

LADMAYOM MARKET: TURNING POINT BENEATH UNCHANGED LIFE STYLES

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Abstract

Market is a place of buying and selling goods and provisions. Its circumstance reflects the social culture and livelihood of surrounding communities. Ladmayom Market was originated by the intention of a community leader to perform activity towards the betterment of the community's environment so as to sustain the existing orchard, and life styles; and to gain extra income among the villagers at the floating market. The clean and beautiful canal provided the benefit of attracting the tourists to visit their community. As an income generating activity of the villagers, the flea market established and expanded around the original community floating market served the tourists. This economic phenomenon encouraged the villagers to uphold their endeavors by keeping the pride of good location to attract the tourists to come to their market and village.

Since the beginning, Ladmayom Market underwent two-fold turning points: a community floating market and a tourist flea market because customers weren't only local villagers but also nearby villagers including foreigners. The occurrence of the second turning point was due to the new expansion of the area and participation of adjacent land owners. They created activities such as community tour on row boat, Thai music performance, etc. in order to draw more customers from different neighboring places and foreign tourists. However, this expansion withstood both as strength and weakness. It slowly led to the decline of their good endeavor and purpose by taking for granted the market's potential of becoming popular to local and foreign people. The new areas were rather mostly run on business purposes than keeping how the market was first introduced to public. Therefore, maintaining the turning point beneath unchanged life styles, Ladmayom Market needs participative process from the villagers through public hearing and setting the community committee to continue their life styles.

Keywords

Ladmayom It is the name of the canal where many orchard community and flea market are located. Hence, "Klong Ladmayom floating market" was

named after the canal. This research will refer to it as Ladmayom Market concisely.

Floating market This is the market place located along a river or canal, which usually sells orchard products and provisions.

Tourist flea market It is a market usually located at an open area within a community and it operates on specific days to sell commodities and luxuries items to both local and foreign tourists.

Introduction

Market is a place where goods can be bought and sold especially provisions. It should also be regarded as a place where visitors perceive social culture and living of communities as a live museum. Ladmayom Market is located in Bangkok which was named "Venice of the East" due to the number of canals that divide the city into separate patches of land. The name of the canal becomes “Geographical identification” of this market within the orchard community as shown in the context map, Figure A.



Figure A: Context around Ladmayom Market

The orchards along the canal are abundant with flowers especially orchids, seasonal fruits and vegetables. Although the villagers are reserved, they are friendly and helpful not only with each other but also with the strangers. The houses along the canal are simple and locally built; however, a new architectural style would be seen in several. Various houses have poultries to produce eggs for family consumption and for selling at the market. Thus, along this quiet and peaceful canal, the Ladmayom community has their unchanged, easy and self-reliable ways of life in the orchard.

In the beginning, Ladmayom Market was a one-man project to preserve his homeland environment. The community leader started the project by collecting garbage along Ladmayom canal. Later, he persuaded the villagers to sell their orchard products: fruits, vegetables, and flowers so as to gain additional income, and to join creative activities around their community on weekends. When the community was ready to sustain towards further pace, he conjoined Ladmayom community market with the local government tourism network, the Talingchan floating market network. In that case, Ladmayom Market became known to the public as his objective to have outsiders' stimulation for environmental preservation project on the basis of the villagers' goal for a clean canal.

Objectives

This research aims to study the success and weak points of the tourist flea market at Ladmayom canal. The research expects to find a good precedent for other communities not only in improving their environment, and in gaining income to fulfill a better standard of living but also in keeping the unchanged life styles.

Methods

Literature review, interview, observation and field survey.

Result & Conclusion

Ladmayom Market opens at the average of 2 days a week on weekends and public holidays. The villagers sell goods, and their products gain at an average of 2,215.92 Baht per day while the merchants in other regular flea markets which open at an average of more than 3 days a week gain a lesser income (See Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of market size, average selling day/week, and average merchant income/day of Ladmayom Market to other two regular flea markets

Market	Size (stalls)	Customer/day (persons)	Average selling days/week	Average merchant income/day (Baht)
Ladmayom	600	4,000	2.00	2,215.91
Yingcharoen	450	10,000	4.77	1,151.64
Tungkru Plaza	200	5,000	3.80	1,092.38

Remark: Average merchant income is calculated from income rank not as an actual income

Ladmayom Market's strong points are its location, the community cooperation and good purpose of all villagers to sustain a good environment, and beautiful scenic clean canal around the community. The weak point is the gradual decline of their good endeavor and purpose brought about by the new expansion area, thus, disregarding the fact that the market is becoming well-known to locals and foreigners. The new expansion area is run rather mostly on business purposes than keeping the good intention as the market that was first pushed to public. Some land owners desire to have more benefits by doubling their selling stalls causing a jam-packed traffic in their zones. The parking area in the vacant lands is too hot since there are no trees planted in the ground.

Ladmayom Market should keep its strong points by avoiding dense selling stalls, and narrow pathways, and by providing more convenient facilities to fulfill customers' basic needs such as clean toilet, more dining table sets, and proper utensils. The wider pathways and some rest areas are basically important for convenient accessibility to persuade new customers to come by and back. Good taste of food is also an added attraction and a good propaganda for tourists. Shaded parking areas with trees will emphasize a unique orchard environment of the market leading to a better community environment.

Future Research Plan

Community-based participatory process and action through public hearing and setting the community committee to continue their life styles.