CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION: TOURISM MANAGEMENT

A Study on Myanmar Tourists' Loyalty Based on Thailand as a Destination Brand

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate Myanmar tourists' loyalty toward Thailand as a destination brand by testing the relationships of brand loyalty with brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, and brand value. This study is based on non-probability convenience and judgment sampling with 384 respondents of Myanmar tourists who have visited Thailand during October and November 2015. The questionnaires were distributed at the air ticket check-in areas of Suvarnabhumi and Don Mueng International airports in Bangkok. The data were analyzed by descriptive and inferential analyses. The Pearson's correlation was used to achieve favorable hypotheses testing. The findings of the hypotheses indicated that there is a moderate positively significant relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty. It was showed that the majority of Myanmar tourists have awareness of Thailand as a destination since most of them know/ hear about Thailand before visiting. Additionally, there is a strong positively significant relationship between brand image and brand loyalty, brand quality and brand loyalty, and brand value and brand loyalty. In Myanmar respondents' point of view, they have a positive image of Thailand as a destination brand. Also they believed that Thailand has high level of brand quality as majority of them expressed Thailand was the best destination choice for visiting. Besides, they believed Thailand provides value for money. Finally, it was also found that the most influent information source besides friends and family was social media (e.g. facebook) and followed by TV, movie, travel agents, and Youtube. Additionally, this research would help tourism related organizations such as national tourism organizations, tour operators and travel agents, hotels to be more understanding about the loyalty of Myanmar tourists toward Thailand as a destination brand.

Key words: Myanmar Tourists' Loyalty, Destination Brand, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Brand Quality, Brand Value, and Brand Loyalty

Introduction

Tourism is definitely an important and profitable industry for many countries which are paying attention to drive an investment in own country. And the contribution that tourism has to the continuous economic growth and development of the tourism industry leading to the competition of promoting destinations in each country (Bierzynski, 2011). Moreover, tourists today are more educated, informed, demanding and experienced. Consequently, they expect good value, quality, and higher standards. The changes are happening on the demand side, coupled with recent development in information and communication technology that has influenced all aspects of marketing strategy and tourist behavior. From a marketing perspective, the requirement of meeting or exceeding tourists' needs and wants should be balanced against the growing requirement of places and destinations, to develop and protect destination attractions, assets and resources in the most sustainable way (Kozak & Baloglu, 2011). The powerful marketing tool for a destination to differentiate itself from competitors is the destination branding and the contemporary national tourism organizations adapt it to their destination to win over the tourist's mind.

A successful destination branding not only attracts new customers, but also maintains the existing customers. When the existing customers become loyal to the products and services, they continue to utilize the products and even recommend or share their positive experiences to others like friends and family. Therefore, customer's loyalty is very important to any organizations and industries including tourism industry because it might bring new customers and repeat purchase in products and services. According to Mechinda and Anuwichanont (2014), the favorable brand awareness was found to be the indicator of repeat purchase and tourists' loyalty. Pike and Bianchi (2013) also indicated that brand image was found to be the most important predictor to the destination loyalty as well as the most crucial variable to the intention to revisit of the tourists (Mechinda, Serirat, Popaijit, Lertwannawit & Aunwichanont, 2010). Brand value was the main driven force for the destination loyalty, according to Pike and Bianchi (2013). Next, the perceived brand quality were influence on the destination choice, products and services consumption, and revisiting to the destination, according to Kim, Holland, and Han (2013). Therefore this research explored how Thailand destination brand attributes (brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, and brand value) are meaningful and significantly related to the loyalty of Myanmar tourists.

Literature Review

A. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the capability of the tourist to recognize and recall the destination brand in any condition according to Aaker (1991) cited by Aziz, Kefallonitis and Friedman (2012). Aziz *et al.,* (2012) indicated that the customers would likely to buy further products and services associated with a particular brand when they are familiar with it. It is as same as the concept that the tourists are unwilling to show their truth to the destination that they unfamiliar with. Therefore the brand awareness is very important to the destination, as tourists are willing to go to a place where they can feel themselves restful, safe and joyful. Mechinda and Anuwichanont (2014) stated that brand awareness influenced tourist's loyalty in terms of future revisit intentions and word of mouth recommendation. It is believed brand awareness is a first step to catch attention of the tourist and it is more or less influential to the brand loyalty. Therefore this study aims to investigate as follows:

Ho1: Brand awareness is not significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others
Ha1: Brand awareness is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others

B. Brand Image

According to Aaker (1996), brand image is the sum of believes, values, and impressions that a person feels to destination. Hankinson (2009) argued that the successful destination branding must go beyond the communication of an image and able to assurance the quality of the brand. Mechinda *et al.,* (2010) indicated that the destination image influences the interest and repeat behavior of the tourist. It directly influenced tourist's intentions to revisit and recommend the destination to others (Qu, Kim & Im, 2011). Pike and Bianchi (2013) and Jraisat, Akroush, Alfaouri, Qatu, and Kurdiech (2015) also supported that brand image is significantly and positively related to destination brand loyalty. Hence, this study examined:
Ho2: Brand image is not significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others
Ha2: Brand image is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others

C. Brand Quality

Brand quality or perceived brand quality is the perception of overall quality or excellent judgment of a person has to product and service as well as destination (adapted from Keller 2003; as cited in Jraisat *et al.,* 2015).

In tourism, the brand quality is concerned with the tourist's perception on destination's hospitality service, infrastructure, safety and security. Brand quality was positively and significantly affected to destination brand loyalty according to Jraisat *et al.,* (2015). Aziz *et al.,* (2012) also confirmed that brand quality was related to the tourist intention to revisit, and advice others to visit destination. Therefore, the researcher investigated:

Ho3: Brand quality is not significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others
Ha3: Brand quality is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others

D. Brand Value

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2000), perceived value is the overall evaluation of a product and service utility that based on customers' perceptions of what is received at what price. Ostrom and Iaconucci (1995) stated that the service industry had accepted customer perceived value as one of the main concept to understand consumer-purchasing behavior, since value creating to customer is a requirement for the competitiveness of the organizations (As cited in Ok, Choi, & Hyun, 2011). Brand value was significantly and positively related to destination brand loyalty according to Pike and Bianchi (2013) and Allameh, Pool, Jaberi, Salehzadeh, and Asdi (2015). Qu *et al.,* (2011) also mentioned about the essential of brand value. Thus, the researchers tested:

Ho4: Brand value is not significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others
Ha4: Brand value is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit to Thailand and recommend to others

E. Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty is the reliability that a person has to a destination and willingness to be advocate of it (Aaker, 1991). Generally, loyalty can be classified into behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. When people repeat his/her consuming a particular product or service, it is known as behavioral loyalty; while people show their preference and positively tell others about a particular product and service, it is known as attitudinal loyalty (Peppers & Rogers Group, 2009).

Materials and Methods
A. Conceptual Framework

Based on the previous empirical studies, the researcher came out with four null hypotheses and alternative hypotheses as mentioned in previous section and proposed the conceptual framework of this study as figure 1:
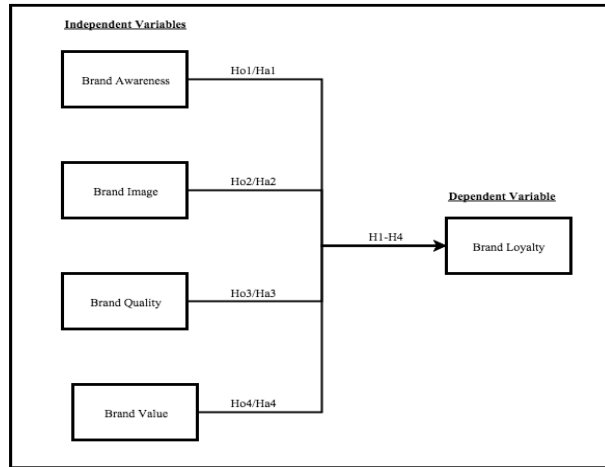

Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of the study

B. Research Method

This study was carried out using the descriptive study. The target population of this research was Myanmar tourists who have visited Thailand age 18 and above. In order to reach this target population, the questionnaire was self-administered at the air ticket check-in counter areas of Suvanabhumi and Don Muang international airports in Bangkok to the departing Myanmar tourists.

This study used non-probability sampling technique as the researcher lacked accurate number of Myanmar tourists travel to Thailand. Consequently the researcher used the formula by Zikmund (1991) to estimate the unknown or minimum number of sample size, which came out with 384 respondents.

C. Sampling Procedure

The researcher used the convenience sampling technique for selecting the sample of the study because it is easy, fast, and inexpensive The judgmental sampling technique was also used during the data collection as McDaniel and Gates (2007) suggested that the judgment sample should be applied when the researcher based on the personal judgment about the representativeness of the population under the study. The researcher conducted 35 questionnaires for pre-test to Myanmar tourists before formally distributing to 384 respondents and measured reliability test of questionnaire with Cronbach's Coefficennt Alpha Scale (minimum score is o.6). In order to make better understanding for Myanmar tourists and be quick in filling up the questionnaire, two versions (English and Burmese) questionnaires were given to the respondents. The researcher applied back-translation method with the questionnaire translation by translating English to Burmese and then interpreting from Burmese to English, in order to get the consistency, accuracy, and truthfulness of questionnaire. The author used a quantitative approach with both closed-ended questionnaires and an open-ended question. There are six sections with 31 questions in total.

Result and Discussion

There are four null hypotheses and alternative hypotheses in this study. The researcher used Pearson' r correlations analysis to measure the relations between independents and dependent variables. The result in this study showed all of null hypotheses (Ho1-Ho4) were rejected and the findings supported alternative hypotheses (Ha1-Ha4) as the significant value of all variables are less than 0.01 (p<0.01) as shown in below table:

Table 1: Summary of Hypotheses testing

No.	Hypothesis Statement	Statistical Test	Significant Value	Coefficient Of Correlation	Result
Ha1	Brand awareness is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others	Pearson's r Correlation	0.000	0.511** (Moderate positive)	Reject Ho1
Ha2	Brand image is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others	Pearson's r Correlation	0.000	0.552** (Strong positive)	Reject Ho2
Ha3	Brand quality is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others	Pearson's r Correlation	0.000	0.668** (Strong positive)	Reject Ho3
Ha4	Brand value is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others	Pearson's r Correlation	0.000	0.572** (Strong positive)	Reject Ho4

According to Table 1, the result of hypothesis testing one, the Sig. value of hypothesis equal to .000 which is less than .01 (.000<.01) at .511 of Pearson Coefficient of Correlation. So it is confirmed that there is moderate positive significant relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty which corresponds to the study by Mechinda and Anuwichanont (2014) who believed that brand awareness influenced both intention to revisit and recommend to others. Therefore, it is concluded that brand awareness is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others.

According to the result of hypothesis testing two, there is a strong positive significant relationship between brand image and brand loyalty. The Sig. value is .000 which less than .01 (.000<.01) at .552 of Pearson Coefficient of Correlation. It is also met the findings of Pike and Bianchi (2013) that indicated brand image is significantly and positively related to destination brand loyalty. Thus, it is concluded that brand image is

significantly related to Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others.

Based on the result of hypothesis testing three, there is strong positive significant relationship between brand quality and brand loyalty; meanwhile brand quality is significantly related to Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others. As the Sig. value is .000 which less than .01 (.000<.01) at .668 of Pearson Coefficient of Correlation, it is also linked to the findings of Aziz et al., (2012) that brand quality is related to the tourist intention to revisit and advise others to visit the destination. So it is concluded that brand quality is significantly related to Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others.

Finally, the result of hypothesis testing four in this study, there is strong positive significant relationship between brand value and brand loyalty. As the Sig. value is .000 which less than .01 (.000<.01) at .572 of Pearson Coefficient of Correlation. Thus, it is concluded that brand value is significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others. It can also interpret that with increase in brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, and brand value, there will be corresponding increase in Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others (brand loyalty).

Conclusions

This study aims to investigate Myanmar tourists' loyalty based on Thailand destination brand and their opinion toward Thailand as destination brand. The sample of this study is 384 Myanmar respondents age 18 and above who have visited Thailand. With respects to the purpose of this study, it is indicated brand awareness is moderated positive significantly related to Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others. It is also showed that brand image, brand quality, and brand value are positive significantly related to Myanmar tourists' intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others.

Based on the descriptive analysis on general information of the informants of this study, the majority of 384 Myanmar tourists were female (58.9%) and in terms of age, 18-28 years old (54.9%). Most of those respondents were self-employed (37.2%) and the majority of them were holding a bachelor degree. Moreover, in terms of frequency of visiting Thailand, majority respondents had visited Thailand 3 times and more than 3 times (61.2 %). For the reason of visiting Thailand, the majority of them were visiting Thailand for leisure (57.0%). Finally, the highest information source belongs to social media (19.4%) which means most of respondents get to know Thailand through social media. It is concluded that female tourist age 18-28 years old who are self-employed with holding a bachelor degree should be the major target of Myanmar tourist for tourism organizations

in Thailand. Those groups of people are very prospective to Thailand since they traveled to Thailand 3 times and more than 3 times. It also meant they are loyal to Thailand as a destination.

Recommendations

The result of this study would help the tourism related organizations to understand Myanmar tourists' loyalty and encourage them to enhance their products and services to make Myanmar tourist firmly loyal to Thailand as a destination brand. Based on the result of hypothesis testing one, with increase in brand awareness and there will be corresponding increase in Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others (brand loyalty). So it is recommended that Tourism Authority of Thailand, tour operators and travel agents, and even hotels to make sure if they deliver alluring messages with crystal clear contents by doing attractive promotional campaign with shopping mall or coordinating with media such as TV channel and newspaper (online and print media) in Myanmar to create the social buzz. As mentioned, most of Myanmar tourists generally know about Thailand before visiting, but rarely know about tourism campaigns in Thailand. Therefore, another way that Tourism Authority of Thailand should do is to launch Myanmar language official Facebook as social media as such Facebook is listed in the top information source of Myanmar tourists besides friends and family.

As the result of hypothesis testing two, there is increasing in brand image, there would be corresponding increase in Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others (brand loyalty). Hence, it is suggested to the tourism organizations and tourism sector to enhance the positive brand image of Thailand by redirecting attention away from the negative aspects. For example, Tourism Authority of Thailand should ensure tourists information centers at different spot of the destination that provide the valid and positive information about Thailand. TAT should also encourage the locals to treat the tourists as a family member and warmly welcome them. For Hoteliers, they should provide quality service as a commitment. Next is the tourist guide should act as the middle person between the destination and the tourist, to spread positive word of mouth about Thailand, Thainess, and Thai culture (Fair and Festivals).

According to hypothesis testing three, there is a strong positively significant relationship between brand quality and Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit and recommend to others. Therefore it is recommended that TAT should maintain the safety and security of Thailand by coordinating with other organizations to declare the important areas or destination where tourists need to be careful with their belongings by putting warning signs, eyes-catching printed vinyl warning hangings or digital wall arts (with famous cartoon characters) at the airports

or the tourist destinations, in order to catch the attention of the tourists, remind and warn them.

The tested hypothesis four showed a strong positively significant relationship between brand value and Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit and recommend Thailand to others. It could imply that with the increase in brand value, there will be corresponding increase in Myanmar tourist's intention to revisit Thailand and recommend to others (brand loyalty). Thus, the researcher would suggest the tourism related organizations especially tour operators and travel agents to make the tourists feel Thailand is worth for money to travel in any season. Even the low season rainy season, the tour operators or travel agents can propose indoor activities package (shopping, culture performance in the theatre, museum, and massage & spa) with reasonable price or value added (e.g. shopping plus 20 % off accommodation or accommodation plus free gift voucher to dine at river side restaurant) to attract the tourists.

Further Study

Due to the limitations of the study such as time and budget, the researcher only focused on general opinion of Myanmar tourists and their loyalty toward Thailand destination brand using the quantitative analysis. However, the future research can study the difference in demographic (such as gender, age, income, education, and occupation) information that affects the relationship between Myanmar tourists' destination brand loyalty and brand awareness, brand image, brand quality, and brand value. It would be better if the selected destination is specified. Besides, it is suggested to analyze individual items deeply by using multiple regressions, will help to understand the real predictors of brand loyalty. Furthermore, it is better to use ANOVA to test the difference in gender, age, education, and socio-economic variable will give further insights on brand loyalty.

VI. Acknowledgments

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Barriers to Local Community Participation in Tourism Development: A Case Study of Pak Nam Prasae Community, Thailand

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Abstract

Community-based tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors in Thailand. Although it has come to play a particularly important economic role for many local communities, there is a general lack of local community participation in tourism development. This research paper fills this gap by exploring community participation in the Pak Nam Prasae community in Rayong province, Thailand, with aims to identify the barriers to local participation in the process of community-based tourism development. The study adopted a qualitative methodology by conducting semi-structured interviews with community members and local government authorities. The findings show that main barriers for local participation include: (1) Lack of basic knowledge, experience and confidence in the tourism field, (2) Lack of financial resources, (3) Busy daily routine and Lack of time (4) Local's distrust and negative relationship with government authorities, (5) Attitude of government authorities and professionals and Power Disparity, and (6) Lack of sense of community. The results suggest that currently only a minority of the local members in the community participated in the development process, whereas others were expressing their strong willingness to participate but have those obstacles that hamper them in participation. The research paper further discusses implications for the government and communities in regard to community-based sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: community participation, limits to local community participation, tourism development

Introduction

Sustainable tourism development have gained a lot of attention from researchers within tourism academic literatures for decades [Hitchner et al. 2009; Jamal & Getz 1995; Joppe 1996; Li 2006; Okazaki 2008; Prentice 1993; Simmons 1994; Zappel, 2006]. Jamal and Stronza [2009] highlighted that community participation is a significant factors in the success of sustainable tourism development. Even though there was no universal definition of sustainability, many scholars agreed that the aim of sustainable development was to increase the benefits generated for locals by utilizing local tourism resources and at the same time trying to preserve culture and environment of the communities at large [Goodwin, 2011; Hunter, 1997; UNEP and UNWTO, 2005].

Local community is a group of people who are affected by tourism impacts [Breugel, 2013]. Abas & Hanafiah [2014] claimed that they have rights to play a vital role in tourism planning and development. This is to ensure economic benefits to be equally distributed for large parts of the community [Aref et al., 2010]. Breugel [2013] found that community participation can less harm generating on both social and cultural environment as the locals were able to ensure that everything was in their control and they were capable to decide which socio-cultural traits were appropriate to share with their guests. As cited by Chilembwe [2014], Shepherd [2002] mentioned that tourism which has been operated by outsiders may change local cultures into commodities whereby religious activities and traditions are reduced and changed in order to adapt to tourist expectations.

Timothy [2002] has confirmed that local community tend to have higher likelihood to know what would fit and what would not fit under local conditions and they were often the best to judge what was best for their community surroundings. With community participation, it was more likely that the tourism development plan would be achieved [Aref et al., 2010; Bramwell, 2010; Dola & Mijan, 2006; Eraqi, 2007; Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Tosun, 2006].

However, even community participation has widely known as main factors for sustainable development, many studies revealed that most local communities have still failed to participate and maximize the benefits of

tourism development [France, 1998; Scheyvens, 2002]. Zhao and Ritchie [2007] stated that one way to achieve sustainability was to remove barriers that hinder local community participation. This research aims to examine barriers to the local community participation in a destination development setting.

The geographical focus of the research is Pak Nam Prasae community which is a small community in the eastern province of Thailand, Rayong. It was selected as a target research destination due to several reasons. First, it is believed that this community has a great possibility to be a new successful cultural tourism site and appealing tourist destination as it has a long beautiful charming street that is full of traditional wooden house. It has a great potential to be able to attract visitors and become a new successful tourist destination in Rayong province.

Secondly, after the government authorities and tourism-related professional have started developing community into tourist destination. Local participation is not quite high as it was expected to be. By identifying barriers to local participation, community leaders, government authorities and other related-stakeholders would better understand and be able to boost local participation.

Last but not least, because of the tourism development in Pak Nam Prasae community is in the early stage of the development, local participation is definitely needed. Therefore, Pak Nam Prasae community is an ideal area provides opportunity to explore the barriers to local community participation and can be a model or footprint that provides solutions to other destinations which share common characteristics to overcome these barriers.

Literature Reviews

Community-based tourism

The research on Community-based tourism (CBT) have been conducted by many researcher in the tourism field such as Lepp (2007), Murphy (1985), Manyara &Jones (2007), Okazaki (2008), and Zorn & Farthing (2007). It has been specified as one type of the tourism forms that usually involve high involvement of community participation with purposes to generate benefits for local community.

In order to achieve the concept of CBT, local community participation plays an important role. Goodwin (2011) claimed that the basic idea of the community-based tourism is about creating opportunity that will empower the local community, encourage their participation in decision making process, and ensure that the willingness to participate derives from the local community itself. The community members should be able to have a degree of control in order to manage local resources for the best of their families and community.

Community Participation in Tourism Planning and Development

In general, various stakeholders are normally involved in any aspects of tourism. Local community is the most important player as they live at the destination and it is within their premises that all activities take place [Thammajinda, 2013]. If tourism development was planned without the concern about community characteristic and capacity, resistance can occur and that negatively affects the hospitality atmosphere, and eventually can destroy tourism at the destination in long term [Murphy, 1985].

Tosun [2000] defined community participation in tourism context as a form of voluntary process whereby community members are given chances to voice and participate in issues affecting their lives. He suggested that it allowed local community to get involve and responsible for their own development [Tosun, 2000].

With these reasons, local community is a significant resource and an essential component in every tourism activities [Bramwell, 2010; Eerang & Sangkyun, 2015; Lapeyre, 2010; Saarinen, 2010; Stone & Stone, 2011]. It is likely that tourism will be more successful and sustainable if local communities are given opportunities to consult with other stakeholders in development processes of tourism in their areas [Eerang & Sangkyun, 2015].

However, in many situations the level of local community participation is likely to be limited, especially in developing countries [Dola and Mijan, 2006; France, 1998; Mustapha et al., 2013; Scheyvens, 2002]. Joppe [1996] stated that even the local community wants to participate; sometimes they do not even know where to begin when it comes to participation.

In the study site, the concept of community-based tourism just has been started putting into place. At first the government municipality played an important role by providing tourism facilities and infrastructure, developing educational program and training sessions, setting rules and regulation for the business operations, and putting effort on promotion. However, currently, the government wants the community to operate the tourism activities by their own. Therefore, the municipality has passed the responsibility to the community leaders whereby they will provide supports if necessary. Unfortunately, there are only minority of other community members decided to participate. As a result, there is a need to explore the underlying reasons that hamper them from participation. Without the support of local communities, the sustainability of tourism will not be able to achieve easily.

Importance of community participation in tourism development

There are many reasons explained the significant of community participation. First, local communities are positively and negatively affected by the impacts of tourism. They should have rights to participate in the planning of activities that will affect their lives [Simmons, 1994]. One main benefit is to increase the chance of positive impacts while minimize negative impacts caused by tourism [Haywood, 1988].

Second, locals are seen as an essential part of the tourism atmosphere [Simmons, 1994]. Hardy et al.

[2002] mentioned that community participation will lessen the feelings of opposition and resistance to development; hence, leading to better cooperation in the implementation of development process. Good tourism atmosphere generated by local will enhance tourists' satisfaction [Lo et al., 2012].

Third, as the tourism products are often closely associated with locals' way of life and culture, local communities tend to know more about tourism products when compare to the outsiders [Tosun, 2006]. They know what will be the most appropriate for the local condition [Kim et al., 2014; Timothy & Tosun, 2003]. Garrod [2003] supported that local communities can be excellent sources of information whereby it will not be available to outsiders.

Finally, community participation can ensure that benefits from tourism will be distributed more equitably throughout the community [Brohman, 1996]. These benefits include job opportunities, increasing in revenue, and help improving skill of locals [Kumar, 2002]. Without their participation, benefits are more likely to be distributed among outsiders whereas the communities will only bear the burden of the costs from the tourism [Thammajinda, 2013].

Barriers to Community Participation in Tourism Development

Community participation is not the concept that can be easily achieved. Evidence from previous literature reviews presented that there are numerous barriers that obstruct effective local community participation in the tourism development [Aref & Redzuan, 2008; Cole, 2006; Kim et al., 2014; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Tosun, 2000]. Tosun [2000] described the concept of community participation as a complex domain that involves different factors such as beliefs, political factor, availability of wealth and power, and perceptions of local community members.

From a research of Koch [1997] done in South Africa, barriers to the community participation was no ownership over the natural resources, land and the lack of capital to build necessary facilities and infrastructure preparing for tourism development. In another research done in Thailand, Breugel [2013] stated that lack of information and knowledge regarding the tourism industry is a main barrier that causes low participation.

Tosun [2000] found three main limitations, including Operational limitations, Structural limitations and, Cultural limitations. Operational limitations include the centralization of public administration of tourism development, lack of co-ordination between stakeholders and unavailability of information to the locals in the tourist destination; therefore, most locals are not well-informed about development. For that reason, low level of local participation should be expected.

For structural limitations, the factors include attitudes of professionals that think that his/her professional qualifications are the best [Wolfe, 1982]. As a result, they are unwilling to negotiate with locals and do not willing to allow other people to be part in the

decisions making process. Lack of expertise or qualified locals, lack of appropriate legal system, and insufficient financial resources are other factors that cause low level of participation [Tosun, 2000].

For the cultural limitations, the main constraint on community participation seems to be locals' limited capacity and apathy and a low level of awareness. In some tourist destination, the biggest challenge for locals appears to be only making survival. Sometimes it requires all of their time and effort. Participating in the tourism development might be a luxury thing that they cannot afford [Tosun, 2000].

In addition, Cole [2006] identified lack of ownership, capital, skill, knowledge, and resources constraint as obstacles that affect their participation. Aref and Redzuan [2008], in the context of Iran, noted that the lack of powerful leadership is the main barriers of community participation. Similarly to the research conducted by Kim et al. [2014], they found that low education levels, poor living conditions, insufficient financial support, busy daily routine, local community's perception of tourism as a seasonal business with low income and power disparities are major limitations.

Research Method

The qualitative study was conducted in this study to identify constraints that locals have towards tourism development. In all, thirty-one semi-structured interviews with community leaders, local members and local government authorities were conducted as of March 2016. Each interview lasted between 15 and 20 minutes. The finding data was then analyzed through four main steps: [1] transcribing notes or audio-recorded into transcript [2] sorting the data based on emerging themes, pattern, consistency, similarities and divergences, [3] grouping the data according to each research question, and [4] summarizing or synthesizing to find the final answer for each research questions.

Results and discussion

Characteristic of participants

Among 31 participants, there were 7 males and 24 females whereby 24 of them were community members, another 2 people were the community leader and her assistant and last 5 people were from municipal government. The majority of participants were between the ages of 41 and 50 years old which is about 45% of total participant. 10 participants were between the ages of 21 and 40 years (32% of total participant) and the rest were at the ages between 51 to 70 years old (23% of total participant).

Over two third indicated that they are working in the tourism industry as their extra job. Majority of them have their own main job such as, sellers at the market, teacher, factory workers, farmers and engineer. The rest of them can be considered working in tourism industry such as homestay owners and sellers at the walking street as they

have no other occupations. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of overall participants.

Table 1 Characteristics of participants

Characteristic	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Male	7	23
Female	24	77
Age range		
Under 20 years old	0	0
21 – 30 years old	4	13
31 – 40 years old	6	19
41 – 50 years old	14	45
Over 51 years old	7	23
Occupation		
Business Owner	6	20
Farmers	1	3
Housewife	1	3
Retire	2	6
Professional	7	23
Seller in the walking street	1	3
Government authorities	5	16
Others	8	26

Barriers to local community participation

The findings suggest that only a minority of local community members participated in tourism-related activities such as joining in the meetings and assemblies held by the tourism development authorities. The majority were merely excluded from the process. In this research, six main barriers for local participation include : [1] Lack of basic knowledge, experience and confidence on tourism field, [2] Lack of financial resources, [3] Busy daily routine and Lack of time [4] Local's distrust and negative relationship with government authorities, [5] Attitude of government authorities and professionals and Power Disparity, and [6] Lack of sense of community.

1. Lack of knowledge, experience and confidence on tourism field

Generally, Pak Nam Prasae local people are fisher folks who have made a living by fishing careers. They not only do not have knowledge and experience to participate on tourism, but also no knowledge on development issues that is needed for meaningful participation. Some locals might know that tourism is now a key for community development as fishing is in the stage of decline. However, they still had no idea how to develop their community into a tourism destination.

Furthermore, as a result from the lack of knowledge and experiences, it leads to the lack of confidence. Once people do not know how to manage their own tourism-related businesses and activities, they started losing confidence and have expressed less interest in tourism-related activities. Interviewee L-07 commented that

"I think that the walking street now cannot make me earn a lot of money. I am still not too sure about its successfulness, so I decided to wait first."

This is supported by the Deputy Municipal Clerk of Pak Nam Prasae District. She said:

"They might feel that they are lacking of confidence. They have never done something like this before, so they don't expect that it will be possible. I think they are waiting. If it's successful, they will start joining and give participation. They may start finding capital to selling things something like that".

2. Lack of financial resources

Another concern is the lack of financial resources. Every development project usually requires large amount of budgets to be allocated for the development. Insufficient financial resources are one of the shortcomings that have become a major constraint to the participation.

Because of poor living conditions, the majority concerns about making a living with an only aim to meet their basic needs. Many locals decided not to get involved as they focused more on their survival than participating in tourism in which they found that it is far from their living and is out of their business. Even they were willing to participate, it was very difficult for them to do so as they have no financial resource and lack of support from government authorities. Interviewee L-15 said:

"I don't have money to participate. In setting up the store, I need to have capital. At least, I have to prepare 2,000 baht. I don't have that much money"

Interviewee L-09 said

"Everyone wants money. But they cannot participate right now because they don't have money. If they decide to sell the products but cannot sell many, then they won't have any more money for the next day. They are living from hand to month"

3. Busy daily routine and Lack of time

The community members also mentioned that their busy routine and the lack of time were the key barriers to their participation towards the development. It caused them not to have sufficient time to participate in tourism-related activities such as meetings or assemblies and training sessions.

Local people need to make a living, so they expressed that they feel like they are lacking of time. They have busy routine as they have to work to ensure their family's survival. It is not the matter whether they wanted to participant or not. There is no time for them to take part in the tourism-related activities. The interviewee L-06 said:

"For me, I have no time. Sometimes the walking street and local market are operating at the same time. Then, I have to select either selling at the walking street or in the local market. And I decided to sell in the market more as the walking street now cannot make money as much as selling in the local market."

This finding is compatible with the past literatures [Kim et al., 2014; Timothy & Tosun, 2003]. The previous researchers had suggested that many local community members were having concern about the negative impact of participation on their primary job. Therefore, they were hesitated to participate in tourism-related activities.

4. Local's distrust, lack of support and negative relationship with government authorities

The next constraint that has appeared is the local's distrust and negative relationship with government authorities. It is rooted in the perception and attitudes of locals that government authorities do not understand issues and unwilling to help. Locals believed that government authorities will not put affords that is beyond their duty and responsibility in helping local develop their community as tourist destination. Therefore, low level of participation can be expected. One of the participants said:

"Locals don't want to work with municipal government. They believe that municipal government is doing everything that is only in their responsibilities and without sincerity. They didn't put themselves in our shoes. They didn't aim for the happiness of local community. They didn't aim for the happiness of the public, so it doesn't work."

Furthermore, some locals thought that government authorities are now giving downloading responsibilities on local communities without providing the necessary resources. Government authorities said that for the past 4-5 times of the walking street, they gave a chance to locals to do everything by themselves and they will act as supporter to take care of them. However, locals do not think that way. They still need government to lead them and help them as they were lack of necessary resources. Without the act from the government authority, everything seems to be difficult.

Also, from the perspective of local communities, they do not trust in the action of the government. They were afraid of the corruption. The community leader said that once there was the collection of the money for giving to the government as the cost for waste management and facilities that are in the control of the government, community members do not want to pay as they do not believe that the money will be really used for that matter. These perceptions and attitudes caused a barrier to community participation in the development of tourism within the community.

5. Attitude of professionals and Power Disparity

It was found that professionals, who have involved in the development of Pak Nam Prasae community into tourist destination, have felt that their idea will work better than the idea of local people who might have lower education level. Once the community member offered their suggestions, those suggestions tends to be ignored. The community members started getting frustrated and discouraged as most of their ideas were rejected. Interviewee L-05 expressed that:

"I have said that but they didn't listen, so I don't know why I should give suggestion."

This barrier was also supported by Interviewee L-12 who said

"When I gave my opinion, they didn't listen. Therefore, I do no more want to participate."

Furthermore, many local members shared their feeling that they have no knowledge and experience regarded the tourism. They were not given an equal opportunity to make decisions or offer suggestions related on tourism development issues. There were only the community leaders who were invited to join in tourism-related activities such as the key meetings or assemblies. Interviewee L-02 said:

"Well, I wanted to go too but I'm not an important person. For the meeting, Aunty X (community leader) will go and then she will come back to conduct meeting with locals. Anyway it's not like every local will go. Some of them that have no time or going to sell thing in the market won't go. Mostly, municipal government is not telling other people in the community, but Aunty X.

6. Lack of sense of community

The next concern leads to low participation is the lack of the sense of community among community members. This is of importance as the sense of community is one of the motivations to support local community members for participation in tourism development. According to the results done by Aref [2011], the sense of community can act as catalyst on tourism development through the enhancement of local participation.
Interviewee L-02 said

"For the problem of motorcycle, some gives cooperation and some don't. Even they go back and tell their children, their children don't cooperate. They decided to do it their way. They don't care about others."

Interviewee L-04 said *"I don't want to get involved. I am staying home and selling stuffs at home as usual. I don't want to join in any meeting."*

Interviewee G-03 said *"There also some who don't participate because they think that it's none of their business. They don't want to sell anything. Why there need to have a walking street to make noise at night."*

From those comments, some community members were lacking of the sense of being in the community so that they are not willing to participate or get involve. Therefore, successful tourism development cannot be achieved.

Conclusion

Giving to the fact that local communities are the ones who are directly affected by tourism and are part of the tourism products themselves [Abas & Hanafiah, 2014], local members tends to know what will best suit the community. Therefore, those barriers to participation are needed to be eliminated. The local communities should be given a chance to voice and need to be empowered in order to ensure that every decision will

lead to a successful community-based sustainable tourism development. To do so, government needs to be trusted by the locals. The government should take actions by providing resources, showing by doing ensuring that they will do what they say they will do to built trust. Once local have trust, confidence will increase. As a result from that, sense of belonging to the community will increase and make the local community to truly believe that they are of importance and are parts of the development. Consequently, local community members will start getting more interest and willing to participate in the tourism development in their community.

Implication and contribution of the research

It is expected that by identifying the barriers to local community participation, the local community members, local government authorities and other related stakeholders will able to generate general ideas on what steps they should take for more sustainable community-based tourism.

It is hoped that the findings will extend the knowledge about the barriers and possible solutions to community participation in tourism development. A wider and deeper understanding of barriers to community participation will help government authorities or other agencies, the tourism managers and planners in the study area or other local destinations within the country and elsewhere to be able to initiate appropriate strategies to overcome those limitations and be success in the industry.

Research limitations and suggestion for future research

The major limitations of this study were that the findings apply only to similar communities in and around the area who have shared similar characteristics with a case study. Therefore, the future research may focus on other communities to further study on local community participation to capture more additional details on barriers that hamper community members from involving in tourism development in a wider context.

Moreover, as the data collection was conducted by using semi-structured interview. Face-to-face data collection with the participants was required. With the characteristic of Thai people that is quite considerate, they might have the feeling that they do not feel comfortable to express their opinion or share their ideas or suggestion in the public. Some participants may feel nervous of the interview, which may spoil their performance in the interview as the audio recorder was also used during the interview.

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Influence of Tourist Personality on Destination Satisfaction: The Cases of Bangkok, Phuket, and Chiang Mai

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Abstract

Segmentation is an important preliminary step in developing a plan of destination marketing. It helps Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) to streamline marketing strategies by dividing market comprising of individual into a relatively homogenous group and communicating critical destination attributes to appeal and pursue targeted tourists. Several studies have been conducted to investigate relationship between various factors used for segmentation, for example, age, gender, nationality, and motivation. However, studies aiming to reveal relationship between tourist personality and other factors were found to be limited. This study aims to fill this academic gap by investigating the direct and indirect relationship between tourist personality and destination satisfaction through achieving five research objectives which are: (1) to determine how tourist personality affects tourist motivation to visit destination, (2) to determine how tourist motivation to visit destination affects overall destination satisfaction, (3) to determine how overall destination satisfaction affects destination loyalty, (4) to determine how tourist personality affects overall destination satisfaction, and (5) to determine how tourist personality affects destination loyalty. Plog's psychographic model employed for tourist personality construct was first developed for American tourists. Employing this model with other nationalities was still success in only limited number of studies. Consequently, in this study, data will be collected from American tourists who visit three destinations during June 2016 which was 381 for Bangkok, 354 for Phuket, and 338 for Chiang Mai. Questionnaire used as research instrument consists of five main sections: (1) Tourist personality, (2) Tourist motivation, (3) Destination satisfaction, (4) Destination loyalty, and (5) Demographic. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to derive results which correspond to all research objectives. Results of this study will help to bridge tourism academic gaps as well as will help to provide insight for Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) who works to promote these three destinations to develop superior destination marketing plan. American tourist market accounted for three percent of Thailand international tourism market in 2015 and continually growth in all three studied locations during 2014-2015. A sharp destination marketing plan can help to make these three destinations achieve their challenged tourism revenue target which continually increase every year.

Keywords: Tourist personality; Destination satisfaction; Destination loyalty; SEM

Introduction

The tourism industry has played a crucial role in Thailand's economy by directly contributing 9% of Thai's gross domestic product in 2014 and accounting for 20% when include indirect effect of tourism [1]. The importance of tourism to Thailand was apparently noticeable in 2013, when Thailand's economy grew more slowly than previous year which resulted from weak domestic demand and slowing exports. Only tourism was still a solid growth driver for the country during that unstable period [2].

In 2016, though the political situation remains volatile, Thailand still set challenged target of international tourism receipts at 1.5 trillion baht, which is up 9% from the previous year [3]. In order to make this target achievable, Bangkok, Phuket and Chiang Mai which were the top three destinations of Thailand based on the highest number of international tourist arrivals in 2013 are demanded to align this annual foreign tourism revenue target with this national goal.

In order to achieve the revenue target of each destination, destination marketing is a key pillar underpinning this success [4]. Generally, DMO develops destination marketing plan by using the model to align tourism products with right customers namely the Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP), and then applying the right marketing mix. After successful implementation of the effective destination marketing plan, potential visitors will increase the number of visit to the destination which will lead to more tourism revenue for the destination eventually.

Segmentation is an important preliminary step in developing the destination marketing plan. In marketing point of view, two principal approaches for segmentation have been discussed in literature [5], [6]. These approaches are priori which is a segmentation method conducted by splitting market into predefined variables of interest, and post-hoc which is a segmentation method conducted by clustering buyers into groups specified by a range of interrelated variables making high similarity within groups and low similarity between groups [7].

A priori market segmentation approach has been received a broad interest among marketing scholars [8], [9]. Initially, marketing researchers employed demographic, geographic, and behavioral characteristics of buyers as key variables for segmentation [10].

However, there was a growing notion afterwards that individuals segmented in the same group may differ in his or her needs caused from different types of personality. For this reason, marketing academics changed their attention to the less tangible characteristics which was capable to explain this phenomenon such as image (Sirgy, 1982), benefit (Myers, 1976), and personality (Alpert, 1972) instead [11].

In the area of tourism marketing, tourist personality is used by adapting the concept of personality into tourism context to explain tourist activities that related to personality type [12]. Though, a broad range of tourist typology has been generated to predict tourist behavior in various perspectives [13], the most legendary one is still the first tourist typology developed by Stanley C. Plog in 1972.

Tourism marketing literatures show that tourism academics have paid their attention toward investigating relationship among Plog's psychographic personality and travel preference and motivation [14], [15]. However, meaningful research aimed to reveal influence of Plog's psychographics and tourist's destination satisfaction has not been conducted anywhere including the three important tourist destinations of Thailand. Though, some studies revealed strong relationship between these two factors in product and service consumption [16], [17], [18]. Consequently, there is a call for a study to be undertaken to investigate this relationship in three high potential destinations of Thailand. This study aims to fill this academic gap by focus on investigating the direct and indirect relationship between tourist personality and destination satisfaction through achieving five research objectives of this study.

In addition to closing a tourism academic gap from lacking of study aiming to reveal these relationships, results of this study will help to gain insight for DMO who promote three studied locations in two perspectives. DMO will know proportion of personality types of tourist who visit each studied destinations which will be very useful when do market targeting and when select media and message to communicate during the positioning stage. Moreover, DMO will understand influence of each tourist personality on destination satisfaction. When they create marketing initiatives, they will know that targeted guests are easy or hard to please. Understanding these two issues will help DMO to develop a better destination marketing plan, which ultimately leads to increasing numbers of tourists and tourism revenue. It is a part that help destinations to overcome difficulties from trying to reach tourism receipt target that increase every year also.

Materials and Methods

Plog's Tourist Typology

The model used for tourist personality construct in this study, is the tourist psychographic model introduced in 1972 by Stanley C. Plog. He presented a bi-polar model with a normal distribution, which divides internal curve into five main groups: Psychocentric, Near Psychocentric, Mid Centric, Near Allocentric, and Allocentric [19].

The group located on the left end is called the Psychocentric who is less venturesome, restrictive in spending income, and less self-confident in facing their life. This tourist type is a less-often flyer that buys a package tour, and prefers to visit well-known destinations and participate in accustomed activities. While, the group located on the right end is called the Allocentric who is more venturesome, love novelty and unusual things, and has self-confident to face their life. This tourist type is a frequent flyer who prefers un-organized and flexible trips managed by their own, prefers underdeveloped destinations with close involvement with local people. The other in-between groups (Near Psychocentric, Mid Centric, and Near Allocentric) can be characterized as the combination between the two-end groups. The behaviors of tourists in these three groups would vary according to the level of destination development in the direction of the axis they closely located to.

Theoretical Framework

The relationship between the tourist personality and motivation can be explained by the 3M Model of Personality and Motivation [20]. This model was emerged by aggregating four theories (the Trait Theories of Personality, the Evolutionary Psychology, the Hierarchical Models of Personality, and the Control Theory). There are four hierarchies of traits in this model: (1) Elemental traits - unidimensional underlying predisposition, developing from genetic and early leaning of individuals; (2) Compound traits - unidimensional predisposition, resulting from the integration of some Elemental traits with culture and individual's leaning history; (3) Situational traits - unidimensional predispositions which result from combining effect of Elemental traits, Compound traits, and situational context; and (4) Category-specific surface traits - trait which is caused by the interaction between the Elemental traits, the Compound traits, the Situational traits, and disposition to act within specific context. The higher traits are more complex by combining lower fundamental traits with specific situation and context, which can turn from fundamental traits in the first level of traits into motivation in the fourth level of traits. Based by this theory individual classified in each type of tourist personality would have their own specific motivation which form by combination of their four hierarchies of traits.

The linkage between motivation and satisfaction can be described by the Expectancy theory of motivation [21]. In this theory, Vroom described that motivation is a process that can be controlled by individuals. When people expect some result to happen, they will choose to perform one behavior from several alternatives which they believe that it will finally lead to their desired result.

Each tourist personality is dominated by particular motives to visit destinations. As this study employs two satisfaction theories (the Self-Congruity theory and the Expectation-Disconfirmation theory), desired outcome generated by tourist internal desire and desired outcome regarding destination attribute would motivate them to visit destination. After completing the entire vacation, tourist would assess their push satisfaction by considering level of congruence between destination and internal desire and assess their pull satisfaction by comparing realities encountered and their initial expectation. This result would become level of satisfaction from the visit to that destination.

The association between satisfaction and loyalty can be explained by using the Cognition-Affect-Conation-Action framework [22]. This framework particularly focuses on loyalty development which mentions that level of engagement can be explained in four stages: (1) Cognitive loyalty, a stage that consumers feel of preferring one product than others as they receive positive information related to that product; (2) Affective loyalty, a stage that consumers feel positive toward product/service after they have tried and satisfy with their purchase; (3) Conative loyalty, a stage that consumers demonstrate intention to repurchase product/service; and (4) Action loyalty, a stage that consumers show commitment to return their purchase, and desire to overcome obstacle occurred to impede their repurchase. Grounding relationship of satisfaction and loyalty by employing this framework for this study, satisfaction is a building block of loyalty as explained by the second stage and the third stage of loyalty in this framework.

The link between the tourist personality and satisfaction and personality and loyalty is able to explain by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) of Icek Ajzen [23]. This theory states that behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs are three main factors influencing people's intention and behavior. Each tourist type is formed by combining several people who have similar thought, feeling, and behavior together. People tend to be motivated (have intention) to behave in particular way that correspond to their thought and feeling which constructed by behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs. For this reason, tourist satisfaction and tourist loyalty which are two kind of behavior, are influenced by thought and feeling constructed by behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs of individual categorized in each tourist personality type.

Conceptual Framework

Plog's model is the most suitable model to explore direct relationship of tourist personality and satisfaction as well as indirect relationship of these two variables mediated by motivation. However, employing this model in this study will be limited to only American tourists visiting to Thailand only as most successful works appeared around employing with Americans [19], [24],

[25], [26], [15]. Different society's culture affect the values held by that society's members. Hofstede created the Hofstede's cultural dimensions to explain six cultural dimensions which affect people's value and make people from different society to have different intention and behaviors [27]. Unsurprisingly, this model is found to be success when employing with limited number of nationalities.

The push-pull motivation [28] is employed for tourist motivation construct in this study. Based by this theory, people make choice to take a trip to satisfy their need because they are pushed by internal psychological forces, as well as pulled by destination attributes and tourism facilities.

To visit destination for vacation, people were more pushed by their innate desires than pulled by destination attributes to visit destination [29], [30]. Consumer choice is made by considering overall congruence between product and desire [31]. Destination features which tourist expect they can respond to motivation occurred and approach which tourist use to make choice on destination will be kept in tourist's mind and will be used when assessing their satisfaction [32].

As push motivation plays major role in destination choice process, push satisfaction will be assessed by considering in what level destination overall respond to their push motivation. Pull satisfaction will be assessed by comparing with initial expectation as tourists generally assess destination attribute by comparing with their initial expectation [33], [34]. For this reason, in this study, push satisfaction is based by the Self-Congruity model [9], while pull satisfaction is based by the Expectancy- Disconfirmation model [35].

Construct of destination loyalty in this study employs attitudinal approach since it is most suitable for work regarding investigating relationship among factors [36], [37]. Indicators of this approach are founded in format of measuring behavioral intention. Two sub-dimensions which most utilized in tourism studies, including intention to revisit and intention to recommend to others, are used to measure loyalty in this study.

Tourist Personality and Tourist Motivation

In tourism, some studies had been conducted, and found that personality affects motivation to visit destination and destination choice of tourist [38], [39].Though, these studies did not employ tourist specific personality, they at least support that tourist personality correlates with tourist motivation. Tourist would make a choice on a destination wherein they expect it can respond to their motivation occurred from their intrinsic and extrinsic need. Some scholars had researched and developed tourist typology to explain tourist characteristics and tourism related behaviors especially destinations choice [19], [40], [41].

When tourist's intrinsic needs and extrinsic needs occur, tourist will be motivated to select one destination over several alternatives which they believe that it best

serves to their two kinds of needs aroused [21]. Plog's psychographic typology describes tourist characteristics and preferred destinations for each personality. Tourist characteristics explained in typology description can infer relevant push motivation, while destination choice and activity level provided in typology description can infer relevant pull motivation which vary depending attribute of destination and activities provided at each destination [42], [43]. Example of this case include: Powerless characters of Psychocentrics may cause them to visit destination to escape from stress in daily life; and intellectually curious of Allocentrics may cause them to visit destination to see people from diverse ethnic background. However, Mid-Centric is a combination of two extreme, and does not demonstrate intense degree of behavior enough to correlate with any specific motivation.

Tourist Motivation and Destination Satisfaction

Destination features which tourists expect can be responsive to their push motivation and pull motivation, will be first placed in tourist's mind; and will be assessed their performance after tourist experience entire vacation [32]. Performance of destination features which tourists expect that it can respond to their push motivation will be measured by considering in what level they can respond initial desire of tourist. Considering overall congruence which desire occurred approach which tourists use to make choice on destination [31], will be also used when assessing push satisfaction [32], as push motivation plays major role in the destination choice process [44]. Performance of destination attributes which attract tourist to visit destination (pull satisfaction) will be assessed by comparing with their initial expectation, as comparing with expectation was found to be the method that tourists used when evaluating performance destination attributes [33], [34] which partly motivate them to make choice on destination.

However, correlation between two constructs was found to be non-linear. Grounded by Assimilation-Contrast theory and the effect of great effort, [45] concluded that consumers incline to have extreme reactions to consumption outcomes in what they perceive as important. In high involvement situation (high motivation), consumers increase their likelihood of contrast, resulting in more extreme satisfaction level on the direction of contrast.

When destination has enough strong performance until above the positive contrast zone of tourists, the stronger intrinsic desire and extrinsic desire toward destination features expressed by tourists; the high degree of destination satisfaction tourist receive (positive correlation). If destination has weak performance until fall below the negative contrast zone of tourists, the stronger intrinsic desire and extrinsic desire toward destination features expressed by tourists; the lower degree of destination satisfaction tourist receive (negative correlation).

However, tourist satisfaction is influenced by tourist personality from both temperamental view and instrumental view [46]. Allocentric tourists tend to assess better destination performance from their positive affection and generating condition that stimulate happiness, leading to greater propensity to make destination performance to be above tourist's positive contrast zone which make tourist motivation positively affect destination satisfaction. Psychocentric tourists tend to assess worse destination performance from their negative affection and generating condition that stimulate unhappiness, resulting in greater tendency to make destination performance to fall below tourist's negative contrast zone which make tourist motivation negatively influences destination satisfaction. Motivation of Mid Centric tourist will not be influenced by any characteristic as it is an average personality which would not intense enough to influence specific motivation. Prior studies aiming to measure destination satisfaction of tourists visiting three studied destinations found that tourists were highly satisfied with their visitation in most of studied locations [47], [48], [49]. Therefore, Mid-Centric tourists visiting three studied locations tend to have satisfaction level above the positive contrast zone, resulting in tourist motivation positively affect destination satisfaction. Consequently, these lead to following hypotheses.

Destination Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

Among several factors influencing destination loyalty (for example, satisfaction, perceived value, destination image, service quality, social bonding, and fortitude level of consumers), literature suggests that the most widely accepted as determinant of loyalty is satisfaction. However, interrelation between destination satisfaction and destination loyalty is not linear as well. Consumers have their own threshold. When satisfaction rises above this threshold, loyalty level will increase rapidly. Likewise, if satisfaction falls under this threshold, loyalty will drop rapidly [50], [51].

Employing the attitudinal approaches by using intention to revisit and intention to recommend others, which is the most frequently employed in tourism studies; several studies found significant relationship between two constructs which help to confirm this interrelation in tourism context [52], [53]. However, there are some opportunities that satisfied tourist would recommend destination others but probably not to revisit destination [54]. This can explain that tourism is rare purchase product [55] and there are some kinds of tourists who seek for novelty and have propensity not to revisit destination [42].

Personality of tourist influences destination loyalty. Although, tourists with higher degree of Allocentricism are likely to have higher level of destination satisfaction from their emotion and behavior which stimulate happiness [46], they have lower tendency to revisit destination and have lower propensity to be a sociable

person [42], [43], [24] which generate lower tendency to create word of mouth [56].

Tourists with more intense degree of Psychocentricism are likely to have lower level of destination satisfaction from their negative affection and behavior which encourage unhappiness [46]. However, they tend to revisit destination and are more likely to be sociable person [42], [43], [24] which generate higher tendency to have positive word of mouth [56].

Mid-Centric is an average personality (Plog, 1995). For this reason, Mid-Centric personality does not demonstrate indirect affect to destination loyalty. Previous studies aiming to evaluate satisfaction of tourist at three destinations reported that tourist were highly satisfied with their visitation in most of studied locations [47], [48], [49], resulting in higher tendency that destination satisfaction of Mid-Centric will be above loyalty threshold. Consequently, these lead to following hypotheses.

Tourist Personality and Destination Satisfaction

In tourism, there has been no prior study investigating interrelation between personality and satisfaction to date. There have been only few studies conducted in product and service consumption. These studies employed generic personality, especially the Five Factor model; and found association between personality and satisfaction [57], [58], [16], [59]. They support that two constructs may have interrelation when investigating a tourism product which is well-known for its complexity than others.

McCrae and Costa [46] stated that personality traits influence satisfaction through two perspectives which are temperamental view (generating by their own emotion) and instrumental view (generating condition that stimulate happiness or unhappiness). When investigating correlation in product and service consumption [57], [16], [59], Agreeableness and Extraversion were found to be positively correlated with satisfaction, and Neuroticism was found to be negatively correlated with satisfaction. Extraversion positively influences affective experiences [57] and Agreeableness represents different level of humbleness which may generate different level of expectation, resulting in different confirmation and disconfirmation experience [59]. Neuroticism negatively influences affective experiences, which in turn influence customer satisfaction [57].

Generic personality trait is a part contributing tourist personality [13]. Allocentricism and Extraversion are associated with active and enjoy meeting and dealing with people. Psychocentricism and Neuroticism are associated with nervousness and vulnerability [42], [60]. Mid-centric is a combination of two extreme groups which is not intense enough to influence destination satisfaction. For this reason, Allocentric personality tends to positively and Psychocentric personality tends to negatively influence satisfaction, while Mid Centric does

not tend to correlate with destination satisfaction. Hypotheses are proposed as following statements.

Tourist Personality and Destination Loyalty

Several studies reported that personality was found to be determinant of loyalty [56], [62], [62]. Though, there has been no studies conducted in tourism domain, these studies strongly support that two constructs have a tendency to be correlated if study in tourism context.

As this study employs two observable variables which are intention to revisit and intention to recommend to others to measure loyalty, Plog [19], [24] described character and behavior of two tourist personalities (Psychocentric and Allocentric) which are relevant to two observable variables (intention to revisit and intention to recommend others) for loyalty construct which can help to generate hypotheses.

Mid Centric personality is a combination of two extreme personalities [42]. Consequently, it cannot generate strong characteristic enough to influence destination loyalty. Psychocentrics prefer familiar destinations and avoid risky situations, while Allocentrics prefer novel and different destination, and can take risk at moderate level [42], [43], [24]. For this reason, tourists with higher degrees of Psychocentricism are more likely to revisit destination if they had experienced it and felt satisfied, while tourists with higher degrees of Allocentricism are less likely to revisit destinations. Socially oriented person has greater tendency to engage in positive word of mouth [56]. Psychocentric are sociable and like to keep company with others, while Allocentric are unsociable and seek personal space [42], [43], [24]. Consequently, tourists with higher degrees of Psychocentricism are less likely to recommend destination to others and tourist with higher degrees of Allocentric are more likely to recommend destination to others. For this reason, hypotheses can be generated as:

Population and Sampling

The target population of this study is the American tourists traveling to Bangkok, Phuket, and Chiang Mai during survey period. Since, questionnaire survey will be administrated during June 2016, figures of tourists traveling to these destinations during a month of survey in the year 2015 were used to forecast number of American tourists traveling to Chiang Mai, Phuket, and Bangkok during survey period. By using Krejcie and Morgan (1970)'s table, sample size for three locations, are 381 for Bangkok, 351 for Phuket, and 338 for Chiang Mai.

The sampling method employed in this study is convenience random sampling method which participants who are members of population will be selected as they are conveniently available [63]. To screen only American tourists in public area of the airport does not ease the researcher to use other probability sampling methods. Therefore, convenient sampling

method is the most appropriate method to be used in this study. Before beginning the session, researcher will ask prospective respondents who wait for their departure flight whether they are Americans who visit the three studied locations for leisure purpose. If qualifications meet the requirements, researcher will inform the objectives of study and ask whether they agree to participate in the survey. Researcher will inform confidentiality and anonymity to prospective respondents who agree to complete the questionnaire.

Research Instrument

A self-completion questionnaire will be used as instrument to collect data by developing from existing tool and relevant literatures. Questionnaire comprises of five sections which aim to measure and collected data related four major constructs and demographic of respondents.

The ten-question version of Plog's allocentric/ psychocentric scale is placed in first section to classify tourists into Psychocentric, Mid-Centric, and Allocentric (Plog's ten questions with three choice instrument classifies tourist into three major types only). Respondents will be asked to respond ten questions by selecting one out of three choices which best describe their behavior. After completing the first section, the researcher will calculate the score and inform tourist to continue to complete the motivation set that specifically provide for their personality in the second part, and continue with other parts until finished.

The second section measures push and pull motivation of tourists by using question items developed by adapting from previous studies conducted with American tourists [64], [65], [66] as well as previous researches measuring international tourists' motivation in three locations of study [67], [68], [69]. Respondents will be asked to indicate push and pull motivation factors which motivate them to visit three studied destinations by rating on a seven-point Likert scale. In this section, tourist motivations are provided in three sets for each type of tourist personality.

Plog presented description of Psychocentrism and Allocentrism in some of his published article and books [19], [42], [43], [24]. These descriptions provide characters, destination choice, and activity level of Psychocentric tourists and Allocentric tourists. Description related to characters of tourists is used to frame push motivation items, while description related to destination choice, and activity level are used to frame pull motivation items. As majority of push motivation is related to destination attributes, researcher employed 6A framework of Buhalis [70] and added some items to ensure completeness of pull motivation list.

The third section measures overall destination satisfaction. Tourists will be asked to measure their overall satisfaction by rating a seven-point Likert scale on three question item which are: (1) can this visit to Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai respond to your initial

desire to take a vacation?; (2) how does Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai, in general, rate compared to what you expect?; and (3) overall, how satisfied were you with your trip to Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai?"

Adapted from Yoon and Uysal [52]'s study, loyalty will be assessed through three question items in the fourth section. Tourists will be asked to indicate their behavioral intention by rating a seven-point Likert scale on three question items which are: (1) in the next two years, how likely is it that you will take another vacation to Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai?; and (2) in the next four years, how likely is it that you will take another vacation to Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai?; and (3) will you recommend Bangkok/ Phuket/ Chiang Mai to your friends/ relatives as a vacation destination to visit?.

The fifth section of the questionnaire is demographic section which asks tourists to answer their demographic information which are gender, age, income, and education level. Tourists will be asked to respond to these questions by selecting choices of answer which best match to their personal profile.

Instrumentation

The tool employed in this study consists of five sections, which is developed from various sources. For this reason, pilot study will be conducted in order to refine instrument. The test will be carried out with American tourists who are waiting for their departure flight at three airports of studied locations at the beginning of survey with 30 people for each location, resulting in a total number of 90 people for three locations.

In order to ensure internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha coefficient test will be used to test the questionnaire instrument [71], [72] in all sections after getting result from pilot test. A reliability coefficient of .70 or higher will be considered "acceptable" [71]. Item show alpha value less than .70 will be deleted from instrument.

Data Collection

As Americans tourist is particularly selected for this study, questionnaire survey will be administrated at the Suvarnabhumi International Airport for Bangkok, the Phuket International Airport for Phuket, and the Chiang Mai International Airport for Chiang Mai. Moreover, literature regarding measuring destination satisfaction suggests that data collection should be made while tourists are waiting for their departure flight not only for collecting data after tourist experience their entire vacation but also for their fresh memories [73], [44].

Data Analysis

In order to analyze data collected from questionnaire survey, AMOS software which well-known for its special function called the Structural Equation Model (SEM) will be employed for this study. In the first stage, answers from the Plog's instrument placed in the first section of questionnaire of each

respondent will be summed to generate a psychographic type.

Anderson and Gerbing [74] suggested that confirmatory measurement models should be evaluated and re-specified before examining structural equation models. For this reason, in the second step, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) will be tested with the measurement model explaining relationship of the observed indicators to the latent constructs. Each construct will be assessed by six measures which are: $\chi2$; $\chi2$/df; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA); Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR); Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) or Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); and Comparative Fit Index(CFI). Each construct will be accepted if: $\chi2 = p > 0.05$ [75]; $\chi2$/df = 2:1 [76], 3:1 [77]; RMSEA <0.07 [78]; SRMR <0.08 [79]; NNFI or TLI >0.95; and CFI >0.95 [79].

Since the purposes of all hypotheses are similar as to investigate the existence of the relationship and to investigate the direction of the correlation, the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) will be used to test all hypotheses of this study in the third stage. SEM is a statistical approach which is an amalgam of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and path analysis which is helpful to achieve both two purposes of all hypotheses in this study. When employing the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the structural relationships among the proposed constructs, similar measures and acceptable values employed in CFA stage will be used to evaluate overall model fit between the hypothesized model and empirical data as well. The completely standardized coefficient will indicate whether causal relationships between constructs appear on the same direction as in the hypothesized model. However, the t-value of each coefficient must be greater than 1.96 which is significant at 0.05 level.

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Medical Tourism in Thailand, the Future Growth of the Market

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Abstract

Medical tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in Thailand and South East Asian Region. The objectives of this study focus on driving forces, drawbacks, market attractiveness, Asean Economics Community's implications on Thai medical tourism. This study applied qualitative method through five in-depth interviews with doctors, three in-depth interviews with medical tourists, two in-depth interviews with hospitals' marketing staff, and direct observations at a private hospital. The secondary data were collected from public websites that provide information about Asean Economics Community`s implications on Thai medical tourism. This study applied thematic analysis by defining and examining key factors that have the direct implications on the potential market growth of Thai Medical Tourism. The study found that Thailand attracts medical tourists because it offers "Thai Hospitality" symbolizing "Country of Smiles" with the high quality medical services at affordable rates.

Introduction

Medical tourism is the combination between the medical treatment and tourism facilities in order to create a new service which can satisfy both the medication needs and relaxation needs. Thailand is one of the popular medical tourism destinations in the world which is moving toward being the leader in medical tourism destination in South East Asian region.

Thailand is also one of the destinations for medical tourism which offer the affordable medical fee (Turner, 2007).There are mainly three factors that attract the foreigner to come to Thailand for medical tourism which are the high quality of the service , the accessible and affordable medical service rate , the ability to combine both the treatment with vacationing (Cohen, 2008).Medical tourism sector in Thailand generates 0.4% of Thailand's gross domestic product(NaRanong, 2011).In Southeast Asia, both the private sector and government sector are focusing in promoting the Medical Tourism Industry and spending the big amount of budget on this attractive sector (Pocock and Phua, 2011). This had support the fact that Medical Tourism in Thailand have the big impact on Thai`s economy and have the high potential toward the increasing market growth rate.

This chapter comprise of the background outline of Medical Tourism in Thailand, statement of problems, research questions, research objectives, assumptions and limitations of this study, significance of this study and the definition and terms of the specific words that were used in this study.

As Thailand is now moving towards being the Medical Hub in Asean Economics Community and increasingly popular in term of the destination for medical tourism, it is very important for the tourism sector to know the possibility, the potentials and ways in which the medical tourism can grow in Thailand. The information and research on Medical Tourism in Thailand and its future growth of the market can be very useful to every tourism related organization in Thailand.

In order to find out the possibility or the potential market growth of medical tourism in Thailand, it is necessary to have a clear understanding on the driving forces and drawbacks of Thailand in the development of the Medical Tourism as well as the reasons why the foreigners are interesting in Thai medical tourism. In relation with Asean Economics community which Thailand is also one of the members, it is also necessary to consider the influence that Asean Economics community can have on the Medical Tourism in Thailand.

This study is aiming to identify four factors that have the possible impacts on the market growth of medical tourism in Thailand which are driving forces, the Drawbacks, the effects from Asean Economics community, Attractive Factors of Thai Medical Tourism.

The examination and study on the driving forces, drawbacks, effects from Asean Economics Community and, attractive factors of Thai Medical tourism were conducted to explore the relationships and effects on the market growth of medical tourism in Thailand.

The researcher assumed that the major strengths of Thai medical tourism are Thai Hospitality and Value Medical fee. Also the political instability in Thailand can be one of the possible major drawbacks of this Market.

There are two main limitations in conducting this research which are the unavailability of medical tourism`s expert in Tourism Authority of Thailand and the reluctance to fully open for all of the information from the respondents to the researcher.

Materials and Methods

This study of "Medical Tourism in Thailand, the future growth of the market" used the "Qualitative Research Approach "which is focusing on the opinion, perception and the information from the doctors at the hospitals who experienced in dealing with the medical tourists, Marketing related staff at the hospitals, the medical tourists who come to Thailand for medical tourism,. The study included the information about Asean Economics community agreement which may have the influence on the medical tourism in Thailand in both positive and negative ways. The research based on the Descriptive research which is focusing on the full explanation and analysis on the information collected in order to provide the best answer toward the research questions and research objectives of the study. This research combined both the primary data sources and secondary data sources which are the four factors that are driving forces, the Drawbacks, the effects from Asean Economics community, Attractive Factors.

The primary data sources were divided in to 2 parts which are the direct communication and Uninformed Non-Participant Observation. There are three types of respondents for In-depth interviews which are doctors at the hospitals, Hospital's marketing staffs, medical tourists who used or using the medical services in Thailand. The in-depth interview was based on the open-ended questions which aim to receive as much as possible of the information and opinion share by the respondents. There are four main objectives for the Uninformed Non-Participant Observation which was done while visiting the hospital which are the way that the medical tourists were interacting with the hospital staff, the way the response of the medical tourists toward that interaction, the physical appearance and the environment of the hospital that the researcher visited and, the language ability while the hospital staff is communicating with the medical tourists.

The secondary data sources were collected from public sources of Asean Economics community related websites in order to add the relevant information for the research question three and research objective three. The reason why the researcher chose to collected the secondary for the information about the agreement of Asean Economics community which may benefit and have the negative impacts on medical tourism in Thailand is because almost all of the important information relating to Asean Economics community are already available online so in order to create a better understanding on Asean Economics community and its implication on medical tourism, the exact agreement which may effects Medical tourism in Thailand should be input in to the study as well.

Sampling method

The method on selection of the research respondents for the data collection is the Non-probability Sample which the researcher chooses the target respondents depending on their specialty on the field and the ability and potential to give the accurate answer for the research questions. In this study, theresearcher did not include the staff in Tourism Authority of Thailand because of the limitation in term of unavailability of expert in medical tourism. The researcher chooses the public website which has a high reliability as the sources for the secondary data collection on implication of Asean Economics community on the medical tourism in Thailand.

Data Analysis Method

The Data analysis techniques that this study applied are Thematic Analysis and Content analysis. The reason of choice for the thematic analysis for this research was because thematic analysis is considered to be method that seems to be the best fit method with the main Data collection technique that used in this study which is In-depth interview. Most of the data collected were from the in-depth interview which is the main key data in this research which lead to the reason behind the choice of this analysis type. Another reason why the researcher used thematic analysis is because this analysis technique allowed the researcher to have more flexibility in data analysis and multiple methodological techniques are possible. The researcher applied the thematic analysis by basing on six steps of Thematic analysis method which are familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. The researcher used the interview scripts which were transcribed from the in-depth interview with the respondents which specifically focus on the opinion about the medical tourism in Thailand from the medical tourists and the thematic analysis technique was used to analyze the data collected. Thematic Analysis is also suitable to be applying with another type of the data collection technique in this study which is direct observation technique. For direct observation technique, thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected in form of note token during the observation under four main points which are 1.The way that the medical tourists were interacting with the hospital staff, 2.The way the response of the medical tourists toward that interaction, 3. The physical appearance and the environment of the hospital that the researcher visited, and 4.The language ability while the hospital staff is communicating with the medical tourists. For the secondary data, the content analysis was used to analyze the data obtained from the reliable and relevant sources directly. In this study the secondary data method was only used to add more important information for Asean Economics community effects on medical tourism development.

Results and Discussion

Findings of this study comprise of four factors which are driving forces, the Drawbacks, the effects from Asean Economics community, Attractive Factors.
The Driving forces

Increasing medical fee in many developed countries

It is the fact that the medical fee in many of the developed countries around the world are increasing and have a very low potential in decreasing in term of price, this characteristics of the developed countries had strongly effected the medical tourism in Thailand and other countries in South East Asia in a very positive way which is increasing number of the medical tourists from the developed countries.

Thai Hospitality

Thai hospitality is one of the major factors that impress many of the medical tourists around the world. Thailand is very unique and popular for the beautiful culture, service mind and willingness to help people and also the beautiful Thai smile is well-known globally. This is also one of the strongest unique characteristics of Thailand that impress many medical tourists as well.

Tourism infrastructure

Thailand is a well-known tourist destination and one of the most popular tourist destinations. Thailand has a lot of beautiful tourist attraction sites such as exotic beaches and beautiful temple or the historical sites as well. These characteristics had also support the growth of medical tourism.

Support from Government

Thai government had seen the important of this medical tourism sector and pay lot of attention toward the improvement of this sector. The government policy such as supporting Thailand to become the medical hub is also one of the factor that driving the medical tourism in Thailand in a positive way

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Middle East Countries

In one of the leading hospital in medical tourism in Thailand, the medical tourists from Middle East countries are their major customers. So the government budget of the Middle East countries on the medical treatment is also the driving forces toward the development in Thai Medical tourism.

Value Medical Fee and Good medical standard

The medical fee in many of the hospitals in Thailand is considered to be in the middle rate which is an affordable rate. When comparing to the medical fee in many developed countries, the medical fee in Thailand is much cheaper than them. The medical tourists can get the same medical treatment with the cheaper cost in Thailand.

Living cost

Thailand is also very popular in term of the value living cost. Because of the natural infrastructure, the food in Thailand has a high availability and variety. The medical tourists do not have to enter the restaurant to have their food but they can also buy the food from the street side with a much cheaper cost. Thailand has a lot of accommodation types which ranging from 1 star to 5 stars hotel and other accommodation types such as homestay, local apartment for the medical tourist to choose.

Herbal Medicine

Nowadays many people start to interest in the herbal medicine which is consider having less negative effect on their body and health. With the natural infrastructure that suit for planting much kind of herbs, Thailand has one of the medical field call Thai herbal medicine. Rising of this kind of medicine is also the driving forces that attract some of the medical tourists to Thailand.

Non-strict Visa Policy

Arriving of the Medical tourists have the direct relationship with the foreign affairs in Thailand so the non-strict visa policy in Thailand can also support the medical tourism sector in Thailand because of the high accessibility.

Trend of combination between medical treatment and tourism in Developed Countries

The trend of combining the medical treatment and tourism can be seen in many developed countries around the world. Apart from just spending their time on the medical treatment, people start to move to spending the time after the medical treatment in travel during the recreation period.

The Drawbacks
Political Instability

The continued and extended political instability in Thailand had strongly effect the medical tourism sector and many other business sectors in Thailand in a negative way. The demonstrations, riots and bomb threat had scared many of the medical tourists to come to Thailand because of the concern in term of their personal safety and security .So the more the political problems arise the less number of the medical tourists will enter to Thailand.

English and third language skills

Another major drawbacks of the medical tourism in Thailand is English and third language ability. In Thailand the number of the population who can speak good English and have the third language ability is quite low when comparing to the competitors in term of the medical tourism such as Malaysia. The medical tourists who visit Thailand still have to face with the communication problems while travelling.

Transportation system

The transportation system in Thailand is in the middle level but still have a lower standard when comparing with the developed countries or the competitors in term of medical tourism such as Singapore. Thailand has the sky train and subway only in Bangkok so it is not so convenient to travel to other provinces.

Safety and security problems

One of the main concerns of the Medical tourists when they have to travel to other countries is the safety and security concern. Thailand still has a lot of criminal records that happened with the tourists.

Imported Medicine

Currently most of the medicines in Thailand were imported from European countries. These drawbacks may lead to the lower ability to create the uniqueness of the medical system.

Management experts

In most of the hospitals in Thailand the management level of the hospitals are the doctors who may be a specialist in term of management. So lack of the management experts who manage the hospitals in Thailand may lead to less competitiveness in term of business.

Understanding on Culture Difference

The hospital who deal with the medical tourists from different nations need to have a clear understanding on the culture difference in order to support different needs of medical tourists, but Thailand still have less ability to understand culture differences.

The Effects from Asean Economics community

Asean Economics community has the positive effects on Thai Medical Tourism.

Visa Policy

More freedom to travel resulted from the free visa policy may lead to the higher number of arrival medical tourists in Thailand.

Members in Asean Economics Community have been cooperating and working together in order to determine the opportunities that may lie in the development of a common visa for non-Asean nationals. (Aung, 2014)

Asean Economics Community will lead to tourism expansion, and will reduce its tourist movement limitations and there are the possibility that one visa is granted for entry to all ASEAN countries (Chareonwongsak., 2010).

Better Translation Sector and Higher importance of English language skill

Asean Economics community motivates Thailand to see the importance of English language skill and improvement of the translations sectors in many businesses.

Entering to Asean Economics community will increase the freedom of people in Asean Economics community members to travel more freely among Asean Economics community countries and this will lead to the increase and improvement in term of multiple language ability of Thai people as well. (ภคภาสน์วิวัฒน์, 2013)

Faster Market Growth

As Asean Economics community will allow higher freedom of travelling to Thailand so it will also lead to higher number of the medical tourists which will finally lead to bigger market scale.

In year 2008, Thai medical tourism generated up to 52 billion baht of revenue from medical services and 12 to 13 billion baht from related tourism. The total revenues were 58 to 65 billion baht. The total value added of the gross domestic product (GDP) was0.4%. This information provided the basis of the value added from medical tourism which is projected to reach between 59 and 110 billion baht in 2012(NaRanong, 2011).

Higher Number of Medical Staff

Asean Economics community is having the direct affects in term of labor as well. The agreement in term of more freedom in working abroad among Asean Economics community countries will lead to the higher supply of the medical staff in the medical institutions in Thailand.

The Attractive factors
Medical fee

The cost effective medical fee in Thailand is one of the major attractive factors to drive many of the medical tourists to come to Thailand.

Thai Hospitality

Thai hospitality is the unique characteristic of the medical tourism in Thailand which is hardly copy by other countries. It is also the factor that differentiated Thailand from others medical tourism destination.

Thailand has the ability to create a great combination of medical tourism and Well-known Thai Hospitality (Mydin, Marzuki, Wong, Velasamy and Arshad, 2014).

Good medical standard

Thailand has a good medical standard which can reach the international standard and accepted worldwide.

Hotel Spitals

The meaning of the Hotel Spitals is the environment in the hospitals that is more similar to the hotel rather than the hospital. This kind of environment can help the medical tourists to feel relax and enjoy their time during the medical treatment.

Non-strict Visa Policy

Thai Government do not have a strict policy in term of visa because Thailand seeing the importance of tourism sectors and aiming to promote tourism sector. Arrival Visa and Free Visa to Thailand were allowed many countries in the world.

Conclusions

In this study the Driving forces toward the development of the medical tourism in Thailand are the Increasing medical fee in many developed countries, Thai Hospitality, Tourism infrastructure, effective Support from Thai Government, Government Budget in medical treatment of Middle East Countries, Value Medical Fee and Good medical standard, reasonable Living cost ,availability of Thai Herbal Medicine, non-strict Visa Policy, and the emergence of the trend of combination between medical treatment and tourism in Developed Countries. All of these driving forces were combined naturally in Thai style and create the unique ness of the medical tourism in Thailand in an effective way. The drawbacks toward the development of the medical tourism in Thailand are the Political Instability and political problems in Thailand, poor English and third language skills lower quality of the Transportation system in Thailand, lower standard of the safety and security for the medical tourists, importation of foreign medicines, lack of the management expert to manage the hospitals, less ability to understand the culture differences. The positive Effects from Asean Economics community had the positive implications on medical tourism in Thailand which are the Visa Policy is leading to higher number of medical tourists, better improvement toward the Better Translation Sector and Higher importance of English language skill, supporting the faster medical tourism market growth ,Higher Number of Medical Staff from Asean Economics community countries.

Recommendations

The reasons why other countries are interested in medical tourism in Thailand are because of the Value Medical fee, Thai Hospitality, the Good medical standard, Hotel Spitals, and non-strict Visa Policy. All of the above factors that have the influence on the future market growth of the medical tourism in Thailand.

However that are still many other points that Thailand should improve in order to stay competitive in medical tourism market in Asean region. The three main factors that Thailand should implement toward the better market growth of medical tourism are improvement of English and Third Language ability, prevention toward Safety and Security Problems, improvement of Transportation System

Acknowledgments

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Study and Improvement of Halal Travel Routes linked to Neighboring Countries under the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle: IMT-GT

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Abstract

This study was employed quantitative and qualitative methods., had the purposes as the following:-1) To examine and develop routes for halal traveling in the five southern bordered provinces in order to connect land transports air transport within Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia 2) To develop halal traveling programs by designing the types of traveling within the five southern bordered provinces in accordance with the tourists' wants in the forms of both text descriptions and maps 3) To investigate the perceptions of tourists both Thais and foreigners towards the attractive places of the halal traveling routes which connected within the five southern bordered provinces, Indonesia and Malaysia 4) To examine the necessity of traveling sites development and facilities for traveling through the halal traveling routes which connected within the five southern bordered provinces, Indonesia and Malaysia 5) To study laws, restrictions, agreements, cooperation framework, and other disciplines relevant to ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and cooperation of IMT-GT that obstructed Halal tourism in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The purposive Samplings and methods of the research were as followed: - 50 head staff working in tourism, 150 Muslim tourists both Thais and foreigners, and 150 people living in the contexts of traveling places by in-depth interview and content analysis. The results showed that 1) The routes development for traveling in the five southern bordered provinces connected among land transport (trains and cars), water transport, and air transport within Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.2) The Halal tours were designed for 43 traveling programs to respond the tourists'wants in terms of text descriptions and maps 3) The survey of tourists found that according to the survey of tourists traveling in the five southern bordered provinces, the attractive places the tourists were mostly interested in such Hot Spring in Yala, Had Chalathat and the Muslim tourists considered the worthiness of the traveling sites in terms of their popularity / well- known such Ban Wat Ancient City (Pattani), Pikulthong Garden (Narathiwat) 4) Problems and obstacles found while traveling in the five southern bordered provinces more than 80% of the Muslim tourists found the problems and obstacles while traveling as followed:- Lacked of Halal tourism information, Prayer rooms were not available at the traveling sites, None of Islamic transportation systems provided, etc. and 5) Have the legislative acts relevant to Halal tourism that should stress cooperation framework, rules and disciplines under the cooperative framework of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT)

Keywords: Halal Travel Routes Development, Halal tourism, Legislative Acts, Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT),

Introduction

Tourism is considered as a part of industrial critically affecting the development of Thailand economics. In 2012, Thailand gained $983,928$ million baths from tourism considering at 26.76 percent of economic growth (Department of Tourism, 2011). The vast numbers of tourists a year travel in Southern part of Thailand because of the well- known and beautiful mounts, sands, beaches, groups of islands, and some world class traveling sites. Nonetheless, based on the study found, both official and private organizations and relevant traveling entrepreneurs do not yet critically consider the significances of Halal Tourism.

The meaning of halal travel is to go out of the house to the desired destination, and in favor with the provisions. The Halal tourism is a trip to see the traces of racism, traveling to study and celebrate the Haji and so on.(Arbu Mahama, 2013) and The Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports has to determine the strategies of travelling services in accordance with the target groups of Halal tourism. When the Halal tourism is developed, not only the information hub is available but also new routs of traveling are introduced to respond the needs of Muslim tourists who are considered as the influential tourist group. In addition, food is regarded as a crucial factor to attract the tourists. In other words, to promote the Muslim tourists' traveling in Thailand, Halal catering services should be available and balance with the tourist's needs, and also should build awareness and understanding

among catering service entrepreneurs about the Halal food and its processes. This is in order to build trusty and satisfaction for the tourist customers to use the services again in the future. Those halal catering entrepreneurs should also be marked in the traveling routes.

Hence, if the routes for Halal traveling in the southern part of Thailand are developed including the analysis of possibilities of cooperation with Malaysia and Indonesia under the cooperative framework of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), this will lead to gain the appropriate traveling routes and preferred traveling programs services provided for the Muslim tourists. Moreover, this will enhance the development of travelling strategies of Thailand in the future.

Purposes and Methods

This research of routes development for traveling connected with the neighbor countries of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) has the purposes as the following:-

2.1 To examine and develop routes for halal traveling in the five southern bordered provinces in order to connect land transport (trains and cars), ship transport, and air transport within Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia

2.2 To develop halal traveling programs by designing the types of traveling within the five southern bordered provinces in accordance with the tourists' wants in the forms of both text descriptions and maps

2.3 To investigate the perceptions of tourists both Thais and foreigners towards the attractive places of the halal traveling routes which connected within the five southern bordered provinces, Indonesia and Malaysia

2.4 To examine the necessity of traveling sites development and facilities for traveling through the halal traveling routes which connected within the five southern bordered provinces, Indonesia and Malaysia.

2.5 To study laws, restrictions, agreements, cooperation framework, and other disciplines relevant to ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and cooperation of IMT-GT that obstructed Halal tourism in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

This research of traveling routes development for the cooperation with the neighbor countries of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) employed quantitative and qualitative methods. In other words, mixed methods were used in conducting the research. The data was collected during October 2014 to July 2015. The purposive samplings of the research and methods were as followed:

Group 1: Head staff working in tourism related fields both from official and private organizations. For example, the staff working in Thailand Tourism of determined provinces, provincial chambers of commerce, provincial administrative organizations, travel agencies, travels guides, etc. The purposive sampling was used in-depth interview in the five southern bordered provinces. 50 head staff intervened in this group.

Group 2: Muslim tourists both Thais and foreigners travelled in the contexts research conducted: Songkla, Satun, Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. The accidental sampling was used in-depth interview in 150 Muslim tourists participated in this research.

Group 3: People living in the contexts of traveling places in each province also participated in this research. They consisted of monks, Tambon leaders, civil servants, people, and merchandise, tour guides, etc. living in the contexts. The purposive sampling was used in-depth interview in 150 people participated in the research.

Results and Discussion

1. Results of routes development for traveling in the five southern bordered provinces connected among land transport (trains and cars), water transport, and air transport within Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The research found that there were 95 travelling sites qualified to include in the routes for traveling in the five southern bordered provinces. Pattani province had 24 qualified traveling sites which is the largest number comparing with other provinces. The followed province was Satun gained 22 qualified traveling sites. Songkla had 19 qualified traveling sites. Narathiwat had 18 qualified traveling sites. And, Yala had 12 qualified traveling sites. Among those traveling sites, the researcher was able to develop 43 routes for traveling. The traveling routes of each province were as followed: 1) 6 routes for traveling in Narathiwat province, 2) 9 routes for traveling in Yala province, 3) 9 routes for traveling in Pattani, 4) 9 routes for traveling in Songkla, 5) 10 routes for traveling in Satun. Then will show the sampling as 9 routes for traveling in Pattani in table 1

Table 1: Routes for halal traveling in Pattani province

Route No.	Duration	Visiting Routes
1	1 Day	**One Day Trip Pattani "Visiting the Land of Three Cultures (Thai, Chinese, and Malay)":** Chao Leng Chu Kiang Shrine, Pattani Provincial Central Mosque, Mujalin Tawapiharn Temple, Sai Kao Waterfall, Ratchaburana Temple, 300 Years Kuan Lang Nga Mosque
2	1 Day	**Pattani One Day Tour "Discover and Appreciate Islamic Pattani Civilization":** Pattani Provincial Central Mosque, Kru Sae Mosque, Sai Buri Palce, Yaring Palce, Phipit Phakdee Palce, Ta Lo Kapo Beach, Dato Mosque
3	3 Days 2 Nights	**Experience Thainess namely Pattani:** Learn the history of 3 cultures, nature and community ways of life
4	1 Day	**One Day Trip Village**: Bang Poo Village, Kru Sae Mosque, Talubo Village
5	3 Days 2 Nights	**Pattani Tour:** Chao Mae Lim Ko Niao Shrine, Phaya Intira Graveyard, Yaring Palace, Hat Ta Lo Kapo, Lampho Village, Graveyard of Bann Dato, Ancient Yarang Town, Chang Hai Temple, Namtok Sai Kao Natioanl Park, King Rama VII Pavillion
6	2 Days 1 Night	**Pattani:** Chabangtigo Palace, Ancient Yaring Town, Kuhapimuk Temple, 300-Year Mosque, Sai Kao Village, King Rama VII Pavillion, Pattani Central Mosque
7	3 Days 2 Nights	**Pattani- Penang "Visit the Land of 3 Cultures (Thai, Chinese, and Malay)":** Chao Mae Lim Ko Niao Shrine, Pattani Central Mosque, Mujalin Tawapiharn Temple, Sai Kao Waterfall, Ratchaburana Temple, 300- Year Kuan Lang Nga Mosque, Penang Island
8	4 Days 3 Nights	**Pattani- Penang**: Chabangtigo Palace, Ancient Yaring Town, Kuhapimuk Temple, Chang Hai Temple, Sai Kao Waterfall, 300- Year Mosque, King Rama VII Pavillion, Pattani Central Mosque, Penang Island
9	4 Days 3 Nights	**Langkasuka to Malaka**: Bang Poo Village, Kru Sae Mosque, Talunbo Village, Padi Museum, Kuala Lumpur, Malaka

2. The results of Halal tour programming in the five southern bordered provinces from designed in accordance with the tourists' wants by Focus Groups and content analysis in the forms of both text descriptions and maps.

The Halal tours were designed for 43 traveling programs to respond the tourists' wants in terms of text descriptions and maps. The examples of halal traveling programs are shown in the following diagrams 1-3.

2.1 Program Tours of Wang Prachan Border-Kuala Lumpur (Kuden Mansion- Mambang Mosque-Huathang& Kok Payom Villages- Wang Prachan Border- Thale Ban National Park- Wangsai Waterfall-Phuphaphet Cave- Kuala Lumpur- Putrajaya)
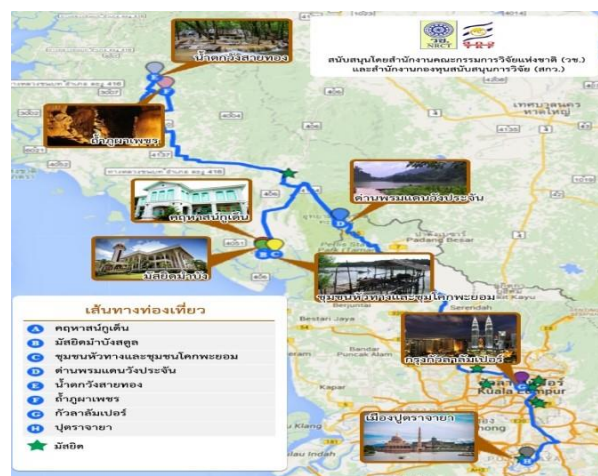

Diagram 1: Program Tours of Wang Prachan Border-Kuala Lumpur

2.2 Program Tours of Thailand Deep South (Wat Khuhaphimuk- Kwan Muang Public Park- Betong Public Park- Wat Buddhathiwat- Chulabhorn 10 Village- Piyamit Tunnel- Winter Flower Garden-Phiphitthammarong Museum- Songkhla Old City

Walls- Songkhla National Museum- Kao Tnagkuan- Songkhla Aquarium- Had Samil- Sultan Sulaiman Tomb)

Diagram 2: Program Tours of Thailand Deep

2.3 Routes and Program Tours of Yala- Hadyai- Satun- Kuala Lumpur (Wat Khuhaphimuk- Wat Chang Hai- Chao Mae Lim Ko Niao Shrine- Kru Sae Mosque- Pattani Central Mosque- Had Samila- Songkhla Old Town- Songkhla Central Mosque- Satun Old Town- Satun Central Mosque- Kuden Mansion- Kuala Lumpur- Putrajaya)

Diagram 3: Routes and Program Tours of Yala- Hadyai- Satun- Kuala Lumpur

3. The survey of tourists' perceptions both Thais and foreigners towards the traveling sites included in the routes for traveling in the five southern bordered provinces connected to Malaysia and Indonesia

3.1 The traveling sites the tourists were mostly interested in

According to the survey of tourists traveling in the five southern bordered provinces, the attractive places the tourists were mostly interested in were Hot Spring in Yala, Had Chalathat, Winter Flower Garden, Laem Samila, Piyamit Tunnel, Kanchanawanit Market, Songkhla Aquarium, Kimyong Market, Big C Hadyai Superstore, Khlong Hae Floating Market, Ice Dome, Somdet Phra Srinagarindra Park Pattani, Koh Sipe/ Lipe, Kao Namkhang National Park, Susara Plaza, Gen Prem Historical Park, Ton Nga Chang Waterfall, Hadyai Central, Narathiwat Central Mosque, Kallayaniwatthana Institute of Arts and Culture, Kao To Phayawang, Wat Chanathip Chalerm, Tarutao Island, Laem Tunyong Po, Had Sai Yao, Thaleban National Park, the Institute for Southern Thai Studies, Hadyai Manucipality Public Park, Wat Hadyai Nai, Wat Tham Kao Rubchang, Wannisa Waterfall, Takbai Border, Luang Po Dang at Wat Cheng Kao, Narathiwat Lak Muang, Satun National Museum, Songkhla Lake, Koh Yo, Noknam Kut Ku National Park, Hadyai Lantern Festival, Song Thale Garden, Had Narathat, Thaksin Ratchniwet Palace, Pattani Central Mosque, and other attractive places respectively.

3.2 The worthiness of traveling sites the tourists considered to visit in terms of their popularity / well-known in the five southern bordered provinces

The Muslim tourists considered the worthiness of the traveling sites in terms of their popularity / well - known as followed: Ban Wat Ancient City (Pattani), Pikulthong Garden (Narathiwat), Namtok Sai Kao National Park (Pattani), Hadyai Central Festival (Songkhla), Somdet Phra Srinagarindra Park Pattani, Had Bame (Narathiwat), Songkhla Aqurium (Songkhla), Thaksin Ratchniwet Palace (Narathiwat), the 60th Birhtday Anniversary of H.M. the Queen Garden (Narathiwat), Thale Ban National Park (Satun), Sungai Kolok Border (Narathiwat), Pajo Waterfall (Narathiwat), Takbai Border (Narathiwat), Namtok Sipo National Park (Narathiwat), Pattani Central Mosque (Pattani), Kao Noi (Songkhla), Thalesab Songkhla (Songkhla), Phyanak Ponnam Achitecture, Songkhla Central Mosque (Songkhla), Had Chalathat (Songkhla), Hot Spring (Yala), Kallayaniwatthana Institute of Arts and Culture (Pattani), Had Pamai (Pattani), Had Panare (Pattani), and other traveling sites respectively.

4. The examination of the necessity to develop the traveling sites and facilities for halal traveling routes which connected within the five southern bordered provinces, Indonesia and Malaysia.

4.1 Problems and obstacles found while traveling in the five southern bordered provinces

More than 80% of the Muslim tourists found the problems and obstacles while traveling as followed:- Lacked of Halal tourism information, Prayer rooms were not available at the traveling sites, None of Islamic transportation systems provided, Entertainment and night life went against Islamic principles, Activities during

traveling went against Islamic principles, Accommodation services went against Islamic principles, and Few numbers of halal restaurants which consistent with studies of Jariyajamsit Sakun and Wongleedee Kawin (2012) study of travel routes of Malaysia tourists in Thailand: a case study of 20 sites critical of the district of Hat Yai, Songkhla There were also problems of not enough parking and toilet. The sidewalks often used to sell products and under standardized of safety. However, mostly routes still in workable condition.

4.2 Necessity for traveling sites development

More than half of the Muslim tourists identified that the traveling sites in the five southern bordered provinces had fundamental infrastructure problems as followed:- Problems of electrical system, Inconvenient road conditions for traveling, None effective telecommunication system, and problems of water supply system

4.3 Facilities needed at the traveling sites

The Muslim tourists wanted facilities provided at the traveling sites as the following respectively:- Optimal numbers of washrooms/ toilets, Route buses available, Center of information services provided, Optimal numbers of bins, Restaurant readiness, Department stores/ Souvenir shops, Parking for bus, Accommodation readiness, Clean toilets available at the traveling sites, Not too narrow parking lots

Other facilities needed at the traveling sites were such as:- Advertisement/ presentation about the traveling sites, Security for living and properties, Sign boards to the traveling sites, Connection from a traveling site to one another, Visitor welcoming, and Communicative problems of sellers

As mentioned this study was consistent with the directional and operational research that similar to the studies of Sunthornwat Arpaporn (2009) that importance of the cultural tourist site and security found was very high potential and the travel link 3 routes in 2 days 1 night program, the satisfaction of tourists that with the high level satisfaction routes.

5. Study of laws, restrictions, agreements, cooperation framework, and other disciplines relevant to ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and cooperation of IMT-GT (2003) that obstructed Halal tourism in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The legislative acts relevant to Halal tourism derived the following problems:

5.1) The international organizations associated with the development of ASEAN tourism lacked clearness and continuity of policies in promoting the tourism within the five southern bordered provinces connected with Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Those organizations were such as Sub- Committee on Tourism of the Committee on Trade and Tourism, Tourism Concern, and Universal Federation of Travel Agent. These organizations once were established during specific conditions of politics and economics. However, when the social conditions were changed, the staffs working on such policies were changed too. Unfortunately, those

international organizations were no longer having continuity in doing any acts to promote halal tourism in the contexts even though the Muslim tourists really needed it.

5.2) Framework agreements affected the tourism in AEC including the tourism in the five southern bordered provinces connected with Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand did not identify the significance of halal tourism:

- The agreement dealing with Mutual Recognition for ASEAN Tourism Professionals (2015) had the main purposes to conveniently mobilize tourism professionals within the countries of ASEAN.

- The agreement dealing with standards for sustainable tourism development were identified in six issues: Homestays, green hotels, spa services, public toilets, clean city, and community based tourism

- The agreement dealing with the products of ASEAN tourism (Thailand Tourism, 2013) were identified to promote the efficacy of the following tourism: natural tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, water tourism, and health tourism.

- The strategies dealing with tourism industry derived from AEC blueprint B.E. 2551 (2008) included the issues of free flow of products mobility, free flow of services, free flow of investments, free flow of capital mobility, free flow of labors mobility, and other mobility of tourism industrials related.

- The agreement of APEC/PATA Code for Sustainable Tourism identified the issues to promote among the country members. Those issues were to enhance quality and efficacy of tourism in the contexts in order to remind and control tourism development of the country members. In other words, those agreements did not consider the significances of halal tourism standards or did not include halal tourism as the important issue in any agreements or ASEAN cooperation frameworks even in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

5.3 The obstacles affected the free flow of tourism services in ASEAN were, for example, lack of fundamental information and effective advertisement or presentation form the government, small and medium enterprises lacked of readiness in competition, the problem of tourism staff and Thai personnel, the problem of educational curriculums of tourism, the problem of official staff working on tourism lacked of quality and efficacy working, and the problem of natural resource readiness. These problems also inevitably affected the tourism in the five southern provinces connected with Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Recommendations

Recommendations for solving the problems in terms of law enforcement for Halal tourism and agreements of cooperation framework, rules and disciplines under the cooperative framework of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) towards the tourism in the five southern bordered provinces connected with Indonesia, Malaysia and Thai:

1. Organizations relevant to tourism management especially Thailand Tourism Authority and tour business should design diverse travel programs such as to design in terms of traveling types: natural tourism, ecotourism, agro tourism, health tourism, and edu- mediation tourism, etc., or to design in activity based: nature visit, historical site visit, cultural tour, making a merit, learn ways of living, and massage or spa, etc.

2. To strengthen the policies or presentation and communicate with enterprises to recognize the significance of halal laws in order to respond the Muslim tourists' needs. This is because the Muslim tourist groups are influential and could bring the financial profits for the country.

3. To strengthen the confidentiality for the Muslim tourists in the tourism products and services by resolving laws dealing with Halal management for tourism services. In other words, to control, examine, guarantee or withdraw the halal standards should be acted seriously. Moreover, the name lists of enterprises that the halal standards are withdrawn should be announced in public.

4. Urgently to resolve the problems of laws dealing with halal and halal signs especially its Penal codes and Trademark Legislation of Thailand, B.E. 2534 to be more precise in terms of penalty when someone doing wrong acts or use halal sign without a permission. The penalty should be harder because the halal sign standards aim to protect Muslim ways of life. This is different from Trademark Legislation which aims to protect the rights of enterprises.

5. The laws dealing with halal should be enacted specifically. The laws should include legislative acts of halal standard promotion, examination of halal standards in order to enhance living standard quality under the right Islamic principles.

6. The government should reexamine the agreements and cooperation framework, rules and other disciplines dealing with tourism strategies in ASEAN especially under the cooperation framework of Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT). That is to say, the government should signify the halal standards and promote halal tourism concretely. It is proposed that all stakeholders should promote community involvement to the development of commercial tourism. This is consistent with studies of Khiaorat Manikan (2010) Study the approaching for development of Cultural tourism routes by the involvement of the community: case study Baan Phu, Udonthani that the factors that affect the participation of the community.to tourism development are moderate level and the problem and the need to development of cultural tourism with the participation of the community are moderate level too.

7. The government should ensure the living safety of tourists both Thais and foreigners traveling in the contexts so that to make the tourists feel safe and decide to travel through the routes for traveling in the southern bordered provinces.

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Study and Improvement of Travel Routes for Senior Tourist In the Upper South of Thailand

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Abstract

The quantitative and qualitative method research aims to study and improvement of travel routes in the upper south of Thailand that linking the tourist area on the south, including the Andaman coast. Koh Samui, and Thailand Gulf Coast area to meet the needs of senior tourist. Legal education requirements and regulations that impede the travel of senior tourist on the travel route linking the tourist area on the upper south. The samples comprised of represent of the government and private sector in relation to tourism, the foreigner tourists and Thai tourists who travelled to the upper southern provinces and the locals who lives in the area. The finding shows that 1.) There are 34 travel routes and programs to respond the senior tourist' wants in terms of text descriptions and maps 2.) The most potential tourist attractions were natural attractions, followed by religious attractions, historical and archeological attractions with activities, and arts and cultural attractions, respectively. 3.) The various problems and obstacles found while traveling such as-lack of tourism information center, accommodation services (ramp, standard grab rails and rails) and facilities (medical/hospital, toilet) etc. 4.) Law Enforcement to comply with the Building Control Act 2552.

Keywords: Senior Tourist, Travel Route and Program Development, Legislative Acts, Upper South of Thailand

Introduction

In this recent time that economics has dropped down and many problems occurred, tourism industrial is utilized as an instrument in developing the economics and society of the country. This is because tourism industrial is associated with other industrials that empower economic movements and job opportunities. This caused the government supporting tourism industrials. As a result, new concepts of tourism are created and consequently the values and efficacies of tourism of Thailand are also increased. One of the well-known new concepts of tourism is called "Tourism for Senior tourist". This new tourism concept focuses on the elderly groups who have much power in payments and do not have time limitation in traveling.

The tourist group of the upper south is considered as one qualitative tourist group from the eight groups. They consist of twelve provinces of the southern part of Thailand: Suratthani, Nakorn Si Thammarat, Pannga, Phuket, Krabi, Trang, Satun, Pattalung, Songkla, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Therefore, the tourism should be promoted and developed throughout these regions of the upper south in order to connect the traveling routes and important traveling sites both in Thai Gulf side and Andaman side of the south. More important, the traveling sites and activities should be suitable for senior tourist groups and their followers so that to increase prices and values of tourism. This will lead to the sustainable economic growth of the country.

Purposes and Methods

This research of routes development for senior tourist connected with the upper south of Thailand has the purposes as the following:-

1. To examine and develop routes for senior tourist on the upper south including the Andaman coast, Koh Samui and Thailand Gulf Coast area in order to connect the tourist area.

2. To develop senior tourist traveling programs by designing the types of traveling within the upper south in accordance with the senior tourist' wants in the forms of both text descriptions and maps.

3. To investigate the perceptions of senior tourist both Thais and foreigners towards the attractive places of the upper south traveling routes.

4. To examine the necessity of traveling sites development and facilities for traveling through the upper south traveling routes.

5. To study laws, restrictions, and other disciplines relevant to obstruct the senior tourist in the upper south of Thailand.

The data of this qualitative and quantitative study were collected by using 370 pieces of questionnaires and 7 groups discussion with three groups of subjects as follows. The first group was 70 officials from the government and the private sectors who were heads of departments involved in tourism selected using purposive sampling. The second group was 150 senior Thai and foreign tourists visiting the upper south of Thailand selected using convenience sampling, and the third group was 150 locals in tourist attractions in each

province selected using purposive sampling. Statistics, frequencies, percentages and mean values were used for quantitative data, and content analysis was used for qualitative data.

Each group would give more details and data added in order to complete data contribution to the research findings.

The study areas were seven provinces in the upper south divided into two clusters. One cluster consists of provinces on the coast of Andaman Sea which were Phuket, Krabi, Pannga and Ranong. The other cluster consists of provinces on the coast of the Gulf of Thailand which were Chumphon, Suratthani and Nakorn Si Thammarat.

Results and Discussion

1. Results of routes development for traveling in the upper south including the Andaman coast, Koh Samui and Thailand Gulf Coast area in order to connect the tourist area connected among the upper south.

The research found that there were 110 travelling sites qualified to include in the routes for traveling in the upper south. Ranong province had 24 qualified traveling sites which is the largest number comparing with other provinces. The followed province was Nakorn Sri Thammarat gained 23 qualified traveling sites. Krabi had 18 qualified traveling sites. Phuket had 17 qualified traveling sites. Pang Nga had 13 qualified traveling sites. Chumporn had 8 qualified traveling sites. And, Suratthani had 7 qualified traveling sites. Among those traveling sites, the researcher was able to develop 34 routes for traveling. The traveling routes of each province were as followed:1) 8 routes for traveling in Ranong province, 2) 5 routes for traveling in Phuket province, 3) 3 routes for traveling in Pang Nga, 4) 4 routes for traveling in Krabi, 5) 4 routes for traveling in Chumporn, 6) 4 routes for traveling in Suratthani and 7) 6 routes for traveling in Nakorn Sri Thammarat. Then will show the sampling as 8 routes for traveling in Ranong in table 1

Table 1: Routes for Traveling in Ranong

Route No.	Duration	Visiting Routes
1	3 Days 2 Nights	Chao Muang Ranong Tomb- Chuan Chao Muang Ranong- Raksawarin Public Park- Ratanarangsan Palce- Ngao Temple- Pukao Ya- Mangrove Research Centre- Pornrang Hot Spring- Wat Pa Chai Mongkol- Thanon Sip Sai
2	3 Days 2 Nights	Kho Su Chiang Memorial Park- Suwankiriwihan Temple- Laem Son National Park- Pornrang Hot Spring- Koh Song Hong- Raksawarin Public Park- Sapan Yung Market- Chuan Chao Muang Ranong
3	1 Day	Rangsan Palce- Chao Muang Ranong Tomb- Mangrove Research Centre- Raksawarin Hot Spring
4	1 Day	Ranong Canyon- Wat Had Sompan- Bun Ya Ban Waterfall- Raksawarin Hot Spring
5	1 Day	**Historical Routes** Luang Por Duan of Bangnon Temple- Ban Chao Muang Ranong Rattanirangsan Palace **-** Raksawarin Hot Spring
6	1 Day	**Ranong Ozone** Pornrang Hot Spring- Mangrove Research Centre- Pukao Ya- Raksawarin Hot Spring
7	3 Days 2 Nights	Ranong Canyon- Nokyung Market- Punyaban Waterfall- Pornrang Hot Spring- Ngao Waterfall- Ratanarangsan Palace- Raksawarin Hot Spring
8	2 Days 1 Night	Ban Chao Muang Ranong- Ratanarangsan Palace- Pornrang Hot Spring- Luangpor Duan- Ranong Canyon- Wat Sompan- Raksawarin Hot Spring- Sapanyung Market- Lungpor Dibuk at Ngao Temple- Pukao Ya- Raksawarin Hot Spring

2. The results of senior tourist programming in the upper south designed in accordance with the tourists' wants in the forms of both text descriptions and maps.

The senior tourist programming were designed for 34 traveling programs to respond the tourists' wants in terms of text descriptions and maps. Each traveling programs got from the original travel routes of Ministry Tourism and Sports, travel agencies and travel guides. Participants in each group discussion selected attractive or preferring travel routes. Senior tourists' samples or participants would select attractive routes. The examples of senior tourist traveling programs are shown in the following diagram 1.

Program Tour of Koh Surin National Park- Koh Similan National Park (Tah-tamu port- Koh Similan- Koh Miang- Oaw Mung-gorn-Oaw Phakgard- Oaw Chongkhard-Had Mai-ngam)

Diagram 1: Program Tours of Koh Surin National Park- Koh Similan National Park

3. The survey of senior tourist' perceptions both Thais and foreigners towards the traveling sites included in the routes for traveling in the upper south.

3 . 1 The traveling sites the tourists were mostly interested in

According to the survey of tourists traveling in the upper south, the attractive places of the senior tourist were mostly interested in were Patong beach, The sea off the beach, Koh Lanta National Park, Leam Phrom Thep, James Bond Island, The palace Krom Luang Chumporn, Khai Island, Koh Panyee, Phraya served faithfully loyal Mahisorn, Suwankeeree-veeharn Temple, and Nopparat Thara Beach, respectively.

3.2 The worthiness of traveling sites.

The senior tourist considered the worthiness of the traveling sites in terms of their popularity/ well- known as followed: Koh Panyee (Pang Nga), Toapom klongsongnam (Krabi), Had Rai Lay (Krabi), Koh Chang (Ranong), Admiral Pond (Krabi), Victoria Point/Koh Song (Ranong), Chaiya National Museum (Suratthani), Central Department Store (Phuket) and other traveling sites respectively.

4. The examination of the necessity to develop the traveling sites and facilities for upper south traveling routes.

4.1 Problems and obstacles found while traveling in the upper south.

More than 50% of the senior tourist found the problems and obstacles while traveling as followed:- Lack of various things such as:-tourism information center, proper senior tourist bus and passenger car, accommodation services, expensive and fake of goods and services, non transportation system provides, improper maintenance of roads damaged etc.

4.2 Necessity for traveling sites development

Most senior tourist identified that the traveling sites in the upper south had fundamental infrastructure problems as followed:-problems of electrical system, inconvenient road conditions for traveling, none effective telecommunication system, and problems of water supply system.

4.3) Facilities needed at the traveling sites

The senior tourist prefer to have a ramp, standard grab rails and rails, They also want to have the facilities in tourist destinations as followed –order medical / hospital, a tourist information center, the availability of shelter, a parking area for large buses, a department store / souvenir shop, clean the bathroom attraction, a number of bathroom / toilet enough for senior tourist, and parking is not very restrictive. And want to have amenities include suitable electricity and lighting, have provided food for the senior tourist, hospitality and friendliness of the local people and fixed safety / crime.

5. The study of laws, restrictions, rules and disciplines that obstructed the senior tourist though the routes connected with Upper South of Thailand

In terms of the traveling of senior tourist, there are laws and rules relevant to the organizations promoting the tourism, the tourist control, the control and development of resources and tourism business to protect the senior tourist rights and welfare so that to facilitate them with safe traveling both living and properties, and including having friendly design building such as coasts available for wheelchairs and handrails in the traveling sites.

In conclusion, the legislative acts dealing with the senior tourist had the following problems:

1. Legislative acts dealing with senior tourist traveling available only in terms of the transportation. On the other hand, the aging people are steadily increased. They need special requirements in traveling different from general tourists such as health care system, and safety for living.

2. The other legislative acts with the traveling of ageing: National Seniors Act, B.E. 2546

Acts of Tourism Council of Thailand, B.E. 2544) Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2544(lacked of clearness leading to the concretely implementation in order to promote and develop the rights and welfare of aging people for protection of their traveling with standard and safe.

Under these circumstances of the legislative acts, the problems of senior tourist traveling were as followed:

- Transportation problem: the inconvenient conditions of vehicles, broken roads, lack of signal boards, toilets and first aid services unavailable

- Unclean and unhealthy food based on Public Health Acts, B.E. 2535 (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2535)

- Accommodation problems: unstable rate price of accommodation especially in high season, the Thailand Hotel Acts were ignored and the officers dismissed the roles to control the standards of accommodation.

- Business tour enterprises and tour guide license problems: did not provide services according to the traveling plans, charge more costs of the traveling services without considering the first agreement and went against Tourism and Tourist Guide Business

Act, B.E. 2551 (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2551)

- Facilities and safety of accommodation problems: lack of readiness for welcoming the senior tourist tourists and buildings were did not constructed following Thailand Building Control Act, B.E. 2522 (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2522)

Recommendations

This research project aims to enhance the prices and values of tourism focusing on the senior tourist group in the context of the northern part of the South of Thailand. According to the data gained, the researcher identified the policies of tourism development for senior tourist groups by connect the routes for traveling with the northern part of the South of Thailand. These developed traveling programs have connected between several provinces. However, with the limitations of senior tourist, organizations relevant to tourism management should identify the policies and mechanisms for welcoming the traveling of those ageing groups as followed:

1. Organizations relevant to tourism management especially Thailand Tourism Authority and business enterprises should operate various traveling programs such as to design in terms of traveling types: natural tourism, ecotourism, agro tourism, health tourism, and edu- mediation tourism, etc., or to design in activity based: nature visit, historical site visit, cultural tour, making a merit, learn ways of living, and massage or spa, etc.

2. To enhance the ageing tourists' opportunities to select their own traveling programs.

The important thing in tourism management is to enhance the ageing tourists' opportunities to select their own traveling programs based on their own interests and their limitations of physical. The organizations relevant should offer the selection of activities for the ageing tourists so that to make a suitable planning of traveling. Making the senior tourist to cooperate in doing some activities are parallel with the notions of creative tourism. That is to say, the tourists are able to participate in doing some value co- creation during their own traveling. Thus, the relevant organizations should operate as followed:

2.1 Create an application dealing with the information of the traveling in each province by allowing the tourists to choose their own activities and traveling programs they preferred.

2.2 Advertise and communicate with the target tourists about the selection of various traveling problems for the senior tourist.

2.3 Organizations relevant to tourism management in the northern part of the South should elaborate some meetings or seminars to discuss the ways to enhance prices and values of the tourism by connecting with other provinces and including to make the strengths of traveling sites more interesting so that to compete with other countries. In terms of traveling activities, the senior

tourist should be given opportunities to plan and determine activities by their own.

3. To seriously operate legislative acts. In order to facilitate the ageing tourist groups, the organizations relevant should control the use of legislative acts related to ageing caring. This is in order to assure that the ageing tourist groups will gain the standard services and safety both for living and properties:

3.1 Create impromptu- application for the tourists to make a complaint or asking for helps from the officers during traveling

3.2 Found court for tourism in every province in order to protect and control people against the laws or take advantage from the tourists with the clear penalty

3.3 Announce the laws and relevant rules and channels for making a complaints when the tourists are cheated so that the tourists are aware of their rights and to remind the tourists of their own rights

3.4 Organizations relevant to tourism management should make a random examination in the traveling sites and determine the clear and severe penalty

3.5 Government sectors who are responsible for tourism should determine a concise plan and policies for welcoming the senior tourist groups under the notions that the ageing traveling is considered as one of their welfare.

3.6 To strengthen the mechanisms and the use of laws relevant to the safety for public health of senior tourist and also to promote private sectors/ business tourism enterprises to follow the rules according to the laws of transportation for senior tourist

3.7 The government should resolve the laws dealing with the rights and welfare of senior tourist in traveling:

3.7.1 To enact the new laws relevant to the promotion and development of tourism for senior tourist by establishing official organizations under the notions that the senior tourist's traveling is considered as one of their welfare

3.7.2 Resolve the laws relevant to the promotion of tourism and the roles of local administrative organizations such as Acts of Tourism Council of Thailand, B.E. 2544, Tourism and Tourist Guide Business Act, B.E.2551, Tambon Council and Tambon Tourism Administrative Authority Act, B.E. 2538, and Municipal Act, B.E. 2542 by including the relevant acts and capable to implement in order to promote the tourism for senior tourist groups.

3.7.3 The government should regulate the ministerial orders which are the internal rules of the ministry to practice in order to control and protect the senior tourist's traveling involving the cars, buses, roads, facilities, health care (i.e., food and toilets), and including to promote private sectors/ business tourism enterprises to respect the laws relevant to the senior tourist's traveling especially the accommodation with high safety standards.

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