



Development of Educational Tourism Model Based on Local Competency at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School Thailand

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ABSTRACT

Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School is a privately owned Islamic school that provides standardized subjects and is overseen by the Songkhla Provincial Private Education Office. Despite being situated in a region renowned for its tourism potential, its allure remains untapped. This activity aimed to address the challenges partners overcome by developing educational approaches incorporating tourism principles. The activity commenced with a survey in 2023 and proceeded with coaching sessions from January to March 2024. The partners comprised six Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School administrators and numerous Primary and Junior High School students. This community service program employed a qualitative method integrating descriptive and explanatory approaches. Primary data collection involved conducting interviews, making observations, and organizing focus group discussions (FGDs). On the other hand, secondary data was obtained from reports, books, and other published materials. The observed tourist attractions encompassed floating markets, culinary establishments, souvenir stores, Buddhist temples and statues, hilltop museums, wayside businesses, and other similar attractions, all meticulously documented as recommended places to visit. The guided visit was divided into two days based on distance analysis. The authors suggested some places on the trip around. On the first day, students can visit Hat Yai Municipal Park, Khlong Hae Floating Market, and Kim Yong Market. On the second day, students explore Samila Beach, Songkhla Old Town, and the Folklore Museum. The findings of the partner satisfaction survey indicated that the partners expressed delight with the program implementation.

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Introduction

Tourism is a secondary requirement for all individuals. Every region possesses a wide range of tourism potential and educational value. Nevertheless, only a limited number of excursions in the area have been designed explicitly as educational tours, offering entertainment and

educational value [1], [2]. Using tourist sites to support learning facilities can be conducted by optimizing the surrounding environment, including natural attractions and structured tourism as learning resources in schools [3], [4].

Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School is a privately owned Islamic School offering a standard curriculum. It operates under the authority of the Private Education Office of Songkhla Province,

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overseen by the Private Education Commission of the Ministry of Education of Thailand. Solid religious activities do not result in substantial annual increases in student enrollment. Despite being in a region renowned for its tourism potential, the school's allure remains mostly unexplored.

The Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School is located in the Sadao District of Songkhla, the southern region of Thailand. The area is close to the Malaysian border, approximately 12 km away by car. There are numerous prominent shopping and authentic Thai culinary establishments in the vicinity. Additionally, it serves as a hub for heavy-duty vehicles and cargo-carrying trucks. The city center of Hat Yai can be accessed in 45 minutes via public transportation, specifically *tuk-tuks*, or by private car. The journey to Hat Yai International Airport by car typically takes approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

The school offers a range of educational levels, including preschool, primary, junior high, and high school. The primary school is for pupils aged 6 to 12 (*prathom*, Thai: ประถม). From the ages of 12-18, students begin secondary school, called *matthayom* (Thai: มัธยมศึกษา). Of the six years of secondary education, only the first three are necessary (*matthayom 1-3*). After completing grade 9, students have the option to continue their education in vocational school programs or pursue upper-secondary education (*matthayom 4-6*) [5]. The Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School encompasses 21 *rai* and comprises ten structures dedicated to academic and meeting purposes. The total number of individuals in the school community is 2,132, consisting of 1,983 pupils, 140 Thai teachers and staff, and nine international teachers.

Recent studies stated that, in Thailand, students' learning outcomes from both national and international assessments are low and have not improved greatly [5], [6]. Another researcher describes that students' educational quality in rural areas needs to enhance the quality of infrastructure and learning methods [7]. In August 2023, the proposal team and LPPM UMJ conducted an observation at the partner location, Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School. It was found that the education management has faced an issue. Partners' methods in teaching encounter several challenges, including 1) inadequate alignment between teaching and learning methods and the demands of the modern world, which results in decreased motivation among students, and 2) the absence of location-specific learning opportunities within the current curriculum.

The school aims to educate students prepared to become competent individuals, capable of coexisting harmoniously with individuals of diverse religious backgrounds in a multicultural society. The underlying principle of this foundation school is to attain fluency in reading, learning, writing, and reciting Al Quran while fostering a deep appreciation for the noble values and principles of Islamic life. Tourism activities embody a way of life guided by the teachings of Islam, which provides regulations to control and guide tourism to maximize its benefits. Exploring educational tourism in Islam involves reflecting on the magnificence of Allah's creation and appreciating the awe-inspiring beauty of nature. This experience catalyzes strengthening one's faith in Allah's unity and inspires individuals to fulfill their life's responsibilities, as mentioned in QS. Al-Ankabut: verse 20.

Integrating tourism activities into learning methods can provide positive feedback to partner educational institutions and tourism agencies [8], [9]. Effective educational programs can be achieved by collaborating with schools and tourism stakeholders [10]. This activity will facilitate the revitalization of student-centered learning approaches. Outdoor education is integral to student-centered learning as it fosters a fervor for acquiring and utilizing knowledge in practical, real-life contexts [11]. The outdoor activity produces new learning experiences that combine education with tourism which is called edu-tourism. This form of interaction promotes student autonomy in their learning process, under the guidance of teachers as facilitators. Furthermore, developing edu-tourism can positively impact the community, particularly concerning community empowerment projects based on tourism [12].

Songkla has the potential to be developed as an edu-tourism destination, where students may both rest and learn at various tourist spots. Tourism destinations are geographical areas that possess the necessary physical and social infrastructure, appealing attractions, and thriving communities to facilitate the expansion of tourism. The site has distinctive prospects and sets itself apart from other regions, attracting tourists keen on exploring and utilizing the available amenities and recreational offerings [13].

Educational tourism (edu-tourism) is a travel mode that involves visiting different places with the goal of learning and experiencing things that are professional, personal, or educational in contexts

like history, culture, social studies, or language studies [14]. Edu-tourism is essential because it provides novel experiences, fosters a broader understanding, and enhances student motivation. Students interested in educational tourism programs actively pursue novel experiences by engaging in learning activities beyond the confines of the classroom[4]. Individuals can broaden their knowledge and acquire a complete comprehension of the universe. Additionally, edu-tourism inspires students to pursue novel experiences and employment prospects upon finishing the program.

The team devised a collaborative initiative aimed at augmenting the student population by utilizing maps that showcase the region's tourism possibilities. This activity aims to address partners' issues by creating educational approaches centered around tourism, executing self-directed learning programs, and accomplishing the partners' goals. The problem-solving plan entails implementing educational tourism-oriented learning approaches, identifying viable tourist destinations, and providing assistance and training in creating promotional media.

Methods

This community service project employed a qualitative methodology that adopts a descriptive and explanatory approach. Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is a method used to examine, make decisions, and enhance understanding through evaluation and learning processes within a community. Our partners include teachers and administrators from Sangkhom Islam Wittaya, Thailand. Data was gathered through interviews, observations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The secondary data were collected from various sources such as reports, books, websites, conference papers, journals, and published materials from governmental and non-governmental organizations. The parameters used for site selection refer to previous research that works on factors influencing educational tourism attraction, namely tourist attraction, ability to pay [15], and ambiance of the local surroundings like environmental, cultural, safety, and social factors [16], [17].

The activity commenced with a survey in 2023 and subsequently involved coaching sessions from January to March 2024. The participants included six school teachers and administrators, with pupils ranging from primary to junior high. The problem-solving process involves three steps: (1) curriculum analysis, which entails examining the subject matter

that can be derived from local knowledge; (2) preparation of learning guides and facilities, which involves creating edu-tourism trip maps, designing learning activities, and developing students worksheets; as well as (3) preparation of learning monitoring and evaluations.

The desired outcome involved utilizing the local competency approach as the development of edu-tourism to encourage individuals to enroll at Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School. This entailed establishing an educational environment that aligns with sustainable edu-tourism principles and optimizing online and offline media marketing strategies.

Results and Discussions

Educational tourism, encompassing eco-tourism, cultural, and agricultural tourism, can bring about profound and immersive experiences while integrating learning methods and technology [18]. The presence of tourism can have a positive effect on various areas, such as income levels, employment opportunities, investment and development prospects, the promotion of social and cultural elements in the communities hosting tourists, the demand for cultural and historical activities, and the exchange of cultural experiences [1], [8].

Sangkhom Islam Wittaya School is a sizable independent Islamic institution that functions under the jurisdiction of the Office of Songkhla Private Education Commission, which falls under the Ministry of Education of Thailand. The location is 93 Sumnaktaw 2, Tambon Sadao, Sadao District, Songkhla 90120, Thailand. In 1972, Baba Zakariya Kayem established an Islamic boarding school known as "Pondok Banloom." The institution initially had a small number of students. After two decades of operation, the school has gained significant popularity, attracting as many as 500 pupils during its busiest period.

The attraction of the Islamic-based school unfortunately has not significantly augmented the annual student enrollment figures. Despite being located in a tourist-friendly area, the institution has not adequately capitalized on its appeal. Hence, as stated by a researcher, integrating tourist activities into learning procedures is needed to yield positive outcomes for educational institutions and tourism agencies [9].

The findings encompassed identifying prospective locations for eco-tourism and details regarding their distinctiveness. Multiple locations have the potential to be suitable settings for the development of education-based learning models. The attractions include Khlong Hae Floating Market, Hat Yai Municipal Park, Folklore Museum, Samila Beach, Kim Yong Market, and Songkhla Old Town.

1. Khlong Hae Floating Market

Khlong Hae Floating Market, situated in Hat Yai District, Songkhla Province, is distinctive due to its integration of Thai Buddhist and Muslim customs. Traditionally, the area adjacent to the river was the initial location of human settlement. Consequently, the majority of settlements in Thailand emerged near river banks. Rivers functioned as a means of transportation and a hub of economic activity. Boats were mainly utilized for local and regional commerce, facilitating the transportation of goods from producers to communities engaged in bartering and trading. Floating markets proliferated as riverfront towns embraced comparable cultural customs, particularly throughout the Chao Phraya Watershed. For centuries, floating markets have functioned as focal points of communal life on Thailand's central plains.

The location of multiple adjacent rivers conducive to commerce during the Ayutthaya Period (1350-1767) had a significant role in the widespread appeal of these markets. During the Rattanakosin dynasty (1782-1868), this market remained vibrant and buzzing with business. As the region and Bangkok advanced, the canals were replaced by road and railway networks. Consequently, individuals opted to journey via land instead of sea. Several floating markets were compelled to move to solid ground; on the other hand, others underwent renovation or closure. The term "floating market" was originally known in Thai as ตลาดต๋องน้ำ "talāt t̄hng nām," which can be translated as "floor of the water market".

Khlong Hae is renowned for its array of boats, housing around 80 merchants displaying menu boards, and facilitating tourists' exploration of the diverse gastronomic choices available. The floating market, inaugurated in August 2008, was the brainchild of the former village leader. During weekends, the canal is occupied by permanently anchored boats that provide some of the finest local products in the area. A substantial covered area on the ground with supplementary stands providing food, clothing, and souvenirs. The local cuisine in

this region features a variety of dishes such as Khanom Chin (rice noodles) served with curry, Khao Yam Ho Bai Bua (a southern-style rice salad wrapped in lotus leaves), Tom Yam Kung (prawns in a spicy and sour soup), Pad Thai (stir-fried noodles), Luk Chup (a type of Thai dessert), coconut ice cream, and various other specialties native to the southern region. Floating markets involve exhibitors displaying their merchandise on small boats and vying for the attention of potential customers along the canals.

Floating markets are aquatic marketplaces where merchants sell goods directly from their boats, ranging from homemade cuisine to exotic fruits and beverages. One distinguishing feature of this market is using environmentally friendly food containers, such as coconut shells, bamboo tubes, and clay pots, instead of foam or plastic containers. This floating market distinguishes itself from other markets in Thailand due to its eclectic blend of Thai Buddhist and Muslim traditions.



Figure 1. Khlong Hae Floating Market

2. Hat Yai Municipal Park

Hat Yai Municipal Park is situated on Kanchanawanit Road and encircles Khao Kho Hong, a mountain known for its picturesque landscapes. The park is embellished with vibrant flowers. The park offers an excellent setting for evening relaxation, featuring a centrally located gazebo surrounded by a pond, bird-watching areas, and food vendors. The extensive coverage area offers various enjoyable activities, such as a cable car ride with panoramic city views. The museum also contains religious artworks, including a colossal golden Standing Buddha, a jade statue of Guan-yin, and a remarkable four-faced Brahma figure. The "Hat Yai Buddha statue" at Khao Kho Hong is known as Phra Phuttha Mongkol Maharat.

Hat Yai Municipal Park was constructed to honor the 6th Birthday of His Majesty the King on 5

December 1999, during the reign of King Rama IX. The park was built with the support of both Thai and foreign Buddhists and was designed by Phinyo Suwankiri. Made of brass, the statue stands at a height of 19.9 meters (excluding the base), weighs 200 tonnes, and is positioned facing the city of Hat Yai. The statue is situated atop the level expanse of Khao Kho Hong, at an elevation of 371 meters above sea level.

A dual-track cable car traverses a distance of 525 meters, connecting Thao Maha Phrom Station to Phra Phuttha Mongkol Maharat Station. On October 12, 1999, Somdet Phra Yannasamvara, a well-known figure in the area, officially started pouring gold onto the Phra Buddha Mongkhon Maharaj statue at the Phutthamonthon ceremony site. This place was selected by the King and given the name "Phra Buddha Mongkol Maharat," which translates to "Great Fortune".



Figure 2. Hat Yai Municipal Park

3. Folklore Museum

There is a folk museum at The Institute for Southern Thai Studies, Thaksin University in Ko Yo District, Mueang County, Songkhla Province. The displays offer insights into the lifestyle, unique local customs, archaeological history, arts and crafts, and cultural heritage of the people of the southern part of Thailand.

The establishment of the Folklore Museum was formally initiated on 22 September 1991 under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The primary allure of this location lies in the museum's collection, which showcases a wide array of old cultural artifacts, spanning from metallic objects to glass items. Antiquated utensils exist to prepare noodles and antique iron objects. The museum offers detailed insights into the historical aspects of the items' exploration and utilization. The museum is situated atop a hill, affording a thrilling vantage point of the sea from an elevated position.

The Folklore Museum houses replicas, traditional customs, auditory recordings, photographs, movies, multimedia presentations, and an impressive collection of 49,000 authentic artifacts. The narrative of Thaksin's educational journey is conveyed through a series of fixed exhibits housed in four distinct structures, spanning an area of almost 3,300 square meters. These buildings include the Nawaphumin, Nawab Phumin, Blanau Roof Group, and Hip-Gable House.



Figure 3. Folklore Museum Songkhla

4. Samila Beach

Samila Beach represents beautiful scenery, with pristine white sand, a crystal-clear azure sea, and gentle undulating waves. The facility is extensive and tranquil, and guests are free to visit. Several vendors offer delectable cuisine and beverages. In the vicinity of the beach, merchants sell T-shirts, bags, and other mementos. Horseback riding is available that costs 150 baht for a 20-minute duration.

Samila Beach, or Hat Samila, is a 3 km stretch of white sand beach in Songkhla, Southern Thailand. It is about a 45-minute drive from Hat Yai. The most striking characteristic is the mermaid statue, which assumes an identical stance to Mae Thoranee. According to Buddhist belief, the deity of the earth manifested during an extended period of deep contemplation and attained the Buddha's state of enlightenment.

The eastern end of Samila Beach, closest to Songkhla City Centre, experiences the highest activity level. The beachside promenade is considerable in length. The path leads to the mermaid monument and terminates at a roundabout marked as 'Samila Beach'. The promenade has many dining establishments, fashionable shops, and market vendors. A substantial concrete pavilion is located after the promenade.

The Mouse and Cat Statue, another renowned landmark of Samila Beach, may be reached through an enclosed space connected to the pavilion adjacent to the Golden Mermaid landmark. From the vantage point of the monument, one can observe two fabled islands known as Ko Nu and Ko Maeo in the far-off horizon. Legend has it that a dog, cat, and mouse pilfered a merchant's crystal and attempted to swim to the shore. Unfortunately, the mouse and cat perished and were named Ko Nu (Mouse Island) and Ko Maeo (Cat Island). However, the dog managed to reach the shore; however, succumbed to fatigue and transformed into Khao Tang Kuan (Tang Kuan Hill); on the other hand, the crystal metamorphosed into the exquisite sand found at Hat Sai Kaeo.

In addition to souvenir vendors selling clothing and accessories, the beach area is also home to numerous eateries offering various fresh seafood options. Several market stalls offer traditional ice cream on the beach, which can be savored in the designated relaxation area shaded by pine trees. When traveling in the southern direction towards the city, a pathway on the beach leads to Chatalat Beach. Chatalat Beach is renowned for its numerous restaurants and coffee shops that attract many evening tourists.



Figure 4. Samila Beach

5. Kim Yong Market

Kim Yong Market is renowned as the largest indoor market in Hat Yai and one of Thailand's most well-known markets. The location is at Tambon Hat Yai, Amphoe Hat Yai, Songkhla. This market distinguishes itself from the ASEAN Night Bazar by its more extensive layout, where merchants trade in rows of shophouses. The market is renowned for its retail establishments that specialize in selling merchandise from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. The pricing is significantly low compared to other establishments in Hat Yai. Their main distribution channel is through retail stores located near the main route.

The market offers various goods, such as snacks, souvenirs, dried fruits, seasonal fruits, cosmetics, apparel, and more. The most highly coveted items are various nuts, such as cashews, pistachios, macadamia nuts, almonds, and fresh fruit goods, particularly mangoes and durians. Additionally, the market offers a wide selection of food, snacks, and sweets. The Kim Yong Market operates daily from 06:00 a.m. to 06:00 p.m.



Figure 5. Kim Yong Market

6. Songkhla Old Town

Songkhla, a town of historical significance, boasts three prominent roads: Nakhon Nok, Nakhon Nai, and Nang Ngam. These roads are adorned with magnificent architecture and retain their original charm, featuring Sino-Portuguese-style historical structures and Chinese commercial shophouses. The exploration of Songkhla Old Town commences at the Songkhla City Gate and proceeds down Nakhon Nok Road, which parallels the scenic Songkhla Lake. Located at the terminus of the route lies a time-honored factory named "Hap Ho Hin", adorned with a crimson hue, that presently serves as a venue for a permanent exhibition. The cultural legacy of Songkhla Old Town endures along Nakhon Nai and Nang Ngam Roads, attached with longstanding local eateries that have garnered popularity over several decades.

Students can explore their surroundings on foot and observe street art murals adorning the walls of residences along several paths. The street art showcases many captivating artworks, including the everyday life of residents and Chinese opera performers. The City Pillar Temple serves as a stopover, with a Chinese architectural style dedicated to the veneration of city pillars and Chinese deities. Within the City Pillar Temple area is a Chinese opera theatre and a tiny noodle shop underneath the raised stage. Visiting Songkhla on the second Sunday of each month allows one to enjoy Song Le Market, a pedestrianized area on Nakhon Nok Road with food and crafts merchants.

During weekdays, Chana Street is inaccessible to vehicles and transforms into Songkhla Tae Raek Walking Street, a pedestrian-only pathway featuring several cuisine sections.



Figure 6. Songkhla Old Town

Tourism Concept in Local Wisdom-Based Education Curriculum

The concept of educational tourism was established based on surveys and observations. Educational tourism underwent three stages of development: curriculum analysis, formulation of learning guidelines, and preparation of an evaluation framework for educational tourism. Firstly, the initial step involved performing a curriculum analysis, which entailed evaluating the suitability of the subject matter based on local knowledge and expertise. Local expertise might be employed to examine primary school curriculum activities related to this concept. For example, despite modernization, the Khlong Hae Floating Market continues to preserve its abundant cultural heritage and historical significance. The floating market in Songkhla has gained popularity among tourists due to its focus on the ecological preservation of the river, which serves as a means of transportation and social engagement.

The following stage involved preparing learning guidelines and resources, including tour itinerary maps, study notes, and worksheets. Student worksheets are utilized during the excursion to ensure the effective execution of educational tourism activities, as students must maintain focus throughout the educational tourism process [19]. The design of the tour itinerary map is organized in an informative manner, providing explicit instructions. Preparing learning facilities involves establishing a conducive learning environment that facilitates edu-tourism learning activities, such as studying post-harvest technologies using dried fruit goods available at Kim Yong Market. Students would recognize that the opportunity to create dried

fruit is favorable, and raw materials are available, particularly during the harvest season.

Furthermore, the learning experience enhanced the knowledge acquired from the trip to produce more than just an assessment. Every educational endeavor at the tourism destination integrated indigenous expertise with rigorous scientific approaches. This method generated public consciousness regarding the potential of utilizing indigenous knowledge as a tourism attraction that prioritizes conserving natural resources. Group-based educational tourism suited Kindergarten, Primary School, and Junior High School student travelers since it allowed for collaborative learning experiences. The evaluation at this stage included assessing the achievement and alignment with the activity program's vision, mission, and objectives and evaluating input, implementation process, and output assessment results through straightforward tests and satisfaction questionnaires.

Mapping the Attractiveness of Educational Destinations

Site selection refers to previous research decided that tourist attraction, ability to pay, environmental, cultural, safety, and social factors are factors influencing educational tourism attraction. Tourism destinations refer to specific places that possess the necessary infrastructure, attractions, and communities to facilitate the expansion of tourism. A tourist destination presents distinctive opportunities and sets itself apart from other regions, allowing travelers to explore and use the amenities and experiences offered [13].

A tourist attraction, as defined, does not necessarily have to be a spectacle; however, it can alternatively simply be a notable landmark. Examples of educational tourism include museums, amusement parks, zoos, research institutions, art galleries, and historical sites [20]. Visitor locations must possess an allure that can incite spontaneous and premeditated visitor visits.

Several factors contribute to the appeal of a tourist destination. The indicators are developed by the factors mentioned by previous researchers [15]–[17]. These indicators include (1) the level of comfort experienced during the tour, (2) the cultural allure in all its forms, (3) the ease of reaching, departing from, and staying in the desired tourist destination, (4) the cost of tourism products and services concerning their value, (5) the scenic beauty and attractiveness of the beaches, and (6) the

ambiance of the local surroundings like environmental, cultural, safety, and social factors.

Table 1. Attraction of eco-tourism

No	Destination	Address	Attractions
1	Khlong Hae Floating Market	Tambon Ban Phru, Amphoe Hat Yai, Songkhla. Operating Hours: Every Saturday 5.00 p.m. – 9.00 p.m.	Floating market, various culinary delights, and souvenirs
2	Hat Yai Municipal Park	Kanjanavanich Rd, Tambon Kho Hong, Hat Yai District, Songkhla 90110, Thailand	Buddhist temple and statue
3	Folklore Museum	Tambon Ko Yo, Amphoe Mueang Songkhla, Songkhla Operating Hours: Every day 8.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. (closed on Tuesday)	Museum on the Hill; Nawamaphumin Building, Blanco Building, Hip-Gable Roof Building,
4	Samila Beach,	Tambon Bo Yang, Amphoe Mueang Songkhla, Songkhla	Beach, Mouse and Cat Statue, Golden Mermaid Statue
5	Kim Yong Market	Tambon Hat Yai, Amphoe Hat Yai, Songkhla. Operating Hours: Every day 6.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.	Street shops selling toys, dried food, souvenirs, imported products from Malaysia and Singapore
6	Songkhla Old Town	Nakhon Nok Road, Nakhon Nai Road, Nang Ngam Road, and Chana Road in Tambon Bo Yang, Amphoe Mueang Songkhla, Songkhla. Operating Hours: Every day (varied)	Street arts, City Pillar Shrine, Song Le Market, Songkhla National Museum

Table 1 displays the educational tourism attractions found in the chosen locations. The itinerary was organized into two days. The students organized to visit Hat Yai Municipal Park, Khlong Hae Floating Market, and Kim Yong Market on the first day. On the second day, the students scheduled excursions to Samila Beach, Songkhla Old Town, and the Folklore Museum. The distance between Hat Yai Municipal Park and Hat Yai Airport is 26.3 kilometers, and it takes a little more than one hour to travel there. Close attractions worth seeing include the Khlong Hae Floating Market and Kim Yong Market, located at distances of 5 km and 6.6 km, respectively, from Hat Yai Municipal Park. Samila Beach is 26 km from the city center and Hat Yai City Park. However, it is possible to explore Songkla Old Town, located just 3 kilometers from the shore. The Folklore Museum, situated beside Songkla Lake, is a notable tourist destination that can be accessed in just 40 minutes, covering a distance of 16 km from the museum.

The subsequent phase involved facilitating socialization and supporting the development of educational tourism programs in collaboration with

schools, students, and academic institutions. Implementation of edu-tourism could promote sustainable tourism practices in natural areas that prevent environmental degradation [8]. Every party concerned took the initiative to construct and enhance communication networks. [12] asserts that digital communities significantly impact the dissemination of information, expertise, and marketing networks to the broader community.

In their role as visitors, students were also anticipated to serve as advocates and participants in developing tourism in Songkla. Several examples of tourism marketing strategies include: 1) Digital Marketing: In addition to utilizing popular platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, it is essential to have an official website. Visually appealing content such as photographs, movies, and concise narratives can capture consumers' attention. 2) Media collaboration: School administration can partner with local or national media to report on school excursions to popular tourist destinations. The school will benefit from engaging in media activities to disseminate the program. 3) Implement advertising campaigns, whether in print or digital format, that effectively showcase the appeal and

desirability of each educational destination. 4) Collaborative efforts amongst agencies. Schools can utilize travel agents' services to provide holiday packages or coordinate their activities.

Evaluation and sustainability

Enhanced partner empowerment through acquiring more knowledge and advancing edu-tourism learning techniques is part of a student-centered learning approach. The participants had a positive response towards nature and open places. In line with empirical evidence, the notion is that outdoor activities improve the quality of teaching and learning [11], [21]. The partners assessed the program activities of the team. The partner satisfaction survey findings indicated that the partners expressed contentment and delight with the program. The outputs of this course have a positive impact on the ongoing environmental care efforts that involve school and community partners.

Conclusion

Educational tourism is a form of tourism that yields numerous positive effects, including disseminating comprehensive information to students and enhancing the economic system. Edu-tourism facilitates the development of human resources by improving skills and knowledge and fostering open-mindedness. The eco-tourism destinations in Songkla comprise Khlong Hae Floating Market, Hat Yai Municipal Park, Folklore Museum, Samila Beach, Kim Yong Market, and Songkhla Old Town. The assessment of the program was determined based on the satisfaction scores of the partners, which indicated a predominantly satisfactory rating. This endeavor necessitates the implementation of comprehensive promotion and marketing strategies. Educational excursions offer pupils novel experiences while reducing the redundancy of the educational process. The itinerary was split into two days. On the first day, the students visited Hat Yai Municipal Park, Khlong Hae Floating Market, and Kim Yong Market. On the second day, the students explored Samila Beach, Songkhla Old Town, and the Folklore Museum. The findings of the partner satisfaction survey indicated that the partners expressed contentment and joy with the program.

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Author Contributions

The authors' contributions to the paper are as follows, HG: conceptualization, methodology, and investigation. LIH: interpretation of results, writing—original draft, and revision. D: project administration. OM, JL: collecting data and validation. TYH: supervising and writing reviews.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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