

The Study of the Relationship Between the Environment of Coffee-Growing Areas and Agrotourism Experiences.

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Abstract

The research on studying the relationship between coffee-growing environments and agritourism experiences aims to examine the connection between factors such as climate, altitude, topography, and coffee cultivation methods in coffee-growing areas, and the experiences of visitors engaging in agritourism. The goal is to understand the factors that influence tourism experiences and to identify ways to develop these areas to better suit agritourism. This study focuses on collecting qualitative data using a case study of coffee-growing areas in northern Thailand. The findings will provide guidance on improving coffee-growing environments to support agritourism and enhance the economic value for local communities.

Keywords: Environment, coffee-growing areas, agritourism, tourist experience, area development

1. Introduction

Thailand has a long history of coffee cultivation, especially in the northern regions, where the environment is well-suited for coffee growing. This includes cool climates, ideal altitudes, and topographies that support high-quality coffee production, which has contributed to greater recognition of Thai coffee both domestically and internationally. Additionally, coffee cultivation holds economic and social importance, generating income for farmers across various communities and playing a key role in boosting the local economy.

In recent years, agritourism has seen significant growth, with coffee farm tourism attracting visitors interested in immersive, hands-on agritourism experiences. Agritourism in coffee-growing areas goes beyond simply visiting farms; it includes learning about the coffee cultivation process, harvesting, and processing—activities that allow visitors to gain a deeper understanding of the value and local lifestyles tied to coffee.

However, environmental factors such as climate, altitude, and topography play an essential role in determining coffee characteristics, quality, and the experiences tourists have in these areas. This study aims to explore the relationship between coffee-growing environments and agritourism experiences, focusing on developing design guidelines for spaces that meet tourist expectations while adding value to both tourism and the coffee industry in Thailand.

1.2 Research Objective

1.2.1 To study the relationship between coffee-growing environments and agritourism experiences.

1.2.2 To develop guidelines for designing and enhancing coffee-growing tourism areas to align with the needs of tourists.

1.2.3 To add value to Thailand's coffee industry and agritourism.

2. Methodology

This qualitative study explores the relationship between coffee-growing environments and agritourism experiences through three phases:

2.1 Literature Review: Examines theories on agritourism, environmental factors, and spatial management to establish a theoretical foundation.

2.2 Fieldwork and Data Collection: Includes on-site observations in northern Thailand, interviews with tourists, and surveys assessing climate, altitude, and topography impacts.

2.3 Data Analysis and Design Development: Identifies themes to create design guidelines incorporating coffee-related features, northern identity, and relaxing, green spaces.

3. Literature Review

This research employs a qualitative approach, involving a review of related literature, in-depth interviews with tourists, and on-site data collection in coffee-growing areas in northern Thailand. The research process includes the following steps;

3.1 Review of relevant theories and literature: This includes concepts related to agritourism, spatial management, and environmental factors that affect coffee cultivation.

3.2 On-site data collection: Surveys are conducted in coffee-growing areas with diverse climates and landscapes to analyze the relationship between these factors and tourists' experiences.

3.3 Data analysis and space design concepts: Content analysis yields guidelines for designing agritourism spaces that enhance visitors' experiences. This design approach focuses on three key elements;

3.3.1 Coffee-related elements: Beyond being located in coffee-growing areas, spaces should reflect the processes of coffee cultivation, care, and processing to educate and deepen tourists' understanding of the value of Thai coffee.

3.3.2 Northern identity elements: Design should connect with the local culture and identity of northern Thailand, incorporating regional folk art and northern Thai architecture to reflect the region's unique charm.

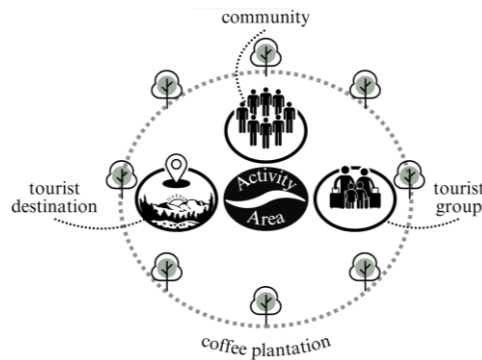
3.3.3 Atmospheric elements: The design should emphasize a relaxing atmosphere that connects visitors with nature through open, scenic resting areas, and increased greenery to reduce heat and create a refreshing environment.

Figure 1 Elements of data analysis.



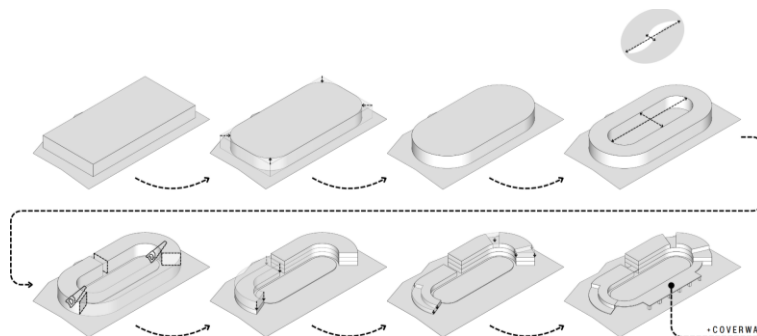
Given the coffee-growing environment and the community's distinctive characteristics, which have the potential to attract tourists, this concept fosters coffee-related activities that not only create an appealing tourist destination but also offer the community an opportunity to participate in sustainably developing their coffee-growing areas.

Figure 2: Spatial design concept.



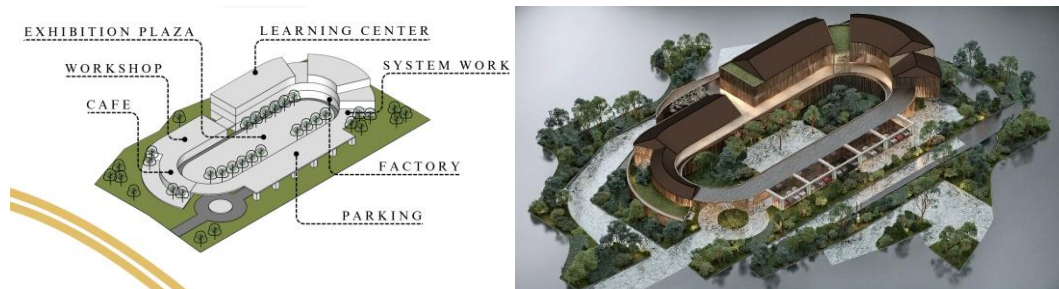
3.4 Draft Development: Inspired by the concept of enclosed spaces and the creation of interior spaces that facilitate activities, this process sparked the development of a draft aligned with the enclosed space concept, as shown below.

Figure 3: Concept Transformation ideas



Environmental Design of Coffee-Growing Areas and Agritourism Experiences: The development of the draft has led to a design that supports a variety of activities, linking tourists and the local community. This approach fosters knowledge exchange and experiential learning through activities that raise awareness of the value of Thai coffee and northern culture, as follows;

Figure 4: Architectural design, space utilization, and project modeling with AI.



4.Results

The study highlights a strong link between environmental factors and agritourism quality:

4.1 Environmental Factors: Altitude, terrain, and climate enhance coffee quality and tourist appeal, with cooler, scenic areas preferred.

4.2 Tourist Experience: Tourists appreciate interactive activities and cultural integration, such as coffee processing and northern Thai architecture.

4.3 Design Guidelines: Emphasize functional and aesthetic spaces, blending coffee-related activities with local identity and green, open areas to support sustainability.

These findings offer practical strategies to boost agritourism and coffee industry value.

5. Conclusion

The study reveals that environmental factors in coffee-growing areas, such as altitude, terrain, and climate, play a vital role in creating positive agritourism experiences. Proper design and management of coffee plantation spaces can add value to both the coffee industry and tourism. The concept of using coffee-growing areas as "enclosed spaces" helps to create an inviting atmosphere for tourists while providing opportunities for community engagement in coffee-related activities, such as guided coffee farm tours and showcasing local culture. This approach fosters sustainable development for both the coffee industry and agritourism.

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