

## Introduction

At present, the image of tourism brand plays important roles in the construction of tourist attraction (Vitic-Cetkovic, Krstic, & Jovanovic, 2015). In fact, the image of tourism brand is a marketing strategy which can make tourist attractions which can be successful (Matiza & Oni, 2014). Many countries in the world have determined the image of tourism brand as an indicator of the competency in tourism competition. Thailand puts the importance on tourism industry and creates the image of tourism brand as an important marketing strategy on the National Tourism Development Plan, 2012 – 2016. In this respect, stakeholders in tourist attraction management must construct the difference in an image from that of the competition (Ji & Wall, 2015).

Community based on tourism is an alternative choice which can develop sustainable tourism. Its principle is development planning as viewed by the tourism manager and the

tourist (Sánchez-Cañizares & Castillo-Canalejo, 2014). In addition, tourism management needs market understanding for tourist attraction development. Also, integrated marketing which stakeholders participate in the development can build an opportunity to successful tourist attractions (Tasci, Croes, & Villanueva, 2014).

In the past, a study on the image of tourism brand put the importance on brand image as most viewed by tourists. However, a study on tourism image at present still lacks of the consistency between tourists and stakeholders in tourist attractions (Ji and Wall 2015). For the management of tourism images, stakeholders should be coordinate to another one in communication and reputation which keep on tourist attractions (Kislali, Kavaratzis, & Saren, 2016). According to the data, brand image measurement is the importance to tourist attractions at the destination of both local and national levels. The researcher was interested in a study on brand image measuring of sustainable community – based tourism as viewed by stakeholders in tourist attractions: a case study of Mae Kam Pong tourist attraction.

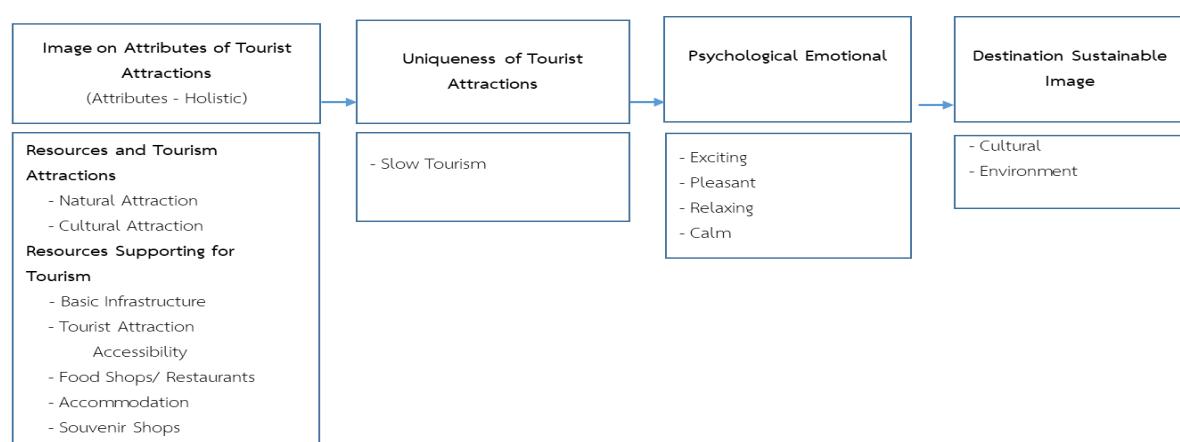
## Objective

The aim of this research is to measure sustainable community based on tourism brand images as viewed by stakeholders in tourist attractions: a case study of Mae Kam Pong tourism community.

## Research Scope

There was the application of Echtner and Ritchie (2003) theory comprising: attribute – holistic, functional - psychology, and common – uniqueness as a main theory employed in this study. In addition, this study was the integration of knowledge on brand images and sustainable tourism.

## Thinking Framework



## Terminology

Destination brand image referred to the concept, and impression of tourists when they visit the tourist attractions. (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003).

Slow Tourism referred to the type of tourism which the tourist having a slower movement than general tourism that makes tourism sustainable(Conway & Timms, 2010).

Psychological emotion referred to the feelings and emotions of a tourist having towards a particular tourist attraction (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

Sustainable Destination Image referred to the imagination of tourist which the tourism management does not have a negative impact on social, economic, and environmental aspects.

## Literature Review

### Brand image

Brand image has a relationship with perceived quality, brand association, and brand royalty. Besides, Ye and Tussyadiah (2011) proposed an effective method of communication with tourists. That was, how to make them see the picture which stimulate their imagination and connect it with their potential. Echtner and Ritchie (2003) mention that the tourist attraction is composed of functional characteristics which can be observed directly and psychological characteristics that cannot be observed directly. All of these are important for measuring the image. The study of the image of tourist attractions shows that each tourist site has unique identities that represent tourist destinations. The unique identities are characterized by functional and psychological characteristics. Thus, the destination image consists of functional characteristics, psychological characteristics, and unique identity of the attraction.

Attributes of tourist attractions also concern with the image representing tourist attractions arised from nature, culture and a specific experience related to a particular tourist attraction (Wang & Hsu, 2010). Ritchie and Crouch (2010) conducted a study on the structure of tourist attractions used for competition and sustainability. The component directly concerns with tourists (touchable) which includes: comparative advantage: macro environment; competitive environment; micro environment; core resources and attraction; and supporting factors and resources.

Psychology: Emotion can be described as specific value concerning with tourist attractions with a basis of motivation. In other word, it is the feelings arised from tourist attractions related to the psychology about tourist attractions (Hung, Lin, Yang, & Lu, 2012).

Although there are many development of conceptual framework and image measurements but it is mostly the measurement based on physical evidence and attributes (Prayag, 2009). Meanwhile, feeling and emotional view is another one of brand image. Both view must be considered together so that it will have efficiency (Sahin & Baloglu, 2011).

**Uniqueness of Tourist Attraction:** Slow tourism refers to tourism having movement which is slower than general tourism. The concept of slow tourism is interested by tourists because it is a process in tourism behaviors focusing on a slow life for creating tourism experience (Oh, Assaf, & Baloglu, 2016). Conway and Timms (2010) cited that slow tourism can make tourists be funny and it enhances knowledge. In this case, the community must seek for a slow tourism form based on their potential. Woehler (2004) claimed that good slow tourism does not create the feeling of the difference between tourists and people in the community. The following are principles of slow tourism: 1) travelling without a hurry; 2) fast food refusal and aimless destination; 3) visiting place is part of beautiful scenery and without big structure; 4) each tourist seeks for nature and touch it; 5) activities of slow tourism are related to love of nature; 6) the purpose is to make body and mind relax; 7) slow tourism must be in mind or spirit (Nistoreanu, Dorobantu, & Tuclea, 2011).

#### Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a tool having relationships with the society and its environment. The goal in development consists of three main aspects: conservation of natural environment; economic development; and social development (Sardianou et al., 2016). Besides, it must satisfy tourists and create experience as well as awareness of the sustainability of tourism (Edgell, 2015). Successful sustainable development does not only the development of attraction in tourist spots and convenience facilities but also service quality and competitive potential (Chindris-Vasioiu & Tocan, 2015). This also includes infrastructure, accommodation, transport, political stability, financial institutions, service excellence, and other environmental aspects related to tourism (Choi, 2003). As mentioned, In conclusion sustainable development focuses on 3 main components: 1. environmental aspects, 2. economic aspect, and 3. social aspect. This study put the importance on the sustainability of the environment and the cultural which can be observed.

## Method

The Semi-structure interview and observation form was used for data collection. This was because images are data which cannot be touched but it concerns with components which can be touched and observed for verifying. Interviews were made by the researcher. Then, the index of item-objective congruence (IOC) was tested for content validity by three experts. And test the reliability of 3 tourists. The structure and language of the interview were improved.

Initially, this study set 22 key informants. The key stakeholders are village council, homestay owner, restaurant owner and local people in the community. Purposive random sampling was used in this study which interviewed the stakeholder. The researcher had designed research instrument and collected data during February 2018 – May 2018. After that, obtained data were checked and analyzed and research report was prepared and synthesized for conclusions and recommendation. The process of data collection on image of Mae Kam Pong community – based tourism as viewed by stakeholders were as follows:

Area selection – The researcher selected Mae Kam Pong community for the following reasons: 1. A famous tourism community where there are tourists visiting there throughout the year and 2. Community participation in sustainable tourism.

Data Analyses - The researcher must be able to interview and change the question where the true answer is not obtained. In other words, the researcher is an analysis tool since he must analyze data all the time during the interview and observation. That is, he must check the correctness of data in the qualitative research called “Triangulation” (Denzin, 1970). After that, the analysis technique on the perception of attributes and benefits of tourist attractions is employed. It can be done by data type classification (Typologies). This includes domain analysis (grouping of a set of words to be under another set of words having definition covering that set of words) and taxonomy analysis (a relationship between sub – set of words and domain as a whole). Later on, content analysis is employed to describe and explain the occurred phenomena.

## Research Result

Attribute – holistic: This is the result of interviews with stakeholders in the tourism section which divided into five elements; as follows, Natural attractions, Cultural attraction, Accommodation, Destination infrastructure, Restaurants and Food shop, and Souvenir shops.

Natural Attraction in stakeholder view is highlights and attract the tourist. The Area of natural resource attraction as well as the Mae Kam Pong waterfall which is called Miang and coffee garden are good climate for relaxation, because the village is located in the full of the forest which is situated in the High Mountain, and the water flows throughout the year. Homestay owner or stakeholder said that “*Mae Kam Pong village has a clear stream of water from the past to the present and it has the beautiful scene for long-lasting tourism*” And “*The climate is different from others. It is cold all day, if it is sunny, it will be cold.*”

On the diversity of cultural attraction, an interviewee said that there was a diversity and number of places of cultural study which is adequate to the size of the village. But cultural may not be the main tourist attraction because some cultural studies match the traditions of the village. Cultural attractions, Kantha Prugsa temple, located in the center of Mae Kam Pong Village which has an over 100 year of sanctuary. Most of the interviewees said in the same way: “*Temple beside the street is the old sanctuary which have many cultural activities*”. The cultural attractions enhance the knowledge of Mae Kam Pong village and the tourists do activities with villagers which increase their knowledge. The interviewee said that “*in the overnight, students tied up Mieng, but they did not tie well because they were not skillful.*”

The people in the village have good relations with the people in the community and the tourists which make the village liveliness a lot. The villager observes tourists who come to visit, the local greet and smile to them. The Areas around or in Mae Kam Pong village are safe suitable visiting. But some place is not enough clean. The interviewer said. “*This temple is clean because of the local employment staff. In the contrast, there are some places that are not clean*” In the opinion of the manager, Kanthaprugs, said that the cleanliness of the area “*the place is available clean, but it will not be like a hotel.*”

Accessibility or condition of travel in Mae Kam Pong village, it is divided into signs to destinations that are prepared but not clear and easy to observation. Homestay owner said that “*Last year, the villager took the sign that means did not park, but tourist come to the park*”. Moreover, homestay owners said. “*The road is in good condition but very steep at some point*”. The committee of village has interviewed about the common sense of the road used by tourists, he said that “*We knew the problem that the car was stuck because our roads were narrow and tourists had to park on the road*”.

The restaurant at Mae Kam Pong village offers a wide range of services for tourists, especially in homestays. The interviewee said that “*There are six restaurants in the village, including noodles, a la carte. In addition, Homestays have tourists to stay which are asked for eating*”. The food served in Mae Kam Pong village is clean and hygienically cooked. In particular, homestay owner ask tourists about the meals to eat in each day because they take times to prepare food for tourists. “*Visitors will eat breakfast and dinner; in contrast, tourists do not eat breakfast because they go out*” The cafe is decorated according to the owner's style and location of the coffee shop and unique decorated shops will be popular for tourists. The interviewee recommended to go to the shop that “*Lung Pud Pa Peng coffee shop which is at the south of the village and Chom Nok Chom Mai, a coffee shop on the north of the village, offers a view of the village.*” The characteristic of the food in the village of Mae Kam Pong village is not unique in ancient Lanna style.

Accommodation in Mae Kam Pong village is a major attraction of the destination. At present, the accommodation in Mae Kam Pong village can be divided into 2 types: Homestay and room which local style which invests for tourists. The villager call “Daily Rented Room” The hygienic cleanliness of the rooms and equipment in Mae Kam Pong village is clean and suitable for tourism. Mae Kam Pong village has a supervised committees to manage the standard of the accommodations.

Souvenirs in Lanna identity are not like the ancient Lanna, but these souvenirs are still local. The cooperation of committee sought to sell the local style. From the interview, the temple administrators mentioned about the identity of souvenirs that, “*There is not any authentic folk like anywhere,*” In addition, in the case of handmade woven clothes which are imported from another village. “*These cottons are imported from another village.*” The committee said about the sale that “*The administrator asked for the cooperation which keep the distribution of the packets to the local theme.*”

Uniqueness: Slow Tourism, Stakeholders have the same opinion that we should manage activities and interact with the villagers to gain knowledge. The interviewee said that “*In the past, student tourists come for the educational travel. Tied Meing is one of activities but they cannot tie well because they are not skillful.*” These activities are also developed the areas. From the interview, “*When students came to do activities such as dam, but it is not done completely. The villagers do not know what else to develop*”. Many well educated tourists

come to study about making tea pillows. The objective is to bring knowledge back to the village. Learning at Mae Kam Pong Village spend a long time. By getting the real knowledge, the interviewee suggest that “*tourists must live and do activities with the villagers it will be the real knowledge*”. Furthermore, tourists should be back again to memorize the story in the past. The interviewee said that “*tourists come back to Mae Kam Pong Village for 3 - 4 times*” and *the repeated tourists asked the question that why Mae Kam Pong Village is changed so much*”. Therefore, the image of uniqueness is the same as a slow tourism. Mae Kam Pong village has the potential places to make tourists returning again because there are activities that takes a long time and gain the knowledge from travelling.

Psychological Emotion, Traveling in Mae Kam Pong village can create a variety of emotions due to the various factors. The emotional aspect of travelling is complicate and profound. Nevertheless, stakeholders have generated the emotion from the natural environment and they have the peace image which creates more relaxation than other emotions in Mae Kam Pong Village. From interviews with villagers, “*Travelling in Mae Kam Pong Village is calm and relaxed.*” Homestay owners and souvenir sales person have an emotional perspective on tourism. “*The weather in Mae Kam Pong Village is cool which is not like the others. And it is sunny in spite of the cool weather.*” However, some stakeholders think that there is a creation and excitement in Mae Kam Pong Village because there is the narrow and steep way to travel. The villagers said that “*Travelling in Mae Kam Pong Village is quite exciting*”. Therefore, the emotional image in the view of many stakeholders have seen that there are the created, Calm and relaxed emotion more than excited and pleasant emotion in Mae Kam Pong Village. The cause of emotion above derived from the tourism resource which tourists themselves touch the nature.

Destination Sustainable Image, The soil fertility in this area can be planted very well because of the village regulations on the use of chemicals. According to the law which relate to forests, there are limits to agriculture. The homestay owner said about the condition of the soil that “*coffee can grow up well in this area*”. “*In the woods, there is a Meing garden which is his/her business owner. However, we also conserve water and the forest*”. There is a thick forest in the village in the past, and until now the local areas have changed a tourism career. Thus there is the abundant forest resources. The village leader said that “*The forest is abundant in the past, because the villagers do the job. But the reason that there is a thick forest because*

*the local people change the job".* In addition, rules and regulations which the villagers should pay respect and adhere are important for the community because this makes the soil. The villagers said that "*there is a prohibiting law which use insecticides that destroyed the soil fertility in the village*".

Teenagers and worker aged often use Thai language to communicate with tourists, but the villagers and neighborhood still use the dialect. . Interviewer said that "*If there are visitors or tourists, I also use the dialect to communicate with them.*" It can be seen that the native language of the culture is strong. Villages sometimes interpret into Thai language to communicate among tourists.

Some people in Mae Kam Pong village wear the traditional costume in Lanna style, but some elderly people still dress in sarong. Many people bought the clothes from Chiang Mai. There is some tangible evident about the costume culture in ancient times. This has changed a lot because of the villagers' careers which is dynamic. Moreover, new costume style is easier than the original ones.

The participation of elderly people in the tourism, only some of them are tour guides because they have a good health and they have known the geography of Mae Kam Pong village very well. The village committee gave some opinions about the career that "*there are two or three seniors who work as tour guides which can be walked on the hill.*" The elderly people do souvenirs by the variety in the career. The homestay owner provided more information that "*there are some strong elderly people, grandmother, who can make the bamboo baskets.*" The interviewee said that "there are 70 years old elderly people who are the president of herbs' committee who serve tourists".

In conclusion, there are the social and cultural sustainability of the tourist community in Mae Kam Pong. The cultural conservation is not strict for the worker age. In terms of the participation of elderly people in the tourism, they participate in the physical and suitable career's choices.

## Discussions

In Natural Attraction aspect: In the view of stakeholders, it is highlights and attract the tourist. The Area of natural resource attraction as well as the Mae Kam Pong waterfall which is called Miang and coffee plantation are good climate for relaxation. The attractive areas have the highly security for tourists because there is no any danger throughout the tourism

management. There are activities which tourists learn about between the forest and community. In this natural area, the very big trees are conserved, but there are the Mieng plantation and the coffee plantation which are conserved by the law and the community's regulations. Mae Kam Pong village is the natural attractive areas which is cool all the year. The high hill community has the variety of the nature. The results of this study are in line with the slow-moving principle of tourism (Nistoreanu, Dorobantu, & Tuclea, 2011) that visiting place is part of beautiful scenery and without big structure; each tourist seeks for nature and touch it; activities of slow tourism are related to love of nature; 6) the purpose is to make body and mind relax.

Moreover, the stakeholders pay attention in the attractive management in tourism; especially, the nature. There should be clear regulations on using the forest which include the care and clean natural attractions. In conclusion, there are two views of natural attraction aspects which are like perfect, diverse, safe, and pleasant. Consistent with slow tourism is a tool used for controlling and giving benefits for tourism development initiated by the community (development – from - below). In this case, the community must seek for a slow tourism form based on their potential (Conway and Timms 2010).

In Cultural Attraction aspect: On the diversity of cultural attraction, there was a diversity and number of places of cultural study which is adequate to the size of the village. But cultural may not be the main tourist attraction because some cultural studies match the traditions of the village. It does not follow Pechlaner, Lange et al. 2011 said that tourist attractions have potential which are suitable for tourists' needs to have special attributes of culture, ethnic groups, sub – group of population, etc. Besides, it puts the importance on food diversity, language skills of local people, uniqueness of local architecture, and diverse culture. The culture of Mae Kam Pong Village which the culture is mixed, so it is not outstanding. The culture which can be the identity should have the different prominent from the others. (Apostolakis, Jaffry et al. 2015)

In uniqueness slow tourism aspect: the activities and interaction with the villagers gain knowledge which is the Uniqueness Slow Tourism. It should take a long time to visit Mae Kam Pong tourist attractions in order to gain true travelling experience and relaxation. Tourists should spend one day to one week there in order to be part of Mae Kam Pong community. To be harmonious with the concept of slow tourism is interested by tourists because it is a

process in tourism behaviors focusing on a slow life for creating tourism experience (Oh, Assaf et al. 2016) and Woehler (2004) claimed that good slow tourism does not create the feeling of the difference between tourists and people in the community. In conclusion, tourist attractions should have the different prominent physical image. And the prominent physical image based on the long time tourism for tourists' experience.

In Emotional aspect: they conclude that tourism in Mae Kam Pong make the diverse feelings which derive from many factors. In stakeholders' view, moreover, the cool atmosphere in Mae Kam Pong would make tourists feel relaxing. To be harmonious with (Sánchez-Cañizares and Castillo-Canalejo 2014, Ahebwa, Aporu et al. 2016) agree with the tourism community based on tourism which must satisfy tourists. This is the one of the components in service quality and potential competition (Chindris-Vasioiu and Tocan 2015) which bring out the sustainable development. The view of sustainable development is involved with aspect: The sustainability in stakeholders' view is the nature which the soil is fertile suitable for cultivation for example coffee, Mieang, and local vegetable plantation. The conservation environment which is derived from strict regulation which manages the sustainable problem. There is sustainable of cultural in Mae Kam Pong which adapt in the suitable socio and natural environment. Local people in Mae Kam Pong wear common dress. Local people in Mae Kam Pong speak dialect among tourists; especially, elderly people communicate with tourists in Lanna language and they can do souvenir products (Sardianou, Kostakis et al. 2016).

## **Suggestion**

Community based on tourism management provides the image of sustainability. The community is organizing tourism by introducing the identity concept of tourism which organize accommodation, souvenir shop, destination infrastructure, restaurants and natural attractions. Organizing activities in tourist destinations, tourists should take a long time to visit Mae Kam Pong tourist attractions in order to gain true travelling experience and relaxation. Tourism management in these elements which tourists have known themselves more than even when you visit Mae Kam Pong and do activities there. Moreover, tourists talk with local people in Mae Kam Pong since it makes you feel like you are part of Mae Kam Pong community. When the development of the composition of the accommodation, souvenir shop, infrastructure, restaurants and tourist attractions are all part of the slow tourism concept. These elements

create the emotional, relaxed, pleasant and exciting experience so that the whole aspects contribute to the image of sustainability.

In term of marketing, stakeholders implement that uniqueness slow tourism plays the big roles which create advantage to the brand. Besides the slow tourism can be different from other brands. The findings offer a uniqueness slow tourism in marketing strategy. First, the stakeholders develop the products on five components: Accommodation, Souvenir, Destination Infrastructure, Restaurant, and Natural attraction. Practical ways to improve marketing by sustainable community based on destination image. The destination image is slow tourism which the tourists travel in the village are calm and relaxed. These feelings cause five attribute-holistic. A uniqueness emotion massage is created by the promotion which appear on the narratives in guidebook, internet, and block in website that direct affect in awareness.

### **Suggestions for the next research**

The findings and limitations of this study have indicated the several potential implications for further research. Firstly, future research should compare two study areas which is between distinguished the natural and cultural attraction. So the future research has clearly results.

Secondly, the level of relevant tourism is importance. The future study will be compared the image between low and high level of relevant tourism. The new contribution will be found; for example, image management of low level stakeholders who build famous destination.

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