

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature in four main areas, along with a summary: (1) the concept of a public park, (2) the concept of recreation and leisure, (3) the concept and theory of tourism attractions, and (4) relevant research

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF A PUBLIC PARK

2.1.1 The Definition of a Public Park

Watcharee Noipituk (วัชรีย์ น้อยพิทักษ์, 2536) stated that a public park or city park means an area provided by the government in order to use it as a recreation spot for relaxation and exercise activities. The beautiful park landscape, peace, shadiness and greenness are designed to reduce the stress of people. Usually a public park will not charge any fee because the government will responsible for it. Moreover, good public park should offer good facilities, activities and services for people.

Atiporn Promtasan (อติพร พรหมทาสาร, 2543) also defined a public park as an area built by the government both national and local in order to help reduce stress among people from routine work. People can do activities in the park such as walking, relaxing, reading, exercising or playing sports whenever they visit the park during its service period. In the park, there are decorated gardens and facilities to serve the need of people.

Sombat Kanjanakit (สมบัติ กาญจนกิจ, 2535) explained that a city park is a garden decoration built by the government or private sector. The purpose aims to encourage people to spend their free time in a beneficial way. For example, they can study the types of tree in the park. Besides, city parks can create a good environment in the city and make people healthy. (p. 243)

Wicttick (1974) described a public park as an outdoor area decorated with beautiful landscape. The park is the place to give shadiness, relaxation and freshness to people. The park comprises a wide varieties of trees, grass fields, ponds, fountains, sculptures etc. (p. 768)

2.1.2 The importance of public parks in the city

The public park plays an important role for people living in the city because it helps people stay healthy both in body and mind. Besides, it creates a balance of nature without destroying natural resources. Moreover, it motivates people to learn and support economic development. It is a way to preserve natural resources such as air, soil, water and animals. As a result, green areas or public parks are good for reducing air pollution in the city and help us to protect the lives of animals. People can live close to nature and realize the importance of forests. Furthermore, public parks provide learning resources for study outside the classroom such as natural areas, history and outdoor areas that attract visitors to visit the park (อาชญญา รัตนอุบล และคณะ , 2548, pp. 47-48).

2.1.3 The good characteristics of a public park

Achuya Rattanaubon et al. (อาชญญา รัตนอุบลและคณะ , 2548) stated that the good characteristics of a public park consist of three aspects: the convenience, the safety of the park and the park maintenance.

Firstly, a public park should provide convenience for the visitors. The name signs should be posted in the entrance areas of the park. Maps and directions are other conveniences that help visitors reach the places they want to easily. The size of paths in the park have an appropriate size including parking lots, trash cans and toilets. In addition, public parks should provide information centers for visitors. Secondly, public parks must have security systems, enough electricity and protective fences and first aid units. Thirdly, park maintenance is another important characteristic. The park should be maintained by the staff of the park regularly such as cleaning park area, decorating flowers and trees, watering, fertilizing and replanting. Furthermore, the park staff should check and fix equipment within the park such as painting the chairs, fixing the fence and posting signs, etc (pp. 48-49).

2.1.4 The types of park

The Office of the Public Parks, Department of Environment divided parks into 7 groups according to the location of each park.

1) Pocket park

The area of the park is not more than 3,200 sq.metres. People can reach the park within 5-10 minutes. This park is near the buildings in order to use as playgrounds for children, exercise areas or meeting points.

2) Neighborhood park

The size of the park is 3,200-40,000 sq.metres. Neighborhood parks are close to residential areas. It offers more facilities than the pocket park.

3) Community park

The area of the park is not more than 40,000-200,000 sq.metres, located in a the crowded living area and near a main street. Compared to pocket parks and neighborhood parks, a community park has more facilities such as sports and grass fields.

4) District park

The size of the park is 200,000- 800,000 sq.metres. The visitors can walk or use bus/car to reach the park. A District park provides facilities such as picnic areas, ponds, and flower gardens.

5) City park

The area of park is 200,000- 800,000 sq.metres, located in the city. People within area or nearby area can visit this park. Usually people spend their time more than 1-2 hours in this kind of park. There are many activities attracting the visitors rather than other parks.

6) Garden road

The area of a garden road is only 3- meters in width. The trees are planted along the road.

7) Special garden

The area of this type of garden is not limited. It is built to serve a specific purpose such as an historical garden, cultural gardens or sports garden.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF RECREATION AND LEISURE

Concept of recreation and leisure

Kraus (1984) has summed up that recreation is a public network that provides the facilities such as parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, sports fields and community centers. The purpose of recreation is the people's pleasure and amusement. Leisure, on the other hand, focuses on the amusement only. It is a reward and important form of people's experience. Furthermore, it plays a major role in economic development and government responsibility. As a result, the governments in many countries provide leisure opportunities for people through the recreation and public parks systems. (p. 3)

Types of recreation

Auamporn Veksomhmai (2527) divided recreation into two kinds. The first type is indoor recreation which is involved with indoor sports and activities. The second one is outdoor recreation. This kind of recreation is associated with outdoor activities such as paddle boats, and playing outdoor sports. (p. 19)

2.3 THE CONCEPT AND THEORY OF TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

The Scottish Tourist board (as cited in Swarnbrooke, 1995, p.3) stated that attractions are destinations where people can visit for entertainment, interest or education without reservation.

Middleton (as cited in Swarnbrooke, 1995, p.3) also explained the term "attractions" as resources offering enjoyment, amusement and education at the visiting place.

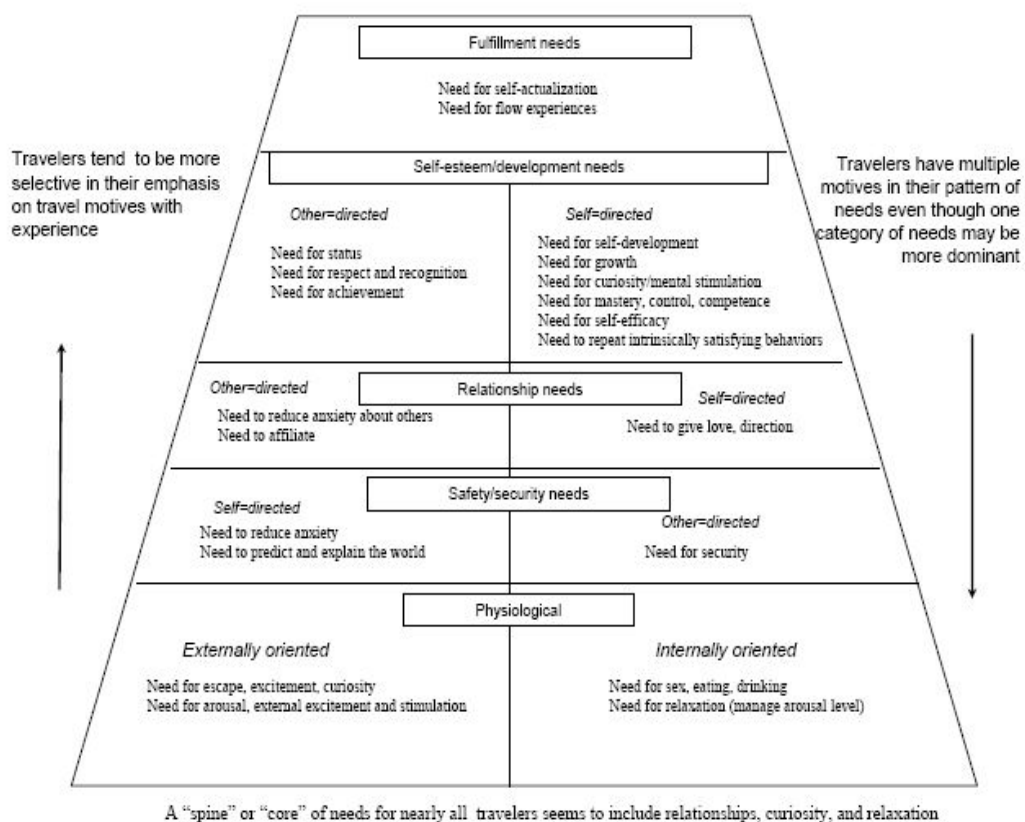
Swarnbrooke (1995) concluded that attractions are an important part of tourism which motivate large number of people to spend their free time traveling away from home so as to visit the attractions in the tourism places within limited period. (p. 4)

Attractions are linked to services, facilities, activities and the natural environment and contribute to the success of visitor attractions. Nowadays visitors are looking for a high quality environment in order to spend their leisure. They need clean and pleasant environments. Many visitors are disappointed with unclean attractions,

resulting in less travel to those attractions. Good customer service is another point that visitors are worry about. The manner and attitude of the staff is the core of any service. It is necessary to make sure that all staff are motivated and well-trained. Visitors also evaluate the attractions according to the facilities so the attractions need to offer the best facilities such as safe car parks, clean toilets, information service centers to satisfy the visitors. The last point is the varieties of on-site attractions such as special theme of event or special activities to attract people to travel.

On the aspect of the theory, most visitors are motivated by their needs to travel. Visitor' behavior contributes to their travel motives. Pearce (1991) has developed the travel need model based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs to explain how people fulfill their needs in each step of needs. The model looks like the steps of a ladder. Similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, People tend to climb to a higher step when they get more experienced.

Figure 2. Pearce's Travel-Needs Ladder.



From *Tourism Principles, Practices, Philosophies* (p.176), by Robert W. McIntosh, Charles R. Goeldner, and J.R. Brent Ritchie, 2002, New York : John Wiley & Sons.

The first step of travel needs is the physiological need or relaxation needs. People who belong to this group need relaxation. They focus on basic services such as food, drinks, space, and toilets. They need escape and excitement. The second step is the safety need. In this group, people need new but safe experience. They want to reduce their stresses with different food and people. Also, they can increase their stimulation while avoiding dangerous situations. The third step is the relationship need. People in this group are looking for personal relationships. They want to reduce stress from others. They may become involved with activities in order to activities in order to build relationships. The fourth step is self-esteem needs. People who belong to this category need achievements to enhance their status and reputation. They worry about how others think of them. The last step is fulfillment needs. People in this group need peaceful minds, happy experiences and spiritual fulfillment.

2.4 RELEVANT RESEARCH

There are many studies which relate to public parks in many aspects as follows:

Jutima Makkun (จตุติมา มัคคู้่น, 2551) conducted a study of factors affecting service user behavior at Wachirabenchatat Park. She found that most of respondents were male and single, aged between 25-34 years old. They hold bachelor degrees and earn monthly incomes lower than 10,000 bath per month. She surveyed opinions of the factors affecting service user in 7 areas such as activities, pricing, procedure, quality, location, equipments, public relations and park staff. The results of the study showed that the level of attitude towards the 7 factors was quite positive but the park needs to be well-managed with regard to the safety of the park and the public relations of the park. Moreover, the study showed that demographic factors including gender, age, marital status, and level of education contribute to the visitor behavior. The different demographic factors affect the visitors' behavior differently. For example, the visiting frequency of visitors with a lower education was higher than visitors with a higher education.

Somusa Titanatabutr (2004) studied visitor satisfaction toward Suan Luang Rama IX Public Park. The study found that the number of female visitors who visit Suan Luang Rama IX were slightly higher than male visitors. Most of them hold a bachelor degree and work for a private company. The average monthly income was at 5,001-15,000 baht. The results showed the visitors' satisfaction with Suan Luang Rama IX Public Park was at a satisfactory level. Visitors felt mostly satisfied with the park's environment but felt neutral with the facilities in the park. The study also revealed problems and suggestions for Suan Luang Rama IX's improvement. The main problem of the park was the fees in each area of the park such as entrance fees, toilet fees, boat fees, car park fees, and tram service fees. Next were the inconvenience of transportation and safety of the park. The park should reduce the fees of the park, provide public relations and offer suggestion boxes for people to comment.

Achuya Rattanaubon and coworkers (อาจารย์ญา รัตน์อุบลและคณะ, 2548) conduct research of sustainable learning management in public parks. This research collected information from the officers of the Office of Public Parks in 12 public parks. The study found that public parks were perceived as a resource of learning and a recreation place for people. The main problem of public parks management were the shortage of team management, an insufficient budget of park maintenance, the low number of activities within the park, the small number for park staff and the cleanliness of the park. The research concluded the study that the public parks should initiate a policy to develop the park in order to be a learning resource for the people. For instance, the park should endow creative activities to support people learning such as painting activities in the park, aerobics or bird watching.