

Kanchana Jantabupha 2008: Analysis of Recreation Patterns and Recreation Experiences of Visitors to Nature-based Recreation Areas in Mae Hong Son Province. Master of Science (Parks and Recreation), Major Field: Parks and Recreation, Department of Conservation. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Noppawan Tanakanjana, Ph.D. 159 pages.

The objectives of this study were to study recreation patterns and recreation experiences of visitors to nature-based recreation areas in Mae Hong Son province, to compare desired recreation experiences with actual experiences in visiting the recreation areas, to compare recreation experiences gained from each of recreation area and to test the relationship between recreation experiences with overall satisfaction and the need for revisit the recreation areas. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 500 visitors who visited 5 represented recreation areas including Tha Pai Hot Spring, Num Lod Cave, Pha Sua Waterfall, Wild Sun Flower Field Doi Mae U-Kho and Pla Cave. The survey data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, Factor Analysis, Paired Samples t-test, Analysis of variance and Correlation Analysis.

The study found that most visitors had no experience in visiting the recreation areas before and their average time spending for this visit was 1 hour and 25 minutes. Sightseeing was the recreation activity that most visitors desired and engaged in when they visited the recreation areas. Factor analysis grouped 28 items of desired experience into 5 groups including 1) independence, tension release and spiritual development; 2) risk taking, to discover something news and physical development; 3) enjoyment, to see new things and to get away from boring situation; 4) to display ability and creativity and 5) social interaction (cumulative percentage of variance=58.42). The same analysis grouped 28 items of actual recreation experience into 4 groups including 1)independence, tension release and spiritual development; 2) risk taking, to discover something news and physical development; 3) enjoyment, to see new things and to get away from boring situation and 4) to display ability and creativity (cumulative percentage of variance= 55.39). The analysis of differences between desired experiences and actual recreation experiences found that 16 pairs from 28 pairs of recreation experience were significantly different. The comparison on 4 groups of recreation experience that gained from each of recreation area found that 3 groups of recreation experience had significantly differences including independence, tension release and spiritual development ($F = 4.032$; $Sig. = .003$); risk taking, to discover something news and physical development ($F = 3.877$; $Sig. = .004$) and enjoyment, to see new things and to get away from boring situation ($F = 4.566$; $Sig. = .001$). Recreation experience significantly correlated with overall satisfaction and the need for revisit the recreation areas in the future.

Student's signature

Thesis Advisor's signature