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FOREWORD

Tourism industry and services are not only money maker enterprises but also promote human resource development that brings progress and prosperity to the region in a positive way. They can although bring negative effects such as environmental pollution, social and cultural conflicts, not to mention the rising cost of living at the touristic places, but the overall positive effect is the improvement of both the economy and social conditions of the country. The policy on tourism management is therefore included in the National Strategic Plan in both developed and developing countries in the world.

The increasing numbers of tourists in all countries bring a tremendous income which makes the tourism industry more and more advanced worldwide. Thus, the tourism industry and services always have to come up with new knowledge and attractive strategic plans to get the competitive edge. Therefore, with the continuing changing global conditions in terms of economy, society, technology, communication and transportation the tourists have to adjust to these changes. The researches that can find out strategy in planning and management are very important in making various organizations and countries to get the advantage in the competitive industry.

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RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: ARE VALUES AN IMPERATIVE TO ACTION? A SCOPING STUDY APPLYING MEANS-END THEORY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this scoping study is to find out whether values of travellers/tourists consuming (at least sporadically) responsible tourism offers differ significantly from the group of non-consumers. Based on means-end theory, the values driving responsible tourism behaviour are uncovered by the laddering technique. The results of this scoping study shed light on intrinsic motivations and decision factors in travelling responsibly and will be used to refine the study design for further research to be conducted. The preliminary results of this exploratory survey propose that choosing responsible tourism packages is done on the basis of different values than choosing regular holiday packages. Values such as universalism, warm relationships with others and true friendship play a role in the selection of responsible tourism offers while hedonism, a comfortable life, pleasure and family security were the driving factors in choosing the other packages. Results of the study are helpful for the development and marketing of responsible travel products and/or a “responsible travel label” for small travel agencies as well as big tour operators. Looking at personal values that drive demand for responsible travel will allow to design, develop and implement appropriate products for this segment.

Key words: Responsible tourism, laddering, means-end theory, social marketing

INTRODUCTION

It is claimed by some researchers that there is increasing evidence of the emergence of responsible tourism as a significant travel market. Lovelock (2008) suggests that recent writings in the area of ethical tourism “refer to the growth of the consumer movement and the development of a conscious tourism segment”. According to Goodwin and Francis, (2003) the percentage of UK holiday makers aspiring to be willing to pay more for an ethical holiday increased by 7% to 52% between 1999 and 2001. Yet other authors claim that while governmental and intergovernmental initiatives to foster sustainability goals are striding ahead, what is missing is tourists’ action: Despite their declared positive attitudes towards sustainable tourism, only 1 in 20 tourists act upon them and purchase responsible tourism packages, environmentally friendly transportation or buy local produce (Chafe, 2005, as cited in Budeanu, 2007). Along the same lines, Telfer and Sharpley
(2008) note that “while surveys suggest that many tourists would be willing to pay more for environmentally friendly holidays, there is limited evidence that this is manifested in practice”.

Against this background, it is essential to note that the tourists’ desire to act in a more sustainable manner needs to be the starting point for the successful development of more appropriate, responsible forms of tourism. To put it another way, tourists must, implicitly, be positively motivated to consume responsibly – which means not only do they have to “demand” responsible travel offers but they also have to behave responsibly throughout the duration of the experience (Sharpley, 2006). And yet, so far no attempt has been made to a) explore the factors that drive responsible travel behaviour and to b) explain the kind of immaterial benefit that tourists derive from travelling responsibly (i.e. spending more money for receiving essentially the same product components).

This paper presents exploratory research investigating values of tourists choosing to consume responsible travel offers. Based on means-end theory, the values driving responsible tourism behaviour are uncovered by the laddering technique. The results of this scoping study shed light on intrinsic motivations and decision factors in travelling responsibly and will be used to refine the study design for further research to be conducted. In a final step, the results of the analysis will provide insight into tourists’ preferences, behavior and values and, more importantly, will give hints on the consequences for marketing responsible travel offers. The final challenge of the research lies in developing successful communication strategies which stimulate the sporadic consumer of responsible travel offers to act upon their value(s) more often so that the overall impact of this specific market segment can generate more and more momentum and help the tourism industry to act in a more sustainable manner overall.

**What is “Responsible Tourism” and what constitutes “Responsible Travel Behaviour”?

One of the basic problems underlying the alleged attitude-action-gap is certainly (also) attributable to the general fuzziness of terms in that area. A multitude of definitions is circulating in the literature and understood (at least slightly) differently by various groups of people. In most cases, there are no clear definitions published and also, there is no unambiguous demarcation between terms. To add to this dilemma, terms such as ecotourism, sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism development, ethical tourism, responsible tourism and the like are widely applied and their usefulness is usually not questioned or critically challenged – probably because it is difficult to criticize an inherently benevolent, altruistic concept. To illustrate the scope of this problem it suffices to refer to a relatively recent study entitled *Voluntary Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism* conducted by the WTO in 2002: this study is based on the analysis of 104 initiatives (WTO, 2002). This might lead to the suspicion that based on their own interests “conservationists, government officials, politicians, local community organisations and tourist themselves all manipulate the term(s) according to their own definition” (Mowforth & Munt, 2009). So, apart from investigating the values that drive responsible tourism (behaviour), the aim of this scoping study is to define a working definition of what constitutes responsible tourism and responsible travel behaviour.

For the purpose of this scoping study, responsible tourism (behaviour) is defined as travelling that considers at least one of
the following aspects (ideally all of them):

- **environment** (choosing modes of transport that have low CO2 impact; compensating CO2 emissions when flying; choosing accommodation with appropriate waste management systems, etc.)

- **society and local communities** (choosing hotels that pay living wages for employees, offer fair working conditions, involve local communities, invest in education and training of local staff, etc.)

The basic assumption underlying this scoping study is that when people take part in responsible tourism and are willing to pay more for essentially the same product an immaterial exchange occurs – so which desires are fulfilled by this “immaterial” exchange?

**Researching personal value structures to understand travel choice and tourism consumption**

A multitude of approaches has been identified and applied in research to understand factors influencing travel choice and tourism consumption. To understand, classify and analyse tourist behaviour, scientists have drawn on theories, concepts and models from various disciplines including psychology, sociology, anthropology, and marketing to mention just a few. In an attempt to explain and predict tourist behaviour better, psychographic variables have gained relative importance in comparison to demographic ones. Unfortunately, the myriad of concepts and constructs (such as beliefs, attitudes, motives, motivations, needs, desires, commitments and so on) unified under the umbrella term ‘psychographics’ were only “marginally more successful … in estimating tourism demand and explaining tourist behaviour” (Pizam & Calantone, 1987). The significance of values for tourism research can be explained with their ability to predict travel behaviour.

**Values**

It has been suggested that values and lifestyle variables, such as attitudes and opinions, are important determinants of consumer behaviour – this is equally true for the consumption of tourism products (Sharpley, 2006). Pizam and Calantone, (1987) claim that especially “values can act as predictors of travel behaviour”. This view is reinforced by McIntosh and Thyne (2005) who state that behaviour is value-driven and that tourists’ personal values ultimately influence their choice of travel product/way of travelling.

The writings of Milton Rokeach (1973, 1976) form the theoretical basis for psychological research on consumer values. One of the earliest definitions of the term value itself was given by Milton Rokeach and his work is still widely used and cited. Rokeach’s major contribution is recognized in that he defined “values as enduring beliefs that specific modes of conduct (i.e., instrumental values) or end states of existence (i.e., terminal values) are personally or socially preferable to opposing modes of conduct or end states of existence” (Rokeach, 1973; Blackwell, Miniard and Engel, 2006; Thompson & Troester, 2002). Building on that definition, Thyne (2000) adds that “a value is a single belief that transcendentally guides actions and judgements across specific objects and situations, and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate end-states of existence.” She continues to state that “a value is an imperative to action; not only a belief about the preferable but also a preference for the preferable. Finally, a value is a standard or yardstick to guide actions, attitudes, comparisons, evaluations, and justifications of self and others.” (Thyne, 2000). As a consequence, values are limited in number and have wide generalisability (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997, p. 32).
Values are thus seen as general rather than specific (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997). Katz & Stotland (1959, as cited in Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997) refer to them as “abstractions concerning general classes of objects”. Kahle and Kennedy (1988) claim that values are “one of the most abstract forms of individual knowledge”. Bem (1970, as cited in Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997) defines values as “generalised attitudes”. According to Rokeach, however, values differ from attitudes. Blamey & Braithwaite (1997) elaborate on that difference and state that while attitudes are clusters of beliefs that can be prescriptive, cognitive, affective or behavioural, a value is a single belief that “transcends specific objects or situations. Furthermore, values transcend specific objects or situations, whereas attitudes focus on specific objects and values” (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997). At the same time, values differ from needs in that they represent socially desirable standards of behaviour. In some ways values can be thought of as the “socially acceptable manifestation of human needs,” (Blamey & Braithwaite, 2010). Values also should not be mistaken for motivations because “as motivations are more a result of person-situation interactions; they contain motives influenced and operationalised by people’s values and their perception of given situations” (Thyne, 2001; Gnoth, 1999). Values give a deeper understanding of motivations and are more insightful to studying why tourists behave in certain ways. Values are transcendent and transsituational – they are deep-seated and have more predictive power than other psychographic variable. Values govern or direct peoples’ attitudes, behaviour and lifestyle (Sharpley, 2006). Kahle and Kennedy (1988) claim that is has at least been hypothesized that “values directly influence interests, time-use activities, and roles, which in turn influence consumer behaviours”. In contrast to lifestyles values are relatively enduring (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006).

In the final conclusion, values can be described as:
- enduring/stable;
- limited in number;
- widely generalisable;
- general rather than specific;
- abstract;
- socially desirable;
- transcendent, and
- transsituational.

Several approaches have been developed in an attempt to measure values. The most important ones are described in the following section. The values that are identified in these approaches will be considered in the content analysis of the data collected in the empirical study of this scoping study.

**Rokeach’s Value Scale - 1973**

While the concept of values implicitly or explicitly has already been part of earlier psychological theories (Freud, Jung, and others), the beginning of research on values in consumer behaviour was strongly influenced by Milton Rokeach who developed the Rokeach Value Scale (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006). Rokeach understood values as being concerned with goals (end-state or terminal elements) and ways of behaving (instrumental components) to achieve those goals (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006). The Rokeach Value Scale contains 18 values in each of these two value categories. Terminal values are either personal (such as salvation or peace of mind) or social (world peace).

Instrumental values are either moral (such as honesty, politeness, obedience) or competence values (behaving logically, intelligently) (Thyne, 2001, p. 120).
Table 1 contains a listing of the terminal and instrumental values of the Rokeach Value Scale.

**Table 1. Rokeach Value Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERMINAL (desirable end states) VALUES: personal or social</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTAL (modes of conduct) VALUES: moral or competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A comfortable life</td>
<td>Ambition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An exciting life</td>
<td>Broad-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sense of accomplishment</td>
<td>Capable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A world at peace</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A world of beauty</td>
<td>Clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Courageous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family security</td>
<td>Forgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner harmony</td>
<td>Imaginative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature love</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National security</td>
<td>Intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasure</td>
<td>Logical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-respect</td>
<td>Obedient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social recognition</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True friendship</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Self-controlled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006*

Although Rokeach’s work on values has been groundbreaking and is still used today, other measures such as the “list of values” (see below) relate more closely to people’s daily lives. For examples, while most people rank Rokeach’s value “world peace” highly, few people take active steps to reflect that value (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988).

**List of Values (LOV) - 1976**

As mentioned above, the List of Values (LOV) scale was developed because the Rokeach Value Survey was criticised as being quite general and not really relevant to consumption (Thyne, 2001). Kahle and Kennedy (1988) claim that although research on the List of Values (LOV) is not quite as eminent as Values and Lifestyle Segmentation (VALS, will be examined in detail later), the approach is useful in many contexts. The LOV was culled from Rokeach’s list of terminal values, Maslow’s hierarchy of values, and a range of other lists used in value research (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). The nine original values of LOV were (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988):

- self-respect,
- sense of accomplishment,
- being well respected,
- security,
- warm relationships with others,
- sense of belonging,
- fun and enjoyment in life,
- self-fulfilment, and
- excitement.
Table 2. Schwartz Value Scale: Definition and Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VALUE TYPE</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social power, authority, wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Successful, capable, ambitious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonism</td>
<td>Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasure, enjoying life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daring, varied life, an exciting life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-direction</td>
<td>Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity, curious, freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalism</td>
<td>Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broad-minded, social justice, equality, protecting the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful, honest, forgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas of that traditional culture or religion provide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humble, devout, accepting my portion in life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politeness, obedient, honouring one’s parents or elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Safety, harmony; and stability of society, of relationships, and of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social order, clean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006; Schwartz, 1994

Since “excitement” was rarely selected as first choice by respondents, this category has usually been collapsed into “fun and enjoyment” (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). Other authors (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006) claim that the LOV asks consumers to rate seven rather than eight or nine statements but they do not specify which values they are specifically referring to and which ones have been left out in comparison to the original LOV. Thyne (2001) in her study investigating motivation-based values of museum visitors describes some values of the LOV and includes in her list the following five values: “being well respected (approval from others), self-fulfilment (personal satisfaction), fun and enjoyment in life (enjoying food, sex, leisure etc.), sense of belonging (feeling that others care about me), and warm relationships with others (true friendships and close family relationships).”

Schwartz, Value Scale (SVS) and Portraits Questionnaire (PQ)

The work of psychologist Shalom Schwartz has become very influential on values research in marketing and other sciences. Schwartz’s research has focused on identifying a universal set of values and determining the structure of their relations. His Schwartz Value Scale (SVS) and Portraits Questionnaire (PQ) are thought to be held by nearly everyone (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006). Table 2 below contains definitions and examples for the Schwartz Value Scale.

Schwartz’s PVQ (Portrait Value Questionnaire) was specifically developed to permit studying populations for whom the value items in the original Schwartz Value Survey may appear to abstract (Schwartz, 2005, as cited in Gronhoj & Thogersen, 2009). Therefore, this instru-
ment is particularly useful when interviewing adolescents (Gronhøj & Thogersen, 2009).

**Other value scales measurement approaches**

The *Values and Lifestyle System (VALS)* is an extensively used lifestyle marketing tool which was developed by SRI International (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006). The VALS approach postulates that “consumers buy products and services and seek experiences that fulfil their characteristic preferences and give shape, substance, and satisfaction to their lives” (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006). It combines values and lifestyle information with demographic data to construct a psychographic framework which can be applied to comprehend consumers of a wide range of products (Thyne, 2001). Respondents are presented with a set of approximately 30 demographic and attitudinal questions. Based on their answers consumers are classified into nine lifestyle groups (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988). Although widely applied in lifestyle marketing, the VALS approach has been criticized for relying heavily on demographics as well as cultural bias aimed toward the United States (Kahle & Kennedy, 1988).

Other value scales include among others *Scott’s Personal Value Scale* and *Bales and Couch’s Value Profile*. Scott’s Personal Values Scale (1965) is “a 66 item inventory describing a person’s values in the area of intellectualism, kindness, social skills, physical development, status creativity, and independence” (Pizam/Calantone, 1987). Bales and Couch’s Value Profile (1969) employs “a 10-item scale measuring a person’s values towards individualism” (Pizam/Calantone, 1987).

**Means-end theory and laddering technique**

One of the most widely used methods to identify values that guide consumer behaviour is means-end theory. Reynolds and Olson (2001, as cited in McDonald, Thyne & McMorland, 2008) claim that means-end theory has been extensively applied to identify values-based motivations behind consumption. Along the same lines, it is claimed that means-end theory is particularly helpful for understanding personal values which determine tourist behaviour (McIntosh & Thyne, 2005). Means-end theory, originally developed and applied in marketing, is just one of the many theories that are applied to study tourism behaviour. It is argued that this theory is helpful especially for understanding personal values as the foundation of tourist behaviour. More importantly, it is asserted that the former are superior determinants of the latter (Gnoth, 1999, as cited in McIntosh & Thyne, 2005).

As suggested by the term, the means-end approach is based on the assumption that consumers think about products and services as a means to some end (Olson, 1995). More specifically, means-end theory focuses “on the linkages between the attributes that exist in products [or services] (the ‘means’), the consequences for the consumers provided by the attributes, and the personal values (the ‘ends’) the consequences reinforce” (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The linkages between attributes, consequences, and personal values depicting the pattern of associations are called “means-end chains” (also referred to as “ladders”) (Klenosky, Gengler & Mulvey, 1999; Thyne, 2001; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The aim of means-end chains is to illustrate the relationship between product/service attributes and the higher-order benefits and values that they serve (Thyne, 2001). For example, low fat food products (attribute or means) may perhaps be purchased for their alleged slimming benefits.
(consequence) and, eventually, for achieving self esteem (value) (McIntosh & Thyne, 2005).

On a more abstract level, this implies that means-end chains represent the relationship between the Self and the product or service, where the means (attributes) represent aspects of product knowledge, and the ends (values) represent aspects of consumer self-knowledge (Walker & Olson, 1991, as cited in Thyne, 2001). Thyne (2001) underlines that means-end chains represent “a model of consumers’ cognitive structures, depicting the way in which concrete product characteristics are linked to self-relevant consequences”. More specifically, Grunert & Muller (1996) claim that “it shows how a product characteristic (concrete or abstract) is linked to consequences (functional or psychosocial) of consumption, which in turn may be linked to the attainment of life values (instrumental or terminal)” (as cited in Thyne, 2001). Figure 1 below shows the hypothesized connections of product and self knowledge in means-end theory.

Based on means-end-theory, laddering technique is applied to look at the intrinsic values of responsible tourists / travelers. Several approaches are mentioned in the literature to reveal means-end structures: laddering is by far the most widely applied technique (ter Hofstede et al., 1998; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). In fact, sometimes laddering is equated with means-end chain theory, even though the theory and methodology should be looked at independently from each other (ter Hofstede et al., 1998). So, following means-end theory, laddering is the method applied to research personal values.

Reynolds & Gutman (1988) describe laddering as “an in-depth, one-on-one interviewing technique used to develop an understanding of how consumers translate the attributes of products into meaningful associations with respect to Self”. Laddering is essentially a qualitative interviewing process employing primarily a series of directed probes, typified by the “Why is that important to you?” question (McIntosh & Thyne, 2005; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). In the classical laddering process, the natural flow of speech is constrained as little as possible. This is referred to by some researchers as “soft laddering”. “Hard laddering” on the other hand, allows respondents less liberty in the answers and forces them to follow one ladder at a time, in which each subsequent answer is on a higher level of abstraction (Grunert & Grunert, 1995, as cited in ter Hofstede, 1998). Examples of this “hard laddering” approach are self administered paper and pencil questionnaires (Walker &
In the “classical”, i.e. soft laddering process, usually three steps are followed (ter Hofstede et al., 1998):

1. elicitation of salient attributes,
2. in-depth interview, and
3. (content) analysis of results.

Figure 2 shows a schematic overview summarizing the laddering process.

**Figure 2.** Schematic overview summarizing the laddering process
(Sources: Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; ter Hofstede et al., 1998, Wriggers, 2001)

**METHODOLOGY**

Rather than focusing on a supply-driven approach the present research will first concentrate on understanding the values that drive sustainable demand for responsible tourism offers. A scoping study was conducted to analyse the means-end structural cognitive relations tourists discern as relevant when selecting a travel package for their summer beach vacation in Egypt. The data was collected during personal face-to-face or telephone interviews. A total of 4 subjects were interviewed during this exploratory phase of the research. In those one-on-one in-depth interviews the laddering approach described above was applied. The subjects were presented with a preference-oriented sorting task (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988) and were asked to choose between three travel packages offering a beach vacation in Egypt. This approach was used to elicit basic attributes and distinctions the interviewees employ when choosing between alternative holiday packages.

The three holiday packages to choose from basically offered the same components (1 week of beach vacation in Dahab, Egypt, including flight, transfer to the hotel, accommodation and board) with
slight differences in the following areas:

- **Tour operating company**: 1 known brand, one rather unknown “responsible” tour operator, 1 fictitious (unknown) company;
- **Category of hotel**: 2 offers were at a 3-star hotel, one offer at a 4-star hotel;
- **Board specification**: 2 packages included half board while one package offered “all-inclusive” (the 4-star hotel package);
- **Price**: the price varied (664 €, 720 €, 750 €);
- **Colour**: each package offered had a different colour (blue, green and red).

The following figure shows the packages.

![Figure 3. Packages to choose from in the preference-sorting task](image)

The green folder advertised an “All-inclusive”-offer at a 4-star hotel by an unknown (fictitious) tour operator at a total cost of 720 €. The red folder was the responsible tourism package which offered accommodation at a 3-star hotel with half-board and additional information on ecological and social aspects that are taken care of (CO2 compensation, waste management, jobs for local Bedouin women, etc.) at a total cost of 750 €. The blue folder advertised by a known tour operator consisted of the same components minus the ecological and social aspects.

The interviews lasted between 20 – 40 minutes during which the laddering method was applied in an attempt to investigate how the interviewees’ cognitive processes influence their consumption behaviour and decisions (Williams, 2002). Interviewees were chosen using a convenience sample keeping in mind a heterogeneous composition of the sample. In total 4 respondents were interviewed for this scoping study. The convenience sample was comprised of
- a 39-year old musician (male) with tremendous travel experience due to being on tour for 15 years;
- a 32-year old marketing executive (female) from the tourism industry;
- a 58-year old retired teacher (female); and
- a 24-year old law student (male).
RESULTS

Of the four interviews, the laddering technique was successfully applied to all of them. In this scoping study, however, because of the limited number of interviews conducted, an aggregate hierarchical value map will not be composed. Instead, the individual cases will be looked at and analysed individually.

Interview 1: Interviewee preference: Responsible Tourism package

For respondent 1, who chose the responsible tourism package, two ladders were found:

Local business/employing local people (A) > Added value stays on the spot (C) > not only European companies are making profits (C) > if someone else is harmed, I am harmed too (C) > we are all one organism (V) > UNIVERSALISM (V)

Small, local business (A) > more personal/personal contact (C) > individual is at the centre of attention (C) > you can feel more at home (C) > WARM RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS (V) / TRUE FRIENDSHIP (V)

It is automatically and explicitly assumed by respondent 1 that mindfulness for the environs (as expressed by concern for the environment and local communities etc.) transfers into more mindfulness towards guests. If the difference in price is not huge respondent 1 would always book responsible travel offers.

Interview 2: Interviewee preference: Responsible Tourism package

For respondent 2, who also chose the responsible tourism package, one ladder was uncovered:

CO2 compensation (A) > eco-friendly offer (A) > environment gives me vitality (C) > UNIVERSALISM

Similar to respondent 1, respondent 2 stresses the fact that if someone cares for the environment they “will care enough not put their guests into some ramshackle hut infested with cockroaches”.

Interview 3: Interviewee preference: All-inclusive, 4-star resort package (fictitious tour operator)

Respondent 3 did not choose the responsible tourism but opted for the all-inclusive package. The following ladders were found:

4-star hotel (A) > certain standard (C) > HEDONISM (V) / A COMFORTABLE LIFE (V) / PLEASURE (V)

All-inclusive (A) > certitude about final price (C) > (FAMILY) SECURITY (V)

Respondent 3 stressed that her favourite package would combine the decisive attributes (4-star hotel/all-inclusive) with the attributes of the responsible tourism offer of which she likes the ecological aspects and the involvement of the local community. She would be willing to pay 850 € for such an offer and emphasizes that 10-20% price difference for a package providing the same services plus the additional “responsible tourism components” are not too much to ask. Asking her about the attributes of such an offer revealed the following ladders:

Ecological aspect (A) > environment is basis of our existence (C) > UNIVERSALISM (V)
Involvement of local community (A) > local people are not exploited by big corporations (C) > avoiding “tourism ghettos” (C) > contact with local people (C) > \textbf{WARM RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS (V) / TRUE FRIENDSHIP (V)}

\textit{Interview 4: Interviewee preference: Tour operator package or All-inclusive, 4-star resort package}

Interviewee 4 would either choose the package provided by the tour operator or the all-inclusive package. The following ladders could be detected:

“Neckermann” (tour operator as a known brand) (A) > credit of trust (C) > I do not want to be surprised by a dirty pool, etc. (C) > big tour operator cannot afford a bad hotel (C) > \textbf{HEDONISM (V) / A COMFORTABLE LIFE (V)}

All-inclusive (A) > I do not have to worry about anything and I know the final price (C) > totally worry free on the spot (C) > \textbf{HEDONISM (V) / A COMFORTABLE LIFE (V)}

Respondent 4 would only consider the responsible tourism offer if it had the same price as the other offers – “responsible” tourism product components are a “nice-to-have” but negligible attribute. Respondent 4 stresses the fact that he would rather make sure himself to act fair and responsibly on the spot and doubts the transparency and trustworthiness of such offers.

\textbf{DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION}

Even though the conclusions based on only 4 interviews are naturally limited in generalisability the interviews suggest some interesting findings. The preliminary results of this exploratory survey propose that choosing responsible tourism packages is done on the basis of different values than choosing regular holiday packages. Values such as universalism, warm relationships with others and true friendship play a role in the selection of responsible tourism offers while hedonism, a comfortable life, pleasure and family security were the driving factors in choosing the other packages.

While these suggestions cannot be generalised from based on the very small number of interviews conducted, this scoping study produced important hints for the main study that is still to be executed. At the same time, while the means-end approach is very valuable in some aspects it misses assets that other methods, such as conjoint analysis, offer. Therefore, the main study will be complemented with a conjoint analysis to realistically portray consumers’ decisions as trade-offs among multi-attribute packages. The results of both the pre- and the main study will be very helpful for the final conjoint analysis design.

Apart from this, the means-end values based approach has also been criticized for “abstracting away diversity”. Blake (1999) elaborates that “research has shown that people do not have a fixed, rational and ready-made set of values that will be activated by particular calls to action; rather people’s values are negotiated, transitory and sometimes contradictory”. So maybe this approach is overlooking the complexity of the situation when we reduce the cause of travel decisions down to a list of narrowly defined values that are hypothesized to be able to predict travel behaviour.

And last but not least the question has to be asked: what comes first: the chicken or the egg? Or to use Mazanec’s (2010) words: “I abandoned the idea of
“detecting” segments and became convinced that the picture of the analyst or manager “generating” market segments is the much better fitting interpretation”. So rather than assuming that tourism demand should be the starting point of the analysis – maybe we have to look at tour operators as well.

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The research aims to investigate the impacts of the websites of ryokan and e-Word-Of-Mouth (eWOM) available at the websites of Japanese e-travel agents on the guests’ expectation for and experience at ryokan. The research stems from interpretivism and mainly adopts an inductive approach. Netnography is selected as a research strategy. The top three ryokan in terms of sales ranking are chosen. eWOM about these three are analysed, focusing on the impacts of websites and eWOM in developing the guests’ expectation for and experience at ryokan, the appealing point(s) of ryokan for the guests, and the gaps between their expectation for and experience at ryokan.

eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites are more influential for the guests than the websites of ryokan in their buying-decision-making process and growing their expectation for ryokan. Of various appealing points of ryokan, the overall experience followed by the meals is the main interest of the guests. The room followed by the meals is the appealing point of ryokan that the guests’ experience is most unlikely to meet their expectation. A section for eWOM on the website of ryokan is not examined as most ryokan do not have it on their websites. Considering the significance of eWOM confirmed in the research, ryokan should have a eWOM section on their website and it should also be examined in the future research. This research is valuable as ryokan have not been examined well in previous studies, especially those in English.

**Key words:** ryokan, website, eWOM, netnography

**INTRODUCTION**

This paper aims to examine the impacts of the websites of Japanese ryokan and eWOM available at the websites of Japanese e-travel agents on guests’ expectation and experience.

**Accommodation facilities in Japan**

Japan has countless accommodation facilities and Western-style hotels and Japanese-style inns are available. There are, however, many differences between these two types of accommodation. Of all, two can be seen as most prominent
differences. The first clear difference is in the guest room. The guest room in Japanese-style inns is characterised by the *tatami* floor (Japan Ryokan Association, 2010a) (See Fig. 1). The *tatami* floor is vital to create a Japanese atmosphere of the guest room and the overall quality of the guest room is one of the key appealing points of Japanese *ryokan* to their guests. The other apparent difference is meals offered. In principle, Japanese-style inns offer dinner as well as breakfast (Japan Ryokan Association, 2010b). In many cases, local products unique to the region where the Japanese-style inn is located are used for the breakfast and dinner. Such delicious and sumptuous meals are also one of the main attraction factors to guests and they also expect Japanese-style inns. In fact, most Japanese-style inns feature their meals on their websites (See Fig. 2).

*Figure 1.* Guest room with the *tatami* floor featured on the website of Tamanoyu in Oita Prefecture (Source: Tamanoyu, 2011b)

*Figure 2.* Meals featured on the website of Kagayain Ishikawa Prefecture (Source: Kagaya, n.d.)
Minsyuku and ryokan

There are two main types of Japanese-style inns, minsyuku and ryokan. Basically, they are distinguished by the management style, level of services, facilities and accommodation fees. Generally, minsyukuis family-run and relatively cheap to stay (Jimura, 2010). In addition, the owner’s family of minsyuku tends to live there and this is common to B&B in European countries. In contrast, ryokan are likely to be managed by a company and expensive to stay. Ryokan are often found in the areas famous for hot-springs and many of them have their own hot-spring facilities (See Fig. 3), whilst most minsyuku do not have such facilities. As Matsuda (2002) notes, hot-springs are very popular amongst Japanese guests; therefore, they are also one of the key attraction factors of Japanese ryokan. Both minsyuku and ryokan have not been examined well in previous studies in tourism, hospitality and marketing, especially those written in English. Moreover, the influence of websites of ryokan and eWOM on their guests would be more important for ryokan than for minsyuku, because the guests of ryokan would have higher expectation for their experience at the accommodation facility than those of minsyuku. Hence, this research focuses on ryokan.

![Figure 3. Hot-spring facilities featured on the website of Hyoe Koyokaku in Hyogo Prefecture (Source: Hyoe Koyokaku, n.d.)](image)

Key points in online marketing of Japanese ryokan

The three aspects of Japanese ryokan discussed above (guest rooms, meals and hot-spring facilities) can be seen as the vital appealing points to their guests. This is evidenced by the fact that these three are often featured at the websites of ryokan (e.g. Tamanoyu, 2011a) and those of Japanese e-travel agents (e.g. Jalan, 2011a) which work as intermediaries between ryokan and guests. Like TripAdvisor, these Japanese e-travel agents have a section for the guests’ reviews about their expectation for and experience at ryokan, and the section has been getting more influential in the guests’ buying-decision-making process. This paper tries to achieve its aim by analysing these guests’ reviews about their expectation for and experience at ryokan, focusing on the
relationships between their expectation grown by the websites of *ryokan* and other guests’ reviews and their experience at *ryokan*.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**E-consumer behaviour**

The Internet impact continues to grow steadily in the world and Japan is not an exception. According to the Ministry for Internal Affairs and Communications (2010), in 2009 Internet household penetration in Japan reached 78.0% and 94.08 million people use the Internet at home. A rapid increase in the proportion of old people (60 year-old or more) between 2008 and 2009 is also confirmed (Ministry for Internal Affairs and Communications, 2010). This data match well the argument that the number of elderly people using the Internet is increasing rapidly in the USA (Bitterman & Shalev, 2004). These imply that the number of e-consumers has also been increasing, especially in the developed countries.

Early research about e-consumers demonstrates that their main concerns were the functional and practical aspects (Dennis et al., 2009). In other words, what e-consumers can do and how easily they can do via the Internet and websites seem to have been their main concerns. Dennis et al. (2009) also summarise the characteristics of such “early adopters”: they tended to be more educated, in a higher socio-economic status, younger than average and more likely to be male. Therefore, the Internet seems to have been utilised by limited market segments in its early development stage. However, this does not seem to apply to e-shopping in recent years. For example, an increase in the number of silver surfers is confirmed as stated above, and the Internet usage at home has been getting more accessible thanks to the cheaper monthly fees. In fact, Jayawardhena et al. (2007) note that consumer’s orientations in purchasing in the real world and on the websites are very similar. As discussed above, the functional and practical aspects are important for e-shopping and these can be rephrased as functions the website has and its east of use. From the study of Jayawardhena et al. (2007); moreover, it is also proved that the significant factors in the real world such as social interaction with other consumers and goods/service providers, and recreational motives are also important for e-consumers. Consequently, four key aspects in e-shopping are identified: (1) functions the website has, (2) ease of use, (3) opportunities for social interaction, and (4) provision of recreational motives. Kim, Kim and Kandampully (2009) investigate how buying environment characteristics, which are not directly associated with price or product information, are related to overall e-satisfaction; and how e-satisfaction and e-loyalty are interrelated. They conclude that convenience, web appearance and entertainment value have a direct effect on e-satisfaction (Kim, Kim & Kandampully, 2009). Of these three, convenience seems to be related with the above-mentioned (1), web appearance seems to be associated with the above-mentioned (1) and (2), and entertainment value seems to be related to the above-mentioned (3) and (4).

As Dennis et al. (2009) argue, the significance of (3) opportunities for social interaction and (4) provision of recreational motives in e-shopping can be evidenced by virtual ethnography (webnography) [also called “netnography” (e.g.Kozinets, 2002; Martin & Woodside, 2011)] of online blogs, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) and e-word of mouth(eWOM). Of these, this research examines eWOM, adopting netnography to explore guests’ expectation developed by the website of *ryokan* and eWOM, and how their experience at the *ryokan* meets their expectation.
Online marketing websites

Online marketing is the fastest growing of direct marketing and widespread use of the Internet has a dramatic impact on both consumers and marketers (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). The website has given marketers an innovative way to create value for consumers and build relationships with them (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). ICT has a great impact on the business operation. For instance, it is now possible even for a small business to operate globally via the usage of ICT including a website (Page & Connell, 2009). Gilbert, Powell-Perry and Widijoso (1999) believe that a successful web presence depends on more than just the technology used and the “look and feel” of the website. The importance of “look and feel” of the website is also noted by Miyazaki (2009). It is important for companies to establish effective and attractive websites as consumers tend to judge the nature and quality of companies by their website as well as the quality of their products (Miyazaki, 2009). In 2.1, four key aspects in e-shopping [(1) to (4)] are identified. Considering the points Gilbert, Powell-Perry and Widijoso (1999) and Miyazaki (2009) suggest, in addition to these four, the atmosphere and image the website creates and projects to consumers can also be seen as a significant aspect in online marketing.

According to Kotler, Bowen and Makens (2010), there are four major online marketing domains: Business-to-consumer (B2C), Business-to-business (B2B), Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and Consumer-to-business (C2B). Of these, B2C has been the most studied area followed by B2B (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2010). This research looks at the impact of the websites of ryokan on their guests; hence, the B2C domain should be examined. In light of the current trends, however, more research should be conducted about the C2C and C2B domains. The more accessible the Internet has become for people in terms of its cost and infrastructure it requires, and the more advanced the Internet technology has become; the more interactive the activities available for the Internet users have become. As shown in (e-consumer behaviour), now many people write online blogs, join social networking sites and write and/or read eWOM. These activities can be categorised as the C2C domain, because consumers exchange their opinions each other and share any thoughts via online blogs, social networking sites and eWOM. Moreover, now consumers can tell their opinion about the company and their products via the website of the company or eWOM. This example can be seen as the C2B domain. This research mainly examines the B2C and C2C domains of online marketing by investigating eWOM about ryokan. The research also investigates the C2B domain of online marketing by exploring any tangible evidences that the guests of ryokan have left on the website of ryokan or eWOM.

Online marketing and websites in the tourism industry

The tourism industry consists of all those firms, organisations and facilities which are intended to serve the specific needs and wants of tourists (Leiper, 1979). Products can be divided into goods and services and tourism as a product is a combination of several different services such as transport, accommodation, catering, visitor attractions, travel agents and tour operators. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the nature of services when the marketing activities in the tourism industry are investigated. Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) note that the benefits come from ownership of physical objects or devices in case of goods, whilst those are created by actions or performances in case of services. Page and Connell (2009)
assert five underlying principles of services marketing: intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity, inseparability (between service provision and consumption) and lack of ownership. Because of these characteristics, it is impossible for consumers (tourists) to test the product (e.g. package holiday) before they purchase it. What tourists could get before the purchase is the information from various sources such as the product’s website and WOM. Apart from photographs, videos and souvenir, what they can bring back from their holiday are memories, feelings and experiences. All of these are intangible until they are visualised as online blogs, comments at social networking sites, eWOM and/or tweets at Twitter. For the above-mentioned reasons, any visible information that prospective guests of ryokan could obtain before the purchase has a great impact on their buying-decision-making processes. Moreover, the information other guests visualised during/after their holiday would also have a large impact on the buying-decision-making processes of the guests of ryokan.

In tourism studies, research about online marketing and websites has emerged around 10 years ago. There are a lot of case studies which examine different sectors in the tourism industry all over the world. For instance, Wang (2002) evaluates the websites of international tourist hotels and tour wholesalers in Taiwan and confirms that 50% of the total sample of hotels and tour wholesalers has already established their own websites. Hudson and Lang (2002) investigate the online marketing in a case of tourism in Banff, Canada, and suggest that the use of the Internet including websites has been spread amongst tourists in their travel planning processes as well as amongst tour operators as a marketing tool. Doolin, Buegess and Cooper (2002) assess the level of website development in New Zealand’s Regional Tourism Organisations and their research adopts the utility of using interactivity to measure the relative maturity of tourism websites. This would also imply the significance of (3) opportunities for social interaction (e-consumer behaviour) for the tourism websites. Regarding the Japanese research in this study area, Otani (2002) explores the changes the Internet would cause in the tourism industry and listed three possible changes: (i) sharing the information with others on the Internet (e.g. eWOM), (ii) the rise of direct marketing from service suppliers (e.g. accommodation) to tourists, and (iii) availability of the updated information on a real-time basis. This research examines (i) through a case study of Japanese ryokan.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Research approach**

There are a number of alternative approaches in the social scientific research. Of these, the distinction between positivist and interpretive approaches is a primary dichotomy (Veal, 2006) and the tourism and marketing research is not an exception. Jupp and Norris (1993) argue that the positivist approach aims to follow the principles of natural scientific research and proceeds by the formulation and testing of hypotheses with a view to making inferences about the causal connections between two or more social phenomena or “facts”. In contrast, the interpretive approach puts more reliance on the people being studied to provide their own explanation of their situation or behaviour (Veal, 2006). This research stems from interpretivism and adopts an inductive approach as the main research approach. In other words, this research examines mainly qualitative data, but also looks at quantitative data.
Netnography

Netnography is chosen as the strategy of this research. Netnography can be seen as online ethnography and seems to be first established by Kozinets in the mid-1990s (Kozinets, 1997). This research aims to explore the impacts of the websites of ryokan and e-WOM on their guests; therefore, netnography is regarded as the most appropriate research strategy in light of the research aim. Compared with other research strategies and data collection methods such as questionnaire surveys, personal interviews and focus groups, netnography is easier to control as other people are not involved in its data collection process. Netnography is also ideal in terms of the costs and time for the data collection. It also allows the researcher to collect/examine a large amount of data within a limited time and to interpret the contexts on eWOM which were developed by a number of guests of ryokan. Netnography, of course, has limitations as well as the advantages mentioned above. As netnography can be seen as a qualitative research strategy rather than a quantitative one, the common issues in the qualitative research such as the reliability and validity of the data and objectivity in the data analysis process should be listed as its limitations. The number of eWOM examined is increased as many as possible for the reliability and validity of the data. Moreover, the ryokan the researcher has stayed before are not selected to ensure objectivity. As discussed in (online marketing and websites in the tourism industry), the tourist experience can be made tangible by tourists via various online tools. The research conducted by Martin and Woodside (2011) is a good example of netnography research which adopts online travel blogs to interpret four tourists’ experiences in Tokyo.

Justification of choices: Japanese ryokan and eWOM examined in the research

Most Japanese ryokan have their websites, but the proportion of ryokan which have a section for eWOM is still relatively small. Moreover, only positive eWOM tends to appear even if such a section is set on the websites. Hence, the eWOM available at e-travel agents in Japan should be investigated, referring to the websites of chosen ryokan. There are a number of e-travel agents which have a section for eWOM about Japanese ryokan as part of their websites. Of these, Jalan and Rakuten Travel are most famous and widely used. They deal with online booking of all kinds of Japanese ryokan from the luxurious to the budget. Considering an extremely large number of eWOM available, three Japanese ryokan are selected for this research and they are the top three ryokan in terms of sales ranking via Jalan as of 25 January–22 February 2011 (See Table 1).

Table 1. The top three Japanese ryokan in terms of sales ranking via Jalan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Arima Royal Hotel</td>
<td>Hyogo</td>
<td><a href="http://www.arimaroyal-h.com/">http://www.arimaroyal-h.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Tokinoyu Setsugetsuka</td>
<td>Kanagawa</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hotespa.net/hotels/setsugetsuka/">http://www.hotespa.net/hotels/setsugetsuka/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Hamachidorinoyu Kaisyu</td>
<td>Wakayama</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hotespa.net/hotels/kaisyu/">http://www.hotespa.net/hotels/kaisyu/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Jalan, 2011b)
A wide variety of tangible online data are developed by the guests of ryokan, and all of them can be investigated in netnography research. Next the reasons why eWOM is selected as the data examined in the research are explained. Online blogs have been getting popular amongst Japanese people; however, it is difficult to find those focusing only on their travels. Moreover, most online travel blogs involve the information other than their expectation for and experience at ryokan. Furthermore there is no consistency how travel bloggers describe their expectation and experience. These points make the data collection and analysis difficult. Second, the social networking sites originating in the USA such as Facebook have not widely used in Japan. The largest social networking site in Japan is Mixi. Mixi requires people to register the site to be users and the researcher is not a user. Like online blogs, moreover, the site is not specifically to share users’ travel experiences. Hence, social networking sites are not appropriate as the data explored in the research. Compared to online blogs and social networking sites, eWOM available at the websites of Jalan and Rakuten Travel are made mainly to exchange and share the guests’ expectation for and experience at ryokan. In addition, eWOM available at their websites follows a specific format. That is why adopting eWOM as the data investigated would not cause any serious problems in the data collection and analysis. eWOM is also desirable in terms of anonymity since people can upload their eWOM with their username. For the above-mentioned reasons, eWOM available on the websites of Jalan (See Fig. 4) and Rakuten Travel (See Fig. 5) were chosen as the most appropriate data examined in the research. Japanese words which are equivalent to “website” and “eWOM” are used to identify the data related to this research. The analytical methods adopted are interpretation of eWOM and coding. The details are explained in Table 2.
Table 2. Analytical methods adopted: Interpretation of eWOM & coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source the guest looked at</th>
<th>Guest’s expectation &amp; experience mainly about</th>
<th>Relationship between the guest’s expectation &amp; experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 W</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 E</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations
W = Ryokan’s website
O = Overall & Service
E = eWOM on e-travel agents’ websites
R = Room
M = Meals
H = Hot-spring facilities
A = High expectation & High satisfaction level with their experience
B = High expectation & Low satisfaction level with their experience
C = Low expectation & High satisfaction level with their experience
D = Low expectation & Low satisfaction level with their experience

NB. 32 codes are developed by a combination of the above-mentioned three different elements. (E.g. WOA, EMA)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arima Royal Hotel (ARH)

As of 26 February 2011, ARH has 846 eWOM in total (635 on Jalan and 211 on Rakuten Travel).

B2C: From ARH’s website to their guests

ARH has their website (See Tab. 1) and three key aspects of ryokan identified in 1.3 are featured on the website. Of 846 eWOM, only one mentions that the ARH’s website was influential in the guests’ buying-decision-making process and developing their expectation for ARH. This does not match the argument by Gilbert, Powell-Perry and Widjioso (1999) and Miyazaki (2009) which emphasises the importance of the atmosphere and image the websites deliver. This is probably because, the eWOM examined in this research are not on the ARH’s website. This is common to the cases of other two ryokan examined in this research and this can also be seen as a limitation of the research. This only eWOM was identified as WOA & EOA (See Table2 for coding). This means that the guests had high expectation for their overall experience at ARH developed by the website and eWOM on the websites of the e-travel agents, and their experience met their expectation.

C2C: From eWOM about ARH to their guests

42 eWOM shows that eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites were influential in their buying-decision-making process and growing their expectation for ARH. Of
these, 19 were largely about the meals (EM) and 18 were mainly about overall experience (EO). Four eWOM is chiefly about the room (ER) and only one is primarily about the hot-spring facilities (EH). Of three key appealing points of ryokan, therefore, the meals are vital for ARH. Of 19 EM, 15 (78.9%) were identified as EMA and three were regarded as EMB. 18 EO are broken down into 11 EOA, six EOB and one EOC. This shows that the overall experience at ARH met or is beyond the guests’ expectation as the total number of EOA and EOC (12/18 = 66.7%) indicates. However, the result also implies that the overall experience of the guests often does not match their expectation, because seven out of 18 EO (38.9%) shows their overall experience was different from their expectation in a good (1 EOC) or bad (6 EOB) sense. Another point should be noted is that all four ER were regarded as ERB. This means that the guests’ high expectation for the room was not met by their experience at all. Its main cause seems to be guests’ subjective views toward “being old”: some may think the room is old, whilst others may feel the room is not old. In short, on the whole the guests’ experience on EO at ARH is somewhat different from their expectation in a negative sense, that on ER at ARH is totally different from their expectation also in a bad sense, and that on EM at ARH is somewhat different from their expectation in a negative sense.

**C2B: from guests to ARH**

Like most of other ryokan, the ARH’s website does not have a section for the C2B domain; hence eWOM on the website of the e-travel agents seems to be the only opportunity which allows guests to take such actions online. Two eWOM suggest that ARH should put more information about the access to ARH on their website as they feel ARH is difficult to access by car.

Tokinoyu Setsugetsuka (TS)

As of 26 February 2011, TS has 1,798 eWOM in total (1,021 on Jalan and 777 on Rakuten Travel).

**B2C: From TS’s website to their guests**

The three key aspects of ryokan are featured on TS’s website. Of 1,798 eWOM, five (2 WOA & EOA, 1 WOA, 1 WOC and 1 WRC) demonstrate that their decision and expectation were influenced by the TS’s website. This indicates that three had high expectation and one had low expectation for their overall experience at TS, but consequently all of them were happy with their experience. The other had low expectation for the room at TS; however, it was betrayed in a good sense. In short it can be said that the TS’s website did not developed too high expectation of guests which is impossible for TS to meet.

**C2C: From eWOM about TS to their guests**

89 eWOM demonstrates that eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites were important in their decision and growing their expectation for TS. Of these, 66 were EO followed by 13 EM, eight EH and two ER. Hence, the main expectation of the guests seems to be for the overall experience at TS rather than for any specific aspect of TS. 66 EO are broken down into 35 EOA, nine EOB, 18 EOC and four EOD. This result shows that on the whole the overall experience at TS met or beyond the guests’ expectation as the total number of EOA and EOC (53/66 = 80.3%) demonstrates. However, the result also means that the overall experience of the guests often does not fit their expectation, because 27 out of 66 EO (40.9%) shows their overall experience was different from their expectation in a positive (18 EOC) or negative (9 EOB)
sense. Two ER were one ERB and one ERC, and 13 EM include three EMB and seven EMC. In conclusion, on the whole the guests’ experience on EO at TS is somewhat different from their expectation in a good sense, that on ER at TS is totally different from their expectation in a positive or negative sense, and that on EM at TS is considerably different from their expectation in a good sense.

C2B: from guests to TS

The TS’s website has a section for the C2B domain; hence, the guests can make any comments about their experience or suggestion for the future through the website. The TS’s website shows both positive and negative comments and the TS’s replies are also available. As for eWOM, two eWOM suggest TS to put more detailed information about the meals.

Hamachidorinoyu Kaisyu (HK)

As of 26 February 2011, HK has 1,088 eWOM in total (611 on Jalan and 477 on Rakuten Travel).

B2C: From HK’s website to their guests

The HK’s website features the three key aspects of ryokan. Of 1,088 eWOM, seven (2 WOA & EOA, 1 WOC, 2 WRA, 2 WRB & ERB) consider the HK’s website in their decision and developing their expectation for HK. This shows that the overall experience at HK and the room were two main concerns for the guests who referred to the website. The overall experience they had at TK met or beyond their expectation, whilst their experience on the room was divided into two (2WRA and 2 WRB & ERB).

C2C: From eWOM about HK to their guests

54 eWOM evidence the impact of eWOM in the guests’ decision and growing their expectation for HK. Of these 54, 37 were EO followed by nine ER and eight EM. Like TS, therefore, the main expectation of the guests would be for the overall experience at HK rather than for any peculiar aspect of the HK. 37 EO are broken down into 20 EOA, three EOB, 12 EOC and two EOD. Like TS again, on the whole the overall experience at HK met or beyond the guests’ expectation as the total number of EO and EOC (32/37 = 86.5%) tells. On the whole, the guests’ overall experience at HK matches well their expectation to a certain extent as the total number of EOA and EOD shows (22/37 = 59.5%). As for EM, however, on the whole a certain level of the gap between the guests’ expectation and experience can be confirmed. Eight EM are broken down into two EMA, four EMC and two EMD and four EMC means that their expectation for the meals was betrayed in a good sense. On the other hand, on the whole the guests’ experience on ER met relatively well their expectation as the total number of ERA and ERD indicates (7/9 = 77.8%), though there are two ERB. In short, on the whole the guests’ experience on EO and EM at HK is somewhat different from their expectation in a positive sense, and that on ER at HK is somewhat different from their expectation in a negative sense.

C2B: from guests to HK

It is found that HK is managed by the company which runs TS. Hence, the HK’s website also has a section for the C2B domain and it enables the guests to make any comments about their experience or suggestion for the future through the website. Like the TS’s website, the HK’s website shows both good and bad comments on their website and also makes their replies available there. As for eWOM, two eWOM suggest HK to put
more detailed information about the access to HK and its hot-spring facilities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As most ryokan still do not have a section for eWOM, the research examined only the eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites. Interestingly, however, two out of three ryokan examined in the research has such a section and both are run by the same company. This might have caused a certain level of a bias in the results as only eWOM available at the e-travel agents’ websites were analysed. Hence, future research should choose ryokan whose websites have a section for eWOM and analyse eWOM at the websites of ryokan and e-travel agents.

Nonetheless, it could still be said that eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites would be more influential for the guests than the website of the ryokan as there is a large difference in the number of eWOM between that referring to the impact of the website of ryokan (E = 13) and that referring to eWOM at the e-travel agents’ websites (W = 185). In contrast, there is not a vast difference in the proportion of A & D and B & C (See Tab. 2) between W (A & D = 61.5%, B & C = 38.5%) and E (A & D = 58.4%, B & C = 41.6%). The proportion of B & C in E is slightly higher than that in W. This is probably because guests’ subjective views are reflected on eWOM. Various guests would evaluate the same ryokan, room, meals and hot-spring facilities differently. The innovative and useful aspect of eWOM is that it allows the guests to visualise their “real” voice and makes this information available for people all over the world. However, it is risky for guests to develop very high expectation only by reading eWOM as this nature is very subjective. In contrast, the information available at the website of ryokan is much more objective (e.g. photos of the room). Hence, how such information is perceived depends on each guest and this process would not be influenced by other guests’ subjective views. However, even such relatively objective information can be modified by the ryokan for the marketing purposes and it might look too good. Moreover, the guests cannot imagine well how their experience will be only from the website of ryokan. In conclusion, it is important for guests to obtain the information from eWOM on the e-travel agents’ websites as well as the website of ryokan.

Of O, R, M and H (See Table 2), the aspect of ryokan which shows the highest proportion of B & C is R (53.3%) followed by M (45.0%). This means that more than half of eWOM whose expectation for ryokan was mainly about the room was betrayed their expectation in a negative sense in most cases (7 ERB and 1 ERC). Hence the room can be seen as the most difficult aspect for guests to have an appropriate level of expectation. As discussed in the 4.3.2 and 4.3.3, the eWOM on the website of ryokan is a very useful function which can cover the C2B domain of online marketing and the website of ryokan as well as e-travel agents’ websites should have this section for guests and themselves.

REFERENCES


THE MODEL OF SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY PHILOSOPHY APPLICATION FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY IN CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This paper has presented the model of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application in the Thai tourism businesses in Chiang Mai. Business professionals interested in adopting the philosophy can now conveniently use the five ‘Sufficiency Economy’ business processes as guidelines in running their businesses without having to considerably interpret the actual philosophy. The practitioner-oriented literature review indicates that the understanding about the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the Thai tourism business sector has improved significantly over the years. However, a search of previous studies on Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Thailand indicates that little empirical research has ever been conducted in assessing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application of Thai tourism businesses. This research, therefore, investigates each of the key tourism sectors in Chiang Mai: 360 tour businesses, 360 guesthouses, 380 restaurants, 300 spa businesses and 360 car rent businesses in applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. The validity analysis of the instrument was through the expert group of professional members of Chiang Mai Tourism Business Association with 89.7% content validity index (CVI). The pilot test was implemented through the members of the association which are business entrepreneurs in the tourism industry in Chiang Mai. The overall reliability coefficient value was quite high (0.98). The reliability coefficient values were 0.87 for car rent samples, 0.85 for guesthouse samples, 0.82 for restaurant samples, 0.82 for spa business samples and 0.89 for tour business samples. Through the factor analysis by using principal components extraction with Varimax rotation, 155 variables were reduced into 25 variables with the high reliability coefficient value (0.98). The percent of variance is 59.6% and the KMO is 0.83 with the highest significance level (0.000). The reliability coefficient values of each five ‘Sufficiency Economy’ business processes were 0.71 for Moderation Factor, 0.78 for Reasonableness Factor, 0.81 for Self-Immunity Factor, 0.75 for Knowledge Factor and 0.88 for Morality Factor. For the 25-variable model of each key tourism sector, the reliability coefficient values were high in each factor (0.63 to 0.90). The findings will be of value to the tourism industry in being guidelines for applying the Sufficiency Economy Philsophy for business sustainability. Various recommendations are made to guide current and prospective tourism entrepreneurs, researchers, as well as tourism policymakers and education.

Keywords: Model, Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Application, Tourism Industry
INTRODUCTION

Sufficiency economy (SE) and sustainable business management

In the sustainability literature, there have been efforts around the world to find an approach to organizational sustainability (Avery, 2005). In Thailand, the philosophy of a 'Sufficiency Economy' was introduced by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej as a means toward more sustainable development to cope with critical challenges arising from changes occurring as a result of globalization (Avery, 2005), which appears to have empirical support from the broader literature. Thailand's 'Sufficiency Economy' philosophy stems from remarks made by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej throughout his 58 years on the throne (NESDB, 2004a). It stresses the 'middle' path as the overriding principle for Thai people's conduct and way of life at the individual, family, business and community levels. Within the philosophical framework, choice of balanced development strategies for the nation in line with the forces of globalization is allowed, with the need for adequate protection from internal and external shocks. In particular, after the Asian economic crisis in 1997 in which numerous business organizations in Thailand went bankrupt, His Majesty reiterated the philosophy as the way to recovery that would lead to a more resilient and sustainable economy (NESDB, 2004b).

Later empirical evidence in Thai business organizations, the tourism industry in particular (Kantabutra, 2005; Nuttavuthisit, 2005) also lends support to the anticipated result of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to sustain business performance. These studies, therefore, investigated some tourism sites, hospitality businesses and some souvenir businesses that have claimed applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and have been around successfully for over years, weathering economic ups and downs. The findings suggested that many business activities these businesses conducted are consistent with the three components and two underlying conditions of the Sufficiency Economy philosophy. Moreover, an additional study by Santiprabhob (2005) revealed that these businesses operated under a long-term perspective and valued their human resources. They also genuinely focused on a wide range of stakeholders, and embraced ethical, social and environmentally friendly practices. In comparison with the broader sustainability literature, these commonalities are consistent with recent findings from a major corporate sustainability study in the Western world by Avery (2005), which examined twenty-eight sustainable enterprises in Europe. Therefore, the Sufficiency Economy philosophy appears to have gained empirical support from the Western study by Avery (2005). Also Calkins (2006) demonstrates that there is no inherent contradiction between modern economics and the Sufficiency Economy philosophy; the two are fundamentally complementary. As a result, it can be expected that tourism organizations in the corporate world that use the Sufficiency Economy philosophy to guide their business activities will be able to sustain their business performance in the long run.

Research objectives

The purposes of this research are as follows:

1. To identify any factors, which influence the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application in the overall tourism industry and in each of the key tourism businesses of Chiang Mai, Thailand

2. To present a model of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application in the Thai tourism businesses in Chiang Mai, Thailand
The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy framework presented in the above Figure 1 comprises three components and two underlying conditions (Piboolsravut, 2004, p.129). First, Sufficiency entails three components: moderation, reasonableness, and requirement for a self-immunity system, i.e. the ability to cope with shocks from internal and external changes. Second, two underlying conditions necessary to achieve Sufficiency are knowledge and morality. For Sufficiency Economy it requires breadth and thoroughness in planning, carefulness in applying knowledge, and the implementation of those plans. At the same time, it is essential to strengthen the moral fibre so that everyone, particularly public officials, theorists and businessmen, adheres first and foremost to the principles of honesty and integrity. In addition, a balanced approach combining patience, perseverance, diligence, wisdom and prudence is indispensable to cope appropriately with critical challenges arising from extensive and rapid socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural changes occurring as a result of globalization. The Sufficiency Economy philosophy serves as a guide for the way of living/behaving for people of all levels, and is scalable with universal domain applicability, including business organizations (Piboolsravut, 2004).

Among the first reported studies of the Sufficiency Economy in business organizations, Puntasen, Premchuen and Keitdejpunya's study (2003) examined 296 Thai SMEs, from six groups of industries (food and beverage, clothing and leather products, wood, paper and printing, rubber and plastic, metals and non-metals, and machinery and transport equipments), which successfully went through the 1997 economic crisis, where their business practices were consistent with the seven components of sufficiency economy.
Sufficiency Economy business practices.

They concluded that all SMEs which successfully went through the crisis conducted their businesses according to the seven Sufficiency Economy business practices. They point out that, particularly in times of economic difficulty, these SMEs were able to well apply the seven practices. In their further study of two royally initiated projects, Puntasen et al. (2003) identified two additional business practices of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: (a) frugal use of resources with highest effectiveness and (b) employment creation (e.g. no unnecessary replacement of human labor by technology). Puntasen et al. (2003) recommended that future studies use all nine Sufficiency Economy business practices in their investigation. Although Puntasen et al.'s (2003) study lends support for the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that Sufficiency Economy SMEs had the ability to sustain their businesses during the economic crisis; it did not explore in great depth the process by which the SMEs applied the philosophy.

Later research sponsored by the Sufficiency Economy Movement sub-committee at the National Economic and Social Development Board examined three sustainable businesses in Thailand. Unlike Puntasen et al. (2003), these studies adopted the three components and two underlying conditions of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as their research framework to explore the process. Since the studies needed to understand the process, the case study approach to research was adopted. The two of the three business case studies are tourism businesses: Sa (the fibre of mulberry trees) products business (Kantabutra, 2005) and a jewelry business (Nuttavuthisit, 2005). They were chosen because they (a) have reasonably strong financial performance, (b) export their products overseas, thus being challenged by the force of globalization, (c) have successfully gone through the 1997 economic crisis, demonstrating their ability to deal with difficult economic and social difficulties and (d) can maintain a leadership position in their relevant market. Consistent with Puntasen et al (2003), the Sa paper products business adopted and/or invented its own technologies (e.g. color formula, water treatment system, recycle system), using local wisdoms (Kantabutra, 2005). It also managed its manufacturing capacity to ensure that the capacity was not beyond its ability to manage (i.e. no more purchase orders taken if the manufacturing capacity was limited), not aiming for short term gains. The business was also honest to a wide range of stakeholders and diversified its market and products. It did not loan at all, and emphasized a low risk management. Initially, it sold its products within the local communities and domestic market first. Then, it started to export its products internationally.

The jewelry business endured the 1997 economic crisis primarily because of its long-term relationship with trade partners and highly diversified products and market, (Nuttavuthisit, 2005). The jewelry business also heavily emphasized social contribution and was accountable for a wide range of stakeholders. It did not aim at maximizing profits, but normalizing profits. This demonstrates its long-term perspective. Given its emphasis on skills development, the jewelry business also significantly invested on developing its own human resources. Skilled workers were key factors to its highly innovative products. These findings endorse the studies of Puntasen et al., (2003) and Kantabutra (2005).

Later on, Santiprabhob (2005) identified common business practices between the Sa paper product business and the jewelry business. He found that both sustainable enterprises were “moderate” in taking purchase orders, making profits, making loan and expanding the businesses. Moreover, both enterprises thoroughly understood their businesses and competitive environment, including key success factors, and efficiently utilized
their resources. They diversified their markets and products to minimize risks, managed raw materials well, and promoted saving.

Supporting staff learning, both worked with other businesses to advance industry knowledge and standard, eventually developing their relevant markets. In terms of ethics and virtues, they invested in waste management, competed fairly, developed alliance to form a cluster, promoted morality within their organizations, and contributed socially.

In synthesizing the findings from the two case studies by Kantabutra (2005) and Nuttavuthisit (2005), the following commonalities are identified. All of these sustainable enterprises take a long term perspective to management. They are managed for long term, rather than short term, benefits. All two businesses are genuinely responsible for a wide range of stakeholders. They promote ethical business practices and genuinely and highly value their human resources. As a consequence, they are able to maintain their organization-specific knowledge, a key to compete in the market. Lastly, all two businesses nurture innovation throughout their organizations. These commonalities support the previous findings by Puntasen et al (2003), and are consistent with Kantabutra’s (2006) assertion.

From all the literature review that can be found, Chartrungruang (2009) explored ten (10) community-based tourism sites, two (2) resorts and five (5) souvenir businesses that have claimed applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and have been around successfully for over years, weathering economic ups and downs. This study adopted the three components and two underlying conditions of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as the research framework to explore the common processes of these tourism businesses in the literature review. It reviewed the practitioner-oriented literature on the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the Thai tourism business sector. Chartrungruang, (2010) also proposed a new assessment tool in Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application for tourism industry sustainability. The assessment tools can assess the relationship between the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application of Thai tourism businesses and their survival: the profits/losses, the sales revenues and the number of the customers. The present study will use the findings of Chartrungruang (2009) and the assessment tool as the base to present a model in Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application in the Thai tourism businesses in Chiang Mai, Thailand (Chartrungruang, 2010).

Why Chiang Mai, Thailand?

Chiang Mai is one of the most famous cities for tourism in Thailand. It is known for its friendly and serene people and the cultural events such as the Songkran festival, the traditional Thai New Year. Each year the city hosts about 3 million tourists and half of whom are international tourists. It is ranked third after Bangkok and Phuket in terms of visitation number. The tourism industries in Chiang Mai are highly competitive. Aggressive price competition has made Chiang Mai one of the best values for money destinations. Fierce competition has led the industry into a low price trap. Despite the competition, efficiency is estimated at 45 percent. This could be due to the short tourism season, approximately 4-5 months a year, and the fact that most operations are locally owned and operated, which involves substantially lagged time for learning by doing (Kaosa-ard, Kruafoo, and Unthong, 2005).

In the recent past years, Chiang Mai has faced the political turbulence and air pollution that has had a detrimental effect
on Chiang Mai’s tourism prospects. However, Chiang Mai can still survive as well as most of their tourism businesses (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011). Chartrungruang, B. (2010) has discovered the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the Thai tourism business sector in particular in Chiang Mai, Thailand. So Chiang Mai is appropriate for this study to investigate all the key factors of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that has influence on managing tourism businesses for the survival in the present.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this exploratory research is to present a model on the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the Thai tourism business sector in Chiang Mai, Thailand in particular. Using Chartrungruang (2010) assessment tool and convenience sampling method, data were gathered from 1,760 key tourism businesses in Chiang Mai: 360 car-rent entrepreneurs, 360 guesthouse entrepreneurs, 380 restaurant entrepreneurs, 218 souvenir business entrepreneurs, 300 spa and massage business entrepreneurs and 360 tour business entrepreneurs The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application assessment was done through a Likert-style five point scale (1 = never to 5 = all the times) with 31 items of moderation, 25 items of reasonableness, 43 items of requirement for a self-immunity system, 23 items of knowledge and 31 items of morality. The validity analysis of the instrument was through the expert group of professional members of Chiang Mai Tourism Business Association with 89.7% content validity index (CVI). The pilot test was implemented through the members of the association which are business entrepreneurs in the tourism industry in Chiang Mai. The overall reliability coefficient value was quite high (0.98). The overall and the individual factor reliability coefficient values were quite high (overall = 0.98, moderation = 0.88, reasonableness = 0.89, requirement for a self-immunity system = 0.94, knowledge = 0.92 and morality = 0.93). The reliability coefficient values were 0.87 for car rent samples, 0.85 for guesthouse samples, 0.82 for restaurant samples, 0.82 for spa business samples and 0.89 for tour business samples.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographical data

For the overall sample as shown in Table 1 below, most of the business owners are female (63.1%), married (54%) in the age group of 31-40 years (39.8%) holders of bachelor degree (54%). Their positions in the businesses are owners and executives (64.8%) which mean they manage their own businesses. The length of their businesses is 1-5 years (43.8%) and the business type is one-owner (71.6%) with 1-50 employees (89.8%). They have earned profits in the present (51.1%); however their sales revenues and the number of customers are less than last year (58.5% and 68.2%).

Data analysis of the sufficiency economy philosophy application assessment

Since there are 153 items in the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application assessment, the means and the modes of the 5 factors (three components and two underlying conditions) were used for the data analysis as follows:

The overall sample groups have applied the moderation, reasonableness, requirement for a self-immunity system and knowledge most of the times while they all the times have applied morality as shown in Table 2.
Data analysis of the sufficiency economy philosophy application model

The measurement instrument in this study that is the questionnaire with 155-item assessing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application is quite long, time-consuming and required 1,550 samples to be statistically creditable. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis is, therefore used to reduce some insignificant items in the 5 factors of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. As shown in Table 3 below, there are only 25 significant items left. The overall reliability Cronbach Alpha of the overall industry is 0.98 which is quite high. The overall reliability Cronbach Alphas of each of the key tourism businesses are also fairly high (0.82-0.89). This confirms the reliability of the model which has five factors.

Table 1. Demographic data of the overall sample group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Data</th>
<th>Overall (N =1,760)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>650 Males (36.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1110 Females (63.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>95 Married (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61 Single (34.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>700 samples with 31-40 (39.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>450 samples with 41-50 (25.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>410 samples with 21-30 (23.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>950 samples with Bachelor Degree (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>260 samples with Higher Diploma (14.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>220 samples with High School (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>1,140 Owners and Executives (64.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>320 Executives (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Business</td>
<td>771 samples with 1-5 years (43.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>620 samples with 6-10 years (35.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Type</td>
<td>1,260 samples with One-Owner Style (63.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>280 samples with Company Style (15.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>220 samples with Partnership Style (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Employees</td>
<td>1,580 samples with 1-50 (89.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profits</td>
<td>900 samples with Have Profits (51.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>860 samples with No Profits (48.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Revenues</td>
<td>730 samples with &gt; last year (41.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,030 samples with &lt; last year (58.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Customers</td>
<td>560 samples with &gt; last year (31.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,200 samples with &lt; last year (68.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remarks: This Table includes only the items that are higher than 10%.

Table 2. The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Application Assessment Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACTOR</th>
<th>MODE</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>moderation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonableness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requirement for a self-immunity system</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus, the tourism businesses in Chiang Mai give the priority to the requirement for a self-immunity system factor, followed by morality, reasonableness, knowledge and moderation respectively as presented in Table 3. The five factors comprise the following:

Factor 1: requirement for a self-immunity system reflects the ability to cope with shocks from internal and external changes. There are 4 variables: Value-added knowledge base revenue, Innovation in products, Plans for unexpected changes and Participation of shareholders. The factor loadings are fairly high (0.72-0.79).

Factor 2: morality has 5 variables: Perseverance in doing businesses, Sincerity with customers and investors, Honesty in doing businesses, Diligence in doing businesses successfully and Staff as family members. The factor loadings are fairly high (0.70-0.83).

Factor 3: reasonableness consists of 5 variables: Balance in business benefit sharing, Focus on both self and social interests, Know customers, markets, competitors and themselves, Short-term, medium-term and long-term benefits and Strategies consistent with the environment. The factor loadings are fairly high (0.61-0.71).

Factor 4: knowledge has 4 variables: Create staff quality-consciousness, Use knowledge for right consideration, Knowledgeable in their core businesses and Conservation and promotion of the local culture. The factor loadings are fairly high (0.55-0.75).

Factor 5: moderation consists of 7 variables: Hire only necessary staff, not over the production capacity, Expand as self capacity and environment, Fair pricing, fair profit sharing, Have business action steps and Moderate risk taking. The factor loadings are in the medium till fairly high (0.47-0.75).

Implications of the study

Implications for tourism businesses

Referring to the model above, the tourism businesses in Chiang Mai have not given importance on moderation since it becomes the last factor of the model. However, according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, moderation is the first high priority factor. So tourism businesses in Chiang Mai should put more emphasis on moderation.

For the tourism businesses in other cities that have similar settings they can apply the significant factors from the research for their business survival.

Implications for the concerned government agencies

1. The concerned government agencies should encourage firms to apply more the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, moderation in particular.

2. More training courses in applying Sufficiency Economy for tourism business entrepreneurs and managers should be conducted continuously, in particular about the significant factors from the research and moderation.

3. Some campaigns to promote the application of Sufficiency Economy in tourism businesses should be conducted, such as business tax reduction, giving the Award for the application of Sufficiency Economy in tourism businesses, government and local fee reduction in operating businesses or giving some privileges.

4. More research in the application of Sufficiency Economy in tourism businesses should be supported in order to update tourism businesses in applying
Sufficiency Economy in their businesses successfully.

**Implications for further research**

1. More research in the application of the philosophy is encouraged to further enhance the understanding of Sufficiency Economy in tourism businesses, in particular exploring the individual key business in the tourism industry.

2. To date most of case-study communities and firms where the Sufficiency Economy theory has been applied are descriptive in nature. While this is an essential first step, the statistical, econometric and optimization tools of standard Western economics should also be applied and quantitative studies in this field are in need, such as measuring the customer satisfaction levels and the number of repeated customers before and after applying Sufficiency Economy Philosophy or comparing the relationship between the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy application and the business survival from different provinces or countries.

3. More research in assessing the knowledge and understanding levels of tourism business entrepreneurs and managers in Sufficiency Economy are recommended.

4. The model in this study is quite new and was conducted only in Chiang Mai, so it cannot be generalized. Further research can study in other provinces in Thailand or in other countries in order to find the good-fit model of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Application for the sake of Thai and world tourism.

Hence, the right model will be the first stage in applying Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in the right way for tourism businesses.

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The Model of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Application for Tourism Industry in Chiang Mai, Thailand

B. Chartrungruang


APPENDIX A

Table 3. Factor Analysis of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Application in overall and each of the key Thai tourism businesses in Chiang Mai, Thailand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-immunity system</th>
<th>Factor Load</th>
<th>Morality Factor Load</th>
<th>Reasonableness Factor Load</th>
<th>Knowledge Factor Load</th>
<th>Moderation Factor Load</th>
<th>Overall Industry Reliability</th>
<th>Reliability of Tour Businesses</th>
<th>Reliability of Restaurants</th>
<th>Reliability of Car Rent Businesses</th>
<th>Reliability of Spa &amp;Massage Businesses</th>
<th>Reliability of Guesthouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value-added knowledge base revenue</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation in products</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans for unexpected changes</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of shareholders</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.75</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall reliability of the overall industry = 0.98, KMO = 0.83, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 59.6%
The overall reliability of the tour businesses = 0.89, KMO = 0.56, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 68.1%
The overall reliability of the restaurants = 0.82, KMO = 0.46, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 64.8%
The overall reliability of the car rent businesses = 0.87, KMO = 0.39, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 60.9%
The overall reliability of the spa&massage businesses = 0.82, KMO = 0.34, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 65.3%
The overall reliability of the guesthouses = 0.85, KMO = 0.56, Significance level = 0.000, Percent of Variance = 66.8%
BANGKOK CITIZENS ATTITUDE-BASED GUIDELINES OF BANGKOK METROPOLITAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore attitudes of Bangkok citizens towards current tourism development in Bangkok, Thailand and changes which would arise due to the development. This research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. Primary data were obtained by a questionnaire survey, conducted with 400 people concerning with tourism development in their respective communities and in-depth interviews of 30 Bangkok people.

Results of the study revealed that most informants were female, 21-30 years old, and single. Most of them were Buddhists, bachelor’s degree graduates, and business owners. Their monthly income was 5,001–20,000 baht. The ration of their domiciles in Bangkok and vicinity was approximate. Some of them had been living in Bangkok for 1-5 years. However, one-third of them had been living there for more than 15 years. Based on the interviews about impacts of tourism development, the following were found: 1) positive impacts on population and politics – there was participation between community and concerned government and private agencies; negative impacts on migration to Bangkok and its vicinity and inadequate budgets for the provision of knowledge about tourism to Bangkok citizens; 2) positive impacts on the ecology and environment – improvement of traffic signs, transportation system and infrastructure; negative impacts on water, air, noise pollution and garbage in the communities; 3) positive impacts on the economy – more opportunity and increase of income; negative impacts – high cost of living ;4) positive social and cultural impacts unity of people in the communities and arts and culture were interested; negative impacts – an increase of evil path and a decrease of ethics.

For the expectancy of changes which will arise due to tourism development in Bangkok, more than one-half of the informants (52.3%) perceived that tourism development had an effect on community participation more than ever. Besides, it would be in the form of job opportunity and community products. The government sector should improve the ecology system and tourism destination environment. Tourism industry helps generate income and expand businesses. Most of the informants (81.0%) living in tourism destinations had expected on social and cultural changes. Future tourism development
would make people in the communities be interested in arts and culture of their respective communities. More than one-half of the informants (70.1%) perceived that future tourism development would make people in the communities have unity. They also expected positive and negative changes on life and asset security.

With regards to a guideline for tourism development in Bangkok based on community participation, it was found in the forms of giving directions to foreign and Thai tourists; tourism destination suggestions; environmental conservation; keeping the city or tourism destination clean; keeping an eye on life security of tourists and everyone in their respective communities. For suggestions on tourism development and promotion in Bangkok in accordance with the 6As conceptual framework of tourism components and a guideline for communication development to create good attitude toward the participation in tourism development, it was found that newspaper, television, and internet were media most access to people. For a guideline for communication development to create coordination among various agencies, the following could be done: regular column on tourism in newspaper, free tourism copy, tourism magazine, tourism manual, brochure, leaflet, website on Bangkok tourism, big and clear advertisement board, advertisement on the radio, tourism documentary program, Bangkok tourism advertisement before the movie, and short movie promoting Bangkok tourism.

**Key words:** Attitudes of tourists, tourism development

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**INTRODUCTION**

The current tourism industry of Thailand plays important roles on the country’s economy. It helps generate revenue for the country for more than 100,000 million baht. Besides, it creates employment and distributes income and prospers to all regions. This includes infrastructure and convenient facilities. Moreover, tourism is an important tool employed for elevating quality of life of people in tourist destinations, developing society, conserving and rehabilitating culture and environment, as well as creating learning process. However, it also has negative impacts if there is inappropriate plan and development.

Current changes create challenges in Bangkok tourism development such as political instability in Bangkok, transportation growth, competitive tourism cities, etc. All of these have direct impacts on the growth of Bangkok tourism. Thus, Bangkok needs to be developed for an increase of competitive potential and it is found to be successful. Based on the survey concerning about tourist opinions throughout the world conducted by the Travel & Leisure magazine, findings shows that Bangkok has a decreased and increased rank as the best city in the world; from the third to the first in 2008, and ranked third in 2009, ranked first in 2010 as the best tourist place in Asia and the world. In fact, there are internal and external factors which are weak points or constraints in the tourism development. This includes the potential in the internal managerial administration of Bangkok. There is no agency directly responsible for tourism in the district level. There is political problems happened in Bangkok like rally demonstration. There is economic problem both inside and outside the country. There is stiff competition on tourism among tourism cities in which each adapts the strategies on tourism promotion in various forms. There is
change in tourist behaviors. There is severe regression of foreign tourist market. And, there is change in the world’s tourism condition. All of these are factors which Bangkok must take into consideration and analyze various environmental conditions concerning with its tourism development.

**Research objectives**

1. Explore attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development.
2. Explore changes that may occur due to the development of Bangkok tourism.

**Expected research outputs**

1. Attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development.
2. Attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the future Bangkok tourism development.
3. Bangkok obtained a guideline for tourism development at present and in the future.
4. Tourism entrepreneurs can improve their business to conform to the current Bangkok tourism development and for sustainable revenue earning.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Research tool and methodology**

This mixed method research (qualitative and quantitative) employed a set of questionnaires and structured interviews for data collection. This was administered with a sampled population who concern with tourism in Bangkok.

1. **Population and Sample group**

   1.1 Populations in this study were people and personnel with tourism in Bangkok.
   1.2 The sample size in this study were 400 people and 30 personnel concerning with tourism in Bangkok.

2. **Sampling technique**

   Purposive sampling was used for the preparation of questionnaire on attitudes of Bangkok citizens on current Bangkok tourism development and changes that may arise in future tourism development. Also, the purposive sampling was done with tourists visiting tourism destination of each district in Bangkok (50 districts of Bangkok). Besides, snowball sampling was also used for structured in-depth interviews.

3. **Tools used in this research**

   The researcher explores attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development and changes that may arise due to the development of Bangkok tourism. A set of 400 questionnaires and a list of questions were used for data collection administered with 400 Bangkok citizens and 30 personnel concerning with Bangkok tourism, respectively.

4. **Data collection**

   Primary and secondary data were collected as follows:
   1. Primary data – the questionnaire was used for data collection administered with Bangkok citizens concerning with tourism in Bangkok. They were obtained by purposive sampling, structured interviews as used with personnel concerning with tourism in Bangkok. They were obtained by snowball sampling.
   2. Secondary data – It were obtained from various agencies, related research and documents. This was aimed to explore attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development and changes that may arise in the future.
5. Data analysis

Obtained quantitative data were analyzed by using the SPSS for windows program. Data presentation was in the form of tables with explanation. The following were used for analyzing obtained data: Percentage – It was used for the explanation of personal data of tourists i.e., sex, age, marital status, religion, occupation, income, educational attainment, and domicile and Mean and standard deviation. For qualitative data analysis, content analysis technique was undertaken.

RESULTS

Results of this study were divided into 4 parts: 1) general information of the informants; 2) attitudes of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development; 3) changes which may arise in the future due to Bangkok tourism development; and 4) a guideline for Bangkok tourism development.

1. General information of the informants

Most of the informants were female, 21-30 years old, single, Buddhist, business owner, and bachelor’s degree graduates. Their monthly income was 5,001-20,000 baht. One-third of the informants had been living in Bangkok for 1-5 years.

2. Opinions of Bangkok citizens on the current Bangkok tourism development.

There were impacts on population, politics, ecology, environment, economy, society, and tradition.

2.1) Impacts on population and politics: Informants perceived that Bangkok tourism development had impacts on population and politics ($\bar{x} = 3.30$). The positive impact was participation among the communities and concerned government and private agencies. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Director of Tourism Division (Interviews: 2010) that “Bangkok tourism in the previous years had strengthened the cooperation among
people in the communities and agencies concerning with tourism”. For negative impacts, there was migration to the communities and inadequate budgets for the provision of knowledge on tourism of Bangkok citizens (Table 1).

2.2) Impacts on ecology and environment: Informants perceived that Bangkok tourism development had impacts on ecology and environment (\(x = 3.80\)). The positive impacts were the improvement of traffic signs, street, mass transportation, and infrastructure. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Head of Tourism Development section (Interviews: 2010) that “it is easy to access tourist destinations at present due to systematic transportation coping up with the expansion of tourism”. However, air, water, noise pollution and garbage are negative impacts.

2.3) Impacts on economy: Informants perceived that Bangkok tourism development had impacts on economy (\(x = 3.83\)). The following were positive impacts: employment, and increase of income, establishment of a small business, and tax collection. This conformed to an in-depth interviews with the head of Community Development and Social Welfare of Pon Prabsattree district (Interviews: 2010) that “Baan Bard community in a vivid example of an increase of income earned from tourism”. However, a high cost of living is a negative impact of Bangkok tourism development.

2.4) Impacts on society and culture: Informants perceived that Bangkok tourism development had impacts on their society and culture (\(x = 3.73\)). The followings were positive impacts: unity of people in the communities; people are more interested in their arts and culture; and they coordinated in the development of tourism. This conformed to an in-depth interview with deputy director of Talingchan district (interview: 2010) that “Klong Mayom floating market community is a clear example on cultural conservative tourism”. However, negative impacts are a decrease of ethics, an increase of evil path, and the youths leave school for earning a living. (Table 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Level of opinions</th>
<th>(\overline{x})</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Population and politics</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Tourism causes migration out of the community</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>0.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Tourism takes part in migration into the community</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>0.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 The communities take part in tourism development with concerned government and private agencies</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 The government sector allocates adequate budgets for tourism development</td>
<td>uncertain</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Adequate training for people in the communities on tourism development</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ecology and environment</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.849</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Tourism takes part in the improvement of transport system</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Tourism takes part in the improvement of streets</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Tourism takes part in an increase of a number of traffic signs</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Tourism takes part in the improvement of infrastructure</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Tourism causes an increase of air pollution in the communities</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Tourism causes an increase of noise pollution</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Tourism causes an increase of garbage</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Tourism takes part in the improvement of water environment</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Tourism takes part in an increase of employment within the cities</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Tourism takes part in an increase of income of people in the communities</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Tourism takes part in the community income earned from tourism activities tax</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Tax collected from tourism activities helps develop the communities</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Tourism takes part in the establishment of small business in the communities</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Tourism takes part in an increase of a high cost of living in the communities</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Society and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Tourism takes part in the promotion of arts and culture of the communities</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Tourism takes part in a decrease of ethics of people in the communities</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Tourism takes part in promoting unity and coordination of people in the communities</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Tourism takes part in an increase of crimes in the communities</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Tourism takes part in an increase of evil path</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Tourism causes an increase of drug problems in the communities</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Tourism causes and increase of prostitution</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Tourism takes part in the cause of youths to leave formal education to work</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Expectation of changes that may arise from Bangkok tourism development in the future

3.1 Changes of population and politics

Most people in tourism communities perceived that Bangkok tourism development in the future would have an effect on demographic change. That was, people outside the tourism communities would move to the tourism communities for job opportunity. However, tourism development does not tend to make people in the tourism community to move out. More than one-half of the informants (52.3%) perceived that tourism development could make community participation more than ever. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Director of Tourism Division (Interview: 2010) that “many communities in Bangkok coordinated in tourism activities such as Wat Saphan floating market and Talingchan floating market communities”.

However, less than one-half of the informants (47.7%) disagreed to it. (Table 2)

Table 2. Opinions on change of population and politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes of people and politics</th>
<th>Percentage of changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migration of people in the tourism communities</td>
<td>Yes 58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No  41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of people in the communities</td>
<td>Yes 52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No  47.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Designed for the study

The informants revealed the people participation in tourism development as follows: 1) cottage industry like handcrafts; 2) recreation activities during festivals; 3) rules and regulations formulation aiming at conserving the surrounding environment of tourist spots; and 4) keeping an eye for life security of tourists and community members.

Most informants perceived that the government sector should provide knowledge on tourism to the public for the preparation of tourism development in the future. This could be done in the forms of festival public relations, training, good hosts, environmental conservation, garbage disposal, local cultural conservation, knowledge on history of the communities, and foreign language training.

3.2 Changes of ecology and environment

Informants perceived that the government sector should rehabilitate the ecology system and environmental condition of tourism destinations. Besides, the transportation system should be improved. Some informants (27.5%) desired the government to improve streets, followed by public transportation (26.8%) information signs (25.4%). This conformed to an in-depth interview with the director of Culture, Sports, and Tourism office (Interview: 2010) that “the improvement and development of tourism focused on the improvement of infrastructure particularly on street improvement so that tourists could access tourist spots easily and conveniently”.

The informants suggested the followings: 1) improvement of services for convenience of clients; 2) improvement of car park; 3) provision of tour-guided buses and city map; and 4) improvement of
security for tourists such as laws and traffic discipline campaign. Most informants (86.8%) perceived that infrastructure should be improved. About one-fifth (26.8%) suggested that the internet system should be improved, followed by public telephone (24.9%) and electricity (24.2%) as shown in Table 3.

With regards to pollution in the communities, the informants perceived that it should be improved (93.5%). This was particularly on garbage disposal (30.6%), followed by air pollution (25.0%) and noise pollution (21.5%). Regardless of its negative impacts they perceived that the development of tourism would cause deterioration of the environment.

### Table 3. Opinions on changes of ecology and environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes of ecology and environment</th>
<th>No. of person</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to improve because it is still in a good condition</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for improvement</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- street</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- direction giving label</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- traffic light</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- public bus system</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- others e.g. heavy traffic and bus stop shelter</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to improve because it is still in a good condition</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for improvement</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- water work</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- electricity</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- public telephone</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- internet</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cell phone signal system</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollutions in the communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to improve because it is still in a good condition</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for improvement</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- air pollution</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- noise pollution</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- water pollution</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- garbage</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Designed for the study

3.3 Change of economy

Most of the informants (86.3%) had expected that future tourism development would be beneficial to their respective communities. Most of them (83.2%) believed that tourism development would help increase income of people in the tourism communities. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Tourism Plan Division Head (Interview: 2010) that “the expansion of economy in Bangkok had a great effect on an increase of income of people in tourism communities.” (Table 4)
Table 4. Opinions on economic change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of economy</th>
<th>No. of person</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment and business in tourism communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- An increase in employment and expansion in business</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A decrease in employment and business</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Likely to have no effect</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income and expenses of people in tourism communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have an effect on an increase of income</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have no effect on income</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have an effect on an increase of expenses</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have no effect on expenses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Designed for the study

3.4 Changes of society and culture

Most informants (81.0%) had expected changes of society and culture more than ever. Besides, 70.1 percent of them believed that tourism development would make unity of people in tourism communities. This conformed to in-depth interviews with the Director of Tourism Division (Interview: 2010) that “tourism is considered as a catalyst to create unity of people in tourism communities”. However, less than one-half of the informants (37.8%) believed that tourism development caused a decrease in life and asset security. About one-half of the informants (49.5%) perceived that tourism development would cause an increase in crime dens in tourism communities. (Table 5)

Table 5. Opinions on changes of society and culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change on society and culture</th>
<th>No. of person</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interested in arts and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Decrease</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity of people in tourism communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Decrease</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and asset security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Decrease</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have no effect</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence of crime dens in tourism communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Decrease</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Have no effect</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Designed for the study
3.5 Change of arts and culture

Tourism development in the future will make people in tourism communities interested in arts and culture more than ever. This is because they can give clear and correct information about their communities’ arts and culture. It also makes them proud of their arts and culture. However, some informants (19.0%) perceived that tourism development in the future would not make people in tourism communities proud of their communities’ arts and culture. It might be because they thought the more communities progress the more unity of people in the communities decreases, resulting in lack of interest in the communities’ arts and culture. It is observed that tourists are likely not interested in history but they are interested in other activities such as taking photographs of temples rather than its history. Some are interested in local life style or shopping. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Head of Community Development and Social Welfare Division, Bang Born district (Interview: 2010) that “most tourists visiting Bang Born were interested in local lifestyle because it was hard to find in Bangkok areas”.

3.6 Changes of unity

Most informants (70.1) believed that tourism development in the future would make people in tourism communities have unity more than ever. This is because they must work together for the development of their communities in terms of cleanliness, tidy, and beauty. It conformed to an in-depth interview with the Head of Community Development and Social welfare, Khlongsarmwa district. He stated that people in the community were active and aware of tourism in their community more than ever and grouped themselves for tourism activities. The tourism here focused on urban and rural activities as well as temples and mosques of Khlong Sarmwa community. This helped increase income for people in the community. Besides, less than one-half of the informants (29.9%) perceived that tourism development in the future would not make people have unity more than ever. They believed that tourism made people in tourism communities compete their business and conflict of interest would arise.

3.7 Changes of life and asset security

The informants had expected that changes of life and asset security would be both positive and negative. However, they believed that it would be more negative than negative. That was, tourism development would decrease life and asset security. Moreover, crime dens would be increased by outsiders. This conformed to an in-depth interview with the Head of Tourism Promotion division (Interview: 2010) that “there were a lot of people migrating to Bangkok, leading to an increase of social problems”.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings showed that Bangkok citizens desired that 1) tourism development planning must be responsive to needs and behaviors of tourists on the basis of Bangkok identity and local wisdoms 2) tourism services must have good quality and tourism communities must have least negative impacts 3) Bangkok identity and local wisdoms must be maintained. Most people concerning with tourism had been living in Bangkok for not more than 5 years. Thus, concerned communities and agencies should coordinate for finding local identity and wisdoms so as to be a guideline for participatory and sustainable tourism.
development. The data collected can provide guidelines for Bangkok Metropolitan tourism development within the 6As framework as follows;

Guidelines for Bangkok Metropolitan Tourism Development, Thailand, based on the attitudes of Bangkok citizens

Attractions
- Develop and promote tourist destinations in the communities by more public relations
- Hold activities of various festivals
- Maintain cleanliness and beauty of tourism destinations
- Instill traditions and cultures of the communities in the tourism communities to local people particularly youths
- Set standard of local products, services quality and price
- Establish community shops in tourism destinations to supply demands of visitors
- Find out uniqueness and authenticity of tourism products of the community

Accommodations
- Take care of lives and asset security of tourists when staying at the hotels and guesthouses
- Maintain cleanliness and good services in tourism-related accommodations
- Train hotel and guesthouse personnel on marketing and language capacity
- Provide effective tourism information service system
- Do public relations through various media and updating tourism website
- Improve cleanliness, quality, price, and standard of the community eatery on restaurant services as well as preparation of leaflet or website on standard eateries or restaurants
- Increase security system in shopping areas;
- Control price and quality of products in shopping areas
- Improve traffic system and car park in shopping areas
- Control strictly entertainment places; particularly on opening/closing times, customer age, security, drug suppression, and prostitution

Accessibilities
- Solve traffic problems
- Improve the quality of streets
- Increase a number of direction labels with clear information
- Provide adequate car parks with security system
- Improve footpaths;
- Provide standard of mass transportation to tourism destinations

Activities
- Hold activities during Thai traditional festivals
- Promote people participation in tourism activities

Amenities
- Promote internet system by adding Wi-Fi spots in public places
- Establish internet service centers in tourism destinations
- Improve the internet signal speed
- Increase a number of currency exchange booths, ATM and an increase of security system at ATM.
- Increase security system in shopping areas;
- Control price and quality of products in shopping areas
- Improve traffic system and car park in shopping areas
- Control strictly entertainment places; particularly on opening/closing times, customer age, security, drug suppression, and prostitution

Acceptance
- Encourage people, government and private agencies to accept tourism development by holding a meeting for all concerned parties to perceive problems and propose suggestion
- Inform the communities about the benefits of tourism development in Bangkok
REFERENCES


Interviews

Bangborn district (September 20, 2010)
Deputy Director of Taling Chan district (September 20, 2010)
Director of the Office of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (October 29, 2010)
Director of Tourism Division (October 5, 2010)
Head of Community Development and Social Welfares Division, Khlongsarmva district (September 21, 2010)
Head of Community Development and Social Welfares Division, Pomprabsattruphai district (September 20, 2010)
Head of Tourism Development Section (October 5, 2010); Head of Tourism Promotion, Section (October 5, 2010)
POSITIVE IMAGE STRATEGY TO ENHANCE PATTAYA CITY TOURISM THROUGH THE PERCEPTIONS OF CHINESE TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

The concept of destination image has gained much attention in related academic literature and has made a significant contribution to a greater understanding of tourist behavior (Beerli and Martin, 2004). Evidently, there has been a number of existing literatures on the study related to tourist destination image (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993; Baloglu and MacClearly, 1999; Pike, 2002; Beerli and Martin, 2004; White, 2004; Chen and Tsai, 2007; Govers, et al., 2007; Martin and Bosque, 2008; Dwivedi, 2008; Dwivedi et al., 2009). However, there are only a handful of studies that has been done on the relationship between the communication media and the formation of destination image as well as the influences of media channels on the perception and the decision-making of the tourists.

Consequently, it has become a primary aim of the present research to study the perceptions of the tourists towards the destination image. The ultimate goal is to critically evaluate the perception of the Chinese tourists towards the destination image of Pattaya City, Thailand. The research adopted a mixed-method approach. Self-administrative questionnaires were distributed to the Chinese tourists who travel to Pattaya City. In-depth interviews were carried out with a number of key informants such as the tour guides and representatives from both public and private sectors. A purposive sampling approach was utilized to recruit the key interviewees. The findings from the study highlighted that those Chinese tourists who are under different age groups and have different occupations tend to have different perceptions towards the holistic image of Pattaya City. In addition to this, it has been discovered that personal media and specialized media are likely to have an effect on the perceptions of the Chinese towards the holistic image of Pattaya City. Also, a holistic image of Pattaya City is found to have a strong influence on the travel decision of the Chinese tourists. Lastly, a strategy to enhance a positive image of Pattaya City will be proposed. This particular strategy is centered around the following; an attempt to promote the positive image of Pattaya City to a selected target market and quality tourists in particular; an effective communication channel that helps to create understandings among tourists (especially a group of Chinese tourists); a promotion of creative tourism activities among the Chinese tourists; suggested policies for the administration of tourism industry development in Pattaya City.

Key words: Destination image, perception, holistic image
INTRODUCTION

The image of Thailand tourism is regarded as the famous tourism destination of tourists across the world. In 2008, Thailand had the reputation for its prominence in tourism in various aspects (Future Brand, 2009). Besides, Thailand was awarded on tourism, for many times voted by American, European, and ASEAN tourists, This is because Thailand has a lot of tourism resources distributed all over the country; particularly Pattaya city, Chonburi province, which is one of the main tourism destinations.

Pattaya is the city for tourism industry generating big revenue for the country. However, the rapid growth of tourism in Pattaya has impacts on the city in various aspects. Related research revealed that one of the impacts on Pattaya city for a long time is the prostitution problem (Choomchuen, 2006). Besides, there is a problem on low quality tourists visiting Thailand in the form of zero-coin tour promotion where more than one-half of Chinese tourists visiting Pattaya by this tour are workforce.

With regard to these problems as mentioned, it leads to a negative image of Pattaya’s tourism industry (Noansrichai, 2005), although Pattaya has potential on tourism in an international level. Moreover, it has a lot of beautiful places worth visiting and therefore can attract moderate and high quality Chinese tourists to visit Pattaya.

Therefore, this study is aimed to find out why Chinese tourists perceive that Pattaya is the city of prostitution and lady boys. Results of the study can help find a strategy towards building a positive image for Pattaya tourism. It also increases an opportunity and market promotion channel for quality tourists to visit Pattaya, leading to sustainable tourism.

Literature review

Concept of tourism image

Image refers to a mental picture or idea created by man. It is created from various elements which can be seen and understood easily and it must be reliable (Boonstin, 1973). It can be said that an image shows people’s feeling towards someone or something passing through the process of data or information from various information sources with many repetition for a long time (Kotler et. al., 1993, Assael, 1984). Meanwhile, tourism image is like general images but the image of tourist spots are focused on identity or uniqueness. Embacher and Buttle (1989) define tourism image as personal or public understanding towards tourist spots. This conforms to those of Echtner and Ritchie (1991), Phelps (1986), Tapachi and Waryszak (2000) that it is the perception of tourist spots’ characteristics and impression that tourists expect to receive. An important component of tourism image is cognitive component which compressed the perception of an individual which is the basic characteristic that arises from the belief in a particular tourist spot (Mayo and Jarvis, 1981; Dobni and Zinkan, 1990). This conforms to that of Beerli and Martin (2004) who cited that cognitive component comprises five (5) factors concerning with tourist spots image as famous places for relaxation. Affective component, however, is an important component related to personal feeling towards something (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999; Gartner, 1993; Russel and Pratt, 1980; Stern and Krakover, 1993) and conveys the meaning through feeling or emotion. In other words, it is the feeling of an individual that is urged to have the feeling towards a particular tourist spot. This perception is regarded as a guideline making an individual create understanding to each other. It also has the influence on the behavior of an individual (Mayo and Jarvis, 1981; Dobni
and Zinkan, 1990). Meanwhile, overall image has a relationship with positive image, negative image, and the assessment of tourism products and tourist spots. For tourism context, it can be found that the cognitive component and feeling are directly important to tourism image (Baloglu and Mc Cleary, 1999; Stern and Krakover, 1993).

**Communication concept**

Communication can be understood as the process of message transfer from the message sender to the receiver through media or process (Everett and Floyd, 1971; p.11). Communication is the perception and interaction by means of verbal or non-verbal language with the message transfer environment, disturbance, and relationships between the message sender and the receiver (Tiyao, 1997). Thus, media may refer to as the communication channel connecting the message sender with the receiver through the message transfer from an individual or institute to the receiver. The term ‘media’ is widely used differently (Atchariyakul and Phitpreecha, 1992). Media is normally classified into three types: personal media, mass media, and specialized media (Satawethin, 1997).

**Concept about information perception**

The communication process of human beings has two components: the message sender and the receiver in which they are interrelated to each other. The communication will occur when the message sender send the message to the receiver. Thus, the message sender must communicate effectively so that the receiver can clearly understand the message (Satawethin, 1997). The selection of communication comprises selective exposure, selective attention, selective perception and interpretation, and selective retention (Klapper, 1960).

**Perception theory**

Perception is a process that ranges from the simplest to the most complex levels which is very difficult to understand. Thus, perception needs to be dependent on learning, thinking, and previous experiences (Therarak, 1994; Chan Em, 1997). This conforms to a study on tourist perception indication that experience in previous visit has much influence on tourist perception (Whythook and Thanakarn, 2006; Mishra, 2008) stating that perception is an occurring process and still exists for a long time. Perception consists of three steps as follows: 1) motivation—it is the initial stage of the perception; 2) awareness—this arises from the perception through hearing and seeing abilities; and 3) interpretation—it is an important stage since interpretation is a process concerning with decision-making of an individual.

**Concepts about the decision – making of consumers**

Decision–making arises from the motivation as a problem in the decision-making. Thus, it needs experience, perception, learning, and various information. After receiving the message, it must be analyzed and evaluated for its advantage and disadvantage points. Then, the alternative determination must be done by several methods for finding the desired expectation (Sommard, 1998). The decision–making process has the following steps: 1) problem recognition; 2) information search; 3) evaluation of alternatives; 4) purchase decision; and 5) post purchase behavior (Hyde, 2000). This conforms to an academician who revealed that the decision–making process normally consists of the following: 1) problem recognition; 2) information search; 3) evaluation of alternatives; 4) purchase decision; and 5) post purchase behavior (Morrison, 1989; Govindarajan, 2007).
METHODOLOGY

Population and sampling

Purposive sampling was used in this study where the sample groups comprised the following: 1) 400 mainland Chinese tourists (group tours); 2) tourist guides (Mandarin language); 3) government sectors: the director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand; vice-mayor of Pattaya city; governor of Tourism Authority of Thailand at Beijing; head of tourist police station; and Chonburi Tourism and Sports Organization; 4) private sector: tour business entrepreneurs offering the service to Chinese tourists; Pattaya Businessmen and Tourism Association (PBTA), and Hotels Club of Pattaya City. Research tools in this study include questionnaire and interview schedule. The former consists of: Part 1: Information perception of Chinese tourists visiting Pattaya (4 – rating scale). Part 2: The Chinese tourist recognition (yes/no answer, dichotomous). Part 3: Feeling of the Chinese tourists visiting Pattaya (rating Scale). Part 4: Image of Pattaya in the viewpoint of the Chinese tourists (4 – rating scale). Part 5: Decision – making of the Chinese tourists to visit Pattaya (rating scale). Part 6: Demographic characteristics of the Chinese tourists. The statistics used is divided into 3 levels: 1) the statistics for finding quality of the research tools - reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient or $\alpha$ - Coefficient). For discrimination power, the item – total correlation was used. It was found that the tool examining parts 1, 3-5 was consistent with the objectives. The reliability of part 1 is 0.88 with the discrimination power of 0.38 – 0.84. The reliability of part 3 is 0.76 with the discrimination power of 0.57 – 0.70. The reliability of part 4 is 0.87 with the discrimination power of 0.31 – 0.82. The reliability of part 5 is 0.85 with the discrimination power of 0.31 – 0.6; 2) basic statistics, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and standard deviation); and 3) statistics for hypothesis testing, inferential statistics, t-test, F-test (ANOVA), simple regression analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

The interview schedule comprised the following: the information perception on Pattaya tourism; Pattaya tourism image; situation of Pattaya tourism as perceived by Chinese tourists; problem of Pattaya tourism concerning with Chinese tourists; and development policy of Pattaya tourism concerning with Chinese tourists. Obtained data were analyzed using open coding analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).
RESULTS

Results of the quantitative analysis

Comparison of Pattaya city image based on demographic characteristics of Chinese tourists consisted of gender, age, occupation, education, and travel experience.

H1 Different demographic characteristics of Chinese tourists had an effect on different image perceptions

Gender

Different genders among Chinese tourists did not show different points of view on the other hand, both male and female tourists had the same perception in the holistic image of Pattaya City (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of holistic image of Pattaya city based on different gender of Chinese tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>$\bar{x}$</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A holistic image of</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>0.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pattaya city</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^* p<0.05$

Age, occupation, education, and travel experience

It was found that different ages and occupations of Chinese tourists had an effect on different image perceptions with a statistical significance level at 0.05, while the Chinese tourists that have different levels of education and different experiences in traveling to Pattaya City did not have the different points of view on Pattaya City image. Then the researcher used the Post Hoc Procedures as the following process with LSD method as shown in Tables 3 and 4, respectively.

Table 3 presents the Chinese tourists whose ages were higher than 55 years old who had different points of view on Pattaya City's holistic image from the Chinese tourists who were lower than 25 years old, ages between 36-45 years old and 46-55 years old. Also, the Chinese tourists whose ages were 46-55 years old also viewed the holistic image of Pattaya City different from 25-35 years old Chinese tourists including those whose ages were between 36-45 years old, they also have the different points of view from the younger tourists group.

Table 4 presents Chinese tourists who were housewives who perceived the image of Pattaya city different from those who were government officials or hired workers. Also, Chinese tourists who were hired workers perceived the image of Pattaya city different from those who were company staffs. Likewise, Chinese tourists who were government officials perceived the image of Pattaya city different from those who were company staffs.
Table 2. Comparison of holistic image of Pattaya city based on different ages, occupations, and travel experiences of Chinese tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>A holistic image of Pattaya city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Between group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Experience</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>0.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>0.055*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>0.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>0.457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05

Table 3. Pos Hoc Comparison on the holistic image of Pattaya city among different ages of Chinese tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>25-35 years</th>
<th>Under 25 years</th>
<th>36-45 years</th>
<th>46-55 years</th>
<th>Over 55 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>25-35 years</td>
<td>Under 25 years</td>
<td>36-45 years</td>
<td>46-55 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35 years</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>0.019*</td>
<td>0.047*</td>
<td>0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 25 years</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.467</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.014*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 years</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.762</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 years</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05

Descriptive statistic and correlation matrix for information perception on tourism through media and a holistic image of Pattaya city

H2 Information perception on tourism through media of Chinese tourists had an effect on the perception of Pattaya city

Results of multiple regression analysis

Table 5 presents the correlations between holistic image of Pattaya city and information perception on tourism through personal media and specialized media (r=0.34, p <0.05; r=0.35, p <0.05 respectively). Accordingly, this evidence suggests that there are intercorrelations.
among all of the variables. However, these correlations are less than 0.80 as recommended by Katz, (2006). As a result, the multicollinearity problems should not be concerned

Regarding information perception on tourism through media relating to multicollinearity, variance inflation factor (VIFs), in this case, the value of VIF ranged from 1.73 – 2.31, below the cut-off value of 10 (Pallant, 2005), meaning each variable was not correlated with each other. Therefore, there were no significant multicollinearity problems confronted (Table 6).

Table 4. Pos Hoc Comparison on the holistic image of Pattaya city among different occupations of Chinese tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Company staffs</th>
<th>Gov’t officials</th>
<th>Hired workers</th>
<th>Own business</th>
<th>Housewives</th>
<th>Retirees</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company staffs</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.03*</td>
<td>0.01*</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td>0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government official</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.974</td>
<td>0.044*</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hired workers</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.039*</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>0.529</td>
<td>0.758</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own businesses</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.301</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.758</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewives</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirees</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05

Table 5. Correlation Matrix for information perception on tourism through media and a holistic image of Pattaya city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>OVERALL</th>
<th>OP_1</th>
<th>OP_2</th>
<th>OP_3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
<td>0.34*</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.35*</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP_1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP_2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP_3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05,  ** p<0.01

Table 6. OLS Regression Results of Personal media Mass media specialized media and the holistic image of Pattaya city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A holistic image of Pattaya (Overall)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Media (OP_1)</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media (OP_2)</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized media (OP_3)</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<0.05,  ** p<0.01
Information perception on tourism through personal media of Chinese tourists had an effect on the perception of Pattaya city (= 0.09**, P<0.01) with the statistical significance level at 0.01. This is because personal media such as relatives, friends, agency staffs and tour leaders are able to motivate tourist to go along with and believe them.

Meanwhile, the perception of tourism information through specialized media of Chinese tourists had an effect on the perception of Pattaya image (= 0.09**, p<0.01) with a statistical significance level at 0.01. This may be because of specialized media such as internet guide, books, and leaflets can convey tourism information that tourists need.

Simple regression analysis of the holistic image of Pattaya city and factors which have effect on holistic decision making for travelling

Simple regression analysis aimed to investigate the effect of a holistic image of Pattaya city on the holistic decision making for traveling to Pattaya of Chinese tourists consisting of perception of needs information seeking alternative assessment and post travel assessment.

H3 A holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on the perception of needs for visiting Pattaya by Chinese tourists.

H4 A holistic image of Pattaya had an effect on information seeking of Chinese tourists.

H5 A holistic image of Pattaya city affects the alternative assessment of Chinese tourists.

H6 A holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on post travel assessment of Chinese tourists.

Results of simple regression analysis

Holistic decision making for travelling

Table 7 presents a holistic image of Pattaya city having an effect on the holistic decision making for traveling to Pattaya of Chinese tourists with the statistical significance level at 0.01. Likewise, the holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on the perception of needs for visiting Pattaya of Chinese tourists, on information seeking of Chinese tourists, affecting the alternative assessment of Chinese tourists and on post travel assessment of Chinese tourists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7. Summary of simple regression analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A holistic image of Pattaya city (Overall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$
Results of the qualitative analysis

1) With regards to the information perception about Pattaya tourism as viewed by Chinese tourists, it was found that tour company personnel played important roles in the public relations about Pattaya tourism. Likewise, relatives and companions played this role in the form of word-of-mouth which could be well remembered. Also, television was another channel of information dissemination since it was an easy access to Chinese people. They also perceived tourism information through internet which is popular among teenagers and people of working age.

2) Chinese tourists had two prominent and different points of view about Pattaya tourism: the sea and entertainment places/Pattaya night life.

3) The current Pattaya tourism situation concerned with Chinese tourism is better than before for continual visits. However, it was observed that well to do Chinese had opportunities to visit Europe and America. Besides, Chinese tourists are very sensitive to the political situations in Thailand.

4) The problems of Pattaya tourism were found as follows: 1) tour promotion – Chinese tourists were forced to purchase off-tour programs otherwise they would be threatened in various forms; 2) obscene shows – most of the entertainment places at night had obscene shows; 3) Jet ski – some jet ski entrepreneurs always overcharged the service; 4) taking advantage of tourists – there were two main cases: 1) tourist guides take advantage of tourists and 2) entrepreneurs take advantage of tourists; 5) illegal tourist guides – these people destroy the positive image of Thailand and Pattaya tourism because they often cheat tourists and give wrong information; 6) low quality products – there were two forms which happened to Chinese tourists: 1) tourist guides took them to purchase it and 2) other people took them to purchase it; in this case, Chinese tourists disobeyed warning.; 7) Chinese tourists will cancel – this happened when tourist guides could not sell options or Chinese tourists did not purchase products; 8) political situations in Thailand—such as Suvarnabhumi airport was closed and the Royal Cliff hotel was encroached.

5) Development policy of Pattaya tourism. The following were concluded: 1) personnel development—it is essential that tourist guide be developed on knowledge skills for clear and correct explanation; 2) it is important to place the importance of quality tourists and find new tourist spots to meet the various touring behaviors of Chinese tourists; 3) area management—focusing on the importance of zoning and controlling of obscene shows; and 4) laws—legislation should be stricter.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

1. Comparison of Pattaya city image based on demographic characteristics of Chinese tourists. The following were found: 1) Different ages of Chinese tourists had an effect on different image perceptions with a statistical significance level at 0.05 meaning that, the older Chinese tourists perceived the image of Pattaya city different from those of other ages. They perceived that Pattaya was the city for relaxation and they were interested in Thai culture. This conformed to an interview with the fifth interviewee (2011: interview) that the older Chinese group emphasized on relaxation and were interested in Nongnuch garden, especially elephant shows there. 2) Different occupations had an effect on different image perceptions with a statistical significance
level at 0.05. This was due to the perception of tourism information and the surrounding environment of their occupation. This conformed to a study of Boontaeng (2003) which stated that Chinese tourists having different occupations tended to have different perceptions of the image of Thai tourism. It was also found that those Chinese tourists who were housewives perceived the image of Pattaya city different from those who were government officials or hired workers.

Chinese housewives perceived Pattaya as a city of low cost of living and suited for shopping since goods were inexpensive which also conformed to a study of Choibamroong (2011) stating that Chinese tourists were interested in diverse forms of tourism and they had a big budget for expenses (1/3 of the total tour budget) – This was in the same direction with the research project on Chinese tourist market of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, (2005). It revealed that most Chinese people spent much money on purchasing when travelling as a time for relaxation.

2. Information perception on tourism through personal media of Chinese tourists had an effect on the perception of Pattaya city (0.09**, P<0.01) with the statistical significance level at 0.01. This is because personal media was able to motivate tourists to go along with and believe him. This conformed to a study of Satawethin (1997) that personal media could directly send his message that he wanted to disseminate to the receiver. Likewise, the third interviewee (2011: interview) revealed that the first stage of the perception of tourism information was to inquire the tour company that gave the service. It also conformed to the opinions of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) that interpersonal communication had an effect on the message receiver to change his attitudes and was willing to coordinate in various activities. Meanwhile, the perception of tourism information through specialized media of Chinese tourists had an effect on the perception of Pattaya image (= 0.09**, p<0.01) with a statistical significance level at 0.01. This might be because specialized media can communicate tourism information that meets tourists’ needs. This conformed to the opinions of Wannaprasert (1999) who revealed that specialized media was produced to have a specific content and it mainly aimed to convey information to a specific target group. Also, this conformed to an interview with the second, eighth, and fourteenth interviewees (2011: interview) that the first stage of information reception by Chinese tourists was only through internet.

It also conformed to a study of Sukrri (2007) that foreign tourists mostly perceived information about Samui tourism through internet. Besides, a study of McCartney, Butler and Bennett (2008) indicated that the integrated communication strategy could create a clear perception of tourism image. It was also found that specialized media like travel program, internet, and Macau manual had highest influences.

3. A holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on the perception of Chinese tourists’ needs for visiting Pattaya with the statistical significance level at 0.01. Since Pattaya’s image attracted Chinese tourists to visit island and beaches, to watch lady boys’ shows, and to use services of night light entertainments. This conformed to an interview with the seventh interviewee (2011: interview) that the prominent images of Pattaya were beach, night life, and entertainment show. Likewise, the first interviewee stated that pubs attracted tourists to visit because they were colorful. The study of Thongprada (2005) on tour behaviors of eastern European tourists showed that they mostly visited Pattaya to see the beauty of Pattaya beaches. Moreover, the holistic image of Pattaya had an effect on information seeking of Chinese tourists with the statistical significance level at 0.01 because the holistic image of
Pattaya is interesting and can attract Chinese tourists who look for information about Pattaya through commercial information sources, people, and public information on travelling sources. Theepaparn (2006) cited that information seeking means information finding and collecting as a basis for decision-making. Information sources obtained by Chinese tourists were diverse as the second and ninth interviewees (2011: interview) revealed that most tourists received information from local media produced for advertisement or public relations and internet. Gover, Go and Kumar (2005), Baloglu (2000) concluded that tourism promotion did not have importance beyond the tourist perception. The real importance was on various tourism information sources influencing the creation of tourism image. The holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on the alternative assessment of Chinese tourists with the statistical significance level at 0.01 because the prominence of the holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on their decision-making to visit Pattaya. Thus, the Chinese tourists decided to visit Pattaya due to the following: 1) appropriate distance to visit; 2) good relationships between China and Thailand; and 3) reasonable travel budget. This conformed to a study of Utmachan (2005) that important factors attracting Chinese people to visit Thailand were: 1) good relationships between the two countries from the past up to the present and 2) low cost of living. Likewise, a study of Sungkhakorn (2008) revealed that Chinese people having a chance to travel abroad for the first time preferred to visit Thailand because it was inexpensive which also conformed to a study of Charnsoongnern (2007) indicating that the Chinese currency was stronger when compared to Thai currency and this was one factor that Chinese people decided to visit Thailand.

The holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on post travel assessment of Chinese tourists with the statistical significance level at 0.01 which was due to the effect of holistic image of Pattaya on tourist satisfaction with the tour session, word-of-mouth, and revisiting Pattaya. A study of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2005) indicated that during 1998-2004 Chinese tourists were contented to visit Thailand and there was a tendency that they would return to Thailand again at an increased rate. A study of Thongprada (2005) revealed that more than one-half of Eastern Europe tourists visiting Pattaya decided to return to Pattaya. Bosque and Martin (2009) had conducted a study on satisfaction of tourists: awareness and consciousness components and found that expectation created positive image and eventually had an effect on satisfaction. Meanwhile, Choi, Thachenko and Sil (2010) who had conducted a study on the tourism image of Korea as viewed by Russian tourists found that those who perceived Korea positively had a tendency to recommend Korea to others.

4. Most tourism problems in Pattaya concerned with Chinese tourists are social problems such as zero-coin tour promotion, obscene shows, being exploited, etc. that conformed to an interview with the fifth and eighth interviewees (2011: interview). They stated that main causes of the problems arose from tour dumping and resulted to getting low quality clients. They added that current tourism market seemed to be non-systematic. Lastly, the second interviewee (2011: interview) stated that all night shows were sex-oriented.

Conclusions

With regards to the comparison of holistic image of Pattaya city which found that Chinese tourists on different age groups perceived the holistic image of
Pattaya city in different ways was at the statistical significance level of 0.05 which meant that the older age perceived Pattaya as a city for relaxation and they were interested in Thai culture. Also, Chinese tourists with different occupations perceived the holistic image of Pattaya city in different ways was at the statistical significance level of 0.05 which meant that Chinese tourists as housewives perceived the holistic image of Pattaya city differently from those of the government officials or hired workers since the former perceived Pattaya as an inexpensive city suited for shopping.

The perception of tourism information through personal media and specialized media had an effect on the Chinese tourists’ perception of the holistic image of Pattaya city because personal media can motivate tourists to get along with and believe in the received information. Likewise, specialized media can send tourism information that meets tourists’ needs. Lastly, the holistic image of Pattaya city had an effect on the perception of needs of Chinese tourists visiting Pattaya because the image of Pattaya can attract Chinese tourists to visit its island beaches, lady boy’s shows, and nightlife. Also, the holistic image of Pattaya had an effect on the information seeking of Chinese tourists because the holistic image of Pattaya is interesting and can attract Chinese tourists to seek for information from commercial information source, personal source, and public source. Moreover, the holistic image of Pattaya also had an effect on the assessment of alternatives of Chinese tourists or on the decision-making to assess the alternatives. They decided to visit Pattaya because of its appropriate distance, good relationships between China and Thailand, and reasonable travel budget. Lastly, the holistic image of Pattaya also had an effect on the post visit assessment of Chinese tourists because the holistic image of Pattaya had an effect on satisfaction with visiting Pattaya, word-of-mouth, and re-visiting Pattaya. However, most problems encountered involved social problems concerning with the Chinese market system like the zero-coin tour promotion, obscene shows, and social exploitations.

RECOMMENDATION

These suggestions are based on the authors’ views which can be useful for further study.

1. Strategies to promote the target markets

   1.1 Tourism Authority of Thailand should promote to the young Chinese tourists and working group, ages from 18 to 54 and more about gay tourism promotion.

   1.2 Tourism Authority of Thailand should promote to the market of Chinese housewives which has the higher consumption behavior than other occupations. Meanwhile Tourism Authority of Thailand should expand the FIT market which tends to increase accordingly.

2. Tourism Communication Strategy

   2.1 Tourism Authority of Thailand should distribute and share the tourism information of Pattaya City in positive ways such as tradition, culture and hospitality through specialized media which is internet by emphasizing to promote via online, social networking websites and popular tourism websites among Chinese people.

   2.2 Tour guides should suggest and present various activities in Pattaya City and mention or point out the culture and hospitality of Thai people issues to create the positive image of Pattaya City affecting the Chinese tourists’ perception which can lead to attracting their relatives and friends in the future.

3. Strategies to create understanding for tourists

   3.1 Tourism Authority of Thailand should also cooperate with the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs, National Tourism Administration (CNTA). Tourism entrepreneurs of China should promote to Chinese tourists providing information about tours, itineraries and prices on traveling.

3.2 General Tour Guides (Chinese Language) should inform and emphasize the itinerary clearly for Chinese tourists before starting the tour by offering and presenting correct information about Tourism in Pattaya City forthrightly.

4. Strategies to promote tourism activities (joining work of Tourism Authority of Thailand in Pattaya City and private corporations in the area)

4.1 Should promote tourism activities that indicate the amiable life style through display such as showing cultural dances and musical shows of each different region

4.2 Should promote other activities such as elephants’ show and learning elephants’ life as a package.

4.3 Promote Gay Tourism trends in creative way, celebrations by homosexual groups; Pattaya is the destination of many tourists’ love sex explicit.

5. Governance strategies for tourism in Pattaya City

5.1 Government should improve laws and regulations to suit tourism development.

5.2 Pattaya City and relevant agencies both public and private corporations should integrate their work together in organizing tourist areas or zoning, and control the dangerous and immoral activities.

5.3 Pattaya City should launch a complaint receiving box and service centre for Chinese tourists, especially for common troubles which always happen to tourists.

5.4 Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports should provide regulatory agency to control those souvenir shops which sell high priced products and with inferior quality.

5.5 Department of Tourism by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports must be strict in giving the permits or tourist guide license (Chinese language) to screen people who have knowledge, good skills and good ethics.

5.6 Pattaya City tourist police should work seriously and straightforwardly on inspecting tour guides that work regularly.

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MULTI PARTIED PARTICIPATION TOURISM MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR HAE PHA KHUEN THAT FESTIVAL NAKHON SI TAMMARAT PROVINCE, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to: 1) investigate the background of Hae Pha Khuen That festival; 2) investigate and compare the needs for participation in Hae Pha Khuen That festival by various party groups; and 3) create multi partied participation model for Hae Pha Khuen That festival in Nakon Si Thammarat Province. This combination study comprised quantitative research by using a set of questionnaires and qualitative research in the form of participatory action research. Focus group and individual interview was also conducted. Populations in this study were 375 representatives of stakeholders in Hae Pha Khuen That festival. Obtained data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program and coding analysis.

Results of the study revealed that Hae Pha Khuen That was a festival which Nakorn Sri Tammarat citizens had been practicing from generations to generations for more than 780 years. This festival was held twice a year, on Makhabucha and Wisakhabucha days at Pra Mahathat Worawiharn temple. Background of Hae Pha Khuen That festival could be divided into 5 eras based on characteristics of holding the festival: the primary chapter of Hae Phra Bot Khuen That festival (1230-1757); 2) the golden era of Hae Phra Bot Khuen That festival (1757-1930); 3) the post-political change era (1930-1987); 4) the rehabilitation of Hae Pha Khuen That festival era (1987-2010); and 5) the wonder of the international cloth (2010-present). It was found that most of the informants were males, 41-50 years old, bachelor’s degree graduates, and government personnel. Their monthly income ranged from 10,001 to 20,000 baht. They had a low level of needs for the participation in Hae Pha Khuen That festival (\( \bar{x} = 2.46 \)) in terms of Plan (\( \bar{x} = 2.32 \)), Check (\( \bar{x} = 2.29 \)), Action (\( \bar{x} = 2.23 \)), and Do (\( \bar{x} = 3.03 \), a high level). The multi partied participation model for Hae Pha Khuen That model was: genuine participation-in the form of coordination among various party groups assigned to play roles they were responsible for (delegated power) and they were designated to be committee members. Procedure of the management formed informal sub-group meeting held in various places based on their convenience and same line relationships of party members which resulted in easy coordination. Parties participating in Hae Pha Khuen That had the rights and authority in management, but had no freedom in changing any part of the structural system.

Key words: Hae Pha Khuen That festival, multi parties, needs for participation, management participation model
INTRODUCTION

Participation is regarded as the initial stage of making the community to have enthusiasm to have self-reliance and ability to manage their own tourism management problems on. Participation is an important tool that makes most people in all regions have the opportunity to take part in the management of their local culture and tradition. The 1997 constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (Section 46, 78, 289, and 290) promoted local communities to have the rights to rehabilitate tradition, local wisdoms arts and culture both in the local and national levels. Besides, they were encouraged to take part in management, maintenance, and sustainable management of the natural resources and environment.

However, previous researches related to tourism development found that people and various parties had a low level of participation due to many factors. Wangphaichit, et. al. (2004) had conducted a study on the structure of tourism industry in Thailand which showed that the management by the government sector lacked participation of various parties. People were dominated and grouped as a tool for the development operation of the government sector, (Jaima, et. al., 2007). In tourist spot development, conflicts among various groups arose before launching cultural tourist spots, (Xie P. F, 2001). This reflected a main problem in tourism where the government and private sectors still lacked unity in tourism management, (Wisitchotetiangkul and Phutthaphan, 2007).

Hae Pha Khuen That is an important festival in Southern Thailand where the people have relationships regarding their beliefs and faith, leading to the development of cultural tourism management. In fact, this kind of tourism is the historical and cultural learning of a particular area or community. There is story telling about the development of a society and man through history concerned with culture, body of knowledge and social value forming. This well reflects livelihood of people in each era.

This research gives the importance of a multi partied participation model for Hae Pha Khuen That festival and the formation of coordination mechanism among various parties and it also aimed to propose the model of participation formation for local people and multi parties in cultural tourism management.

Objectives of the study

This study had the following goals:

1. To explore the history and background of Hae Pha Khuen That festival;
2. To explore and compare the needs for participation in holding Hae Pha Khuen That festival by various party groups; and
3. To construct the multi partied participation management model for Hae Pha Khuen That festival.

Scope and limitation of the study

1. Area scope – Nakorn Sri Thammarat province or the only province where the festival is held.
2. Content scope – history and background of Hae Pha Khuen That festival; participation needs of various party groups in planning, operation, monitoring and evaluating and improvement of the festival
METHODOLOGY

Using probability sampling, simple random sampling methods, stratified sampling, a set of 375 questionnaires was used for data collection. The questionnaire comprised two parts. Part 1: general information of the informants (checklist) and Part 2: needs for participation in Hae Pha Khuen That of various party groups (4 scale rating). Obtained data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences program. Percentage and mean were used for statistical treatment. Focus group interview was conducted to obtain qualitative data. In-depth interview and snowball random sampling were also conducted and obtained 27 informants. Also, coding analysis was employed.

RESULTS

History and background of Hae Pha Khuen That festival.

Hae Pha Khuen That festival had been practiced for more than 780 years. This festival was held twice a year, on Makhabucha and Wisakhabucha days. The history and background of the festival could be divided into five eras as follows:

1. The primary chapter of Hae Phra Bot Khuen That (1230-1757)

In 1230, about 100 Buddhist people from Intharapat town made a trip to Sri Lanka to pay homage to the foot print of the Lord Buddha. On the way to Sri Lanka, the ship was wrecked due to strong winds and the people on the ship landed at the seashore of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. Surprisingly, the wave pushed a piece of cloth having a written story about Buddhism called “Phra Bot” to Pak Phanang beach. The villagers there had kept the cloth and gave it to the King Sri Thammasokraj and he ordered someone to clean the cloth but the story on the cloth did not wear away. Then, the King had someone to bring the cloth to wrap around the Borrommathat pagoda for the Intharapat survivors to admire. Soon after that, there was a royal task of Nakhon Sri Thammarat rulers of all eras to hold a procession for wrapping the Phra Bot around the pagoda.

2. The golden era of Hae Phra Bot Khuen That festival (1757-1932)

In the era of King Rama II, there was the Hae Phra Khuen That procession holding on Wisakahabucha day. This day was the birthday, enlightenment, and eternal death anniversary of Lord Buddha. This was held once a year. King Rama IV later on initiated having the procession of Phra Bot Khuen That again on Makhabucha day also in the occasion of 1,250 Buddhist monks gathering together. Finally, the Hae Phra Bot Khuen That was held twice year since the era of King Rama V up to the present. During the festival, people joining the festival brought food, dessert, and customer goods with a small flag on it as a sacrifice offering. Furthermore, people from neighboring towns also joined the festival and played joyful music with dancing procession.

3. The post-political change era (1932-1987)

After the political changes in 1987 (from absolute monarchy to democracy), the Hae Phra Bot Khuen That was absolutely abolished. During this age, people in Nakhon Sri Thammarat and neighboring towns prepares Phra Bot with white, yellow, or red cloth to celebrate the festival any time based on their convenience. Unfortunately, there was no play like before. Eventually, the term “Phra Bot” was deleted in the festival and became “Hae Phra Khuen That” festival.

In 1987, the government sector promoted and supported tourism entrepreneurs and educational institutions to encourage people to produce Phra Bot cloth in various forms for the formal procession of Hae Phra Khuen That festival. There were processions of villages, communities, districts, schools, companies, shops, and government officials in the same time of the day. Most of the Phra Bot cloths were long and colored yellow, red, and white. During the whole day silent procession, people held Phra Bot cloth while walking the long road to the pagoda.

5. The wonder on international cloth (2010-Present)

In 2010, the Hae Phra Khuen That festival committee members perceived that this festival was an activity which could be elevated to be faith tourism. This was aimed to promote Phra Borrommathat pagoda to be one sanctuary in the world. In fact, Nakhon Sri Thammarat province is one of the four destinations of Buddhism pilgrims around the Bengal rim: During this era, Phra Bot was designed to be a long rectangle cloth, Tung cloth, and bar flag. Its colours are white, yellow or red. Picture drawing technique, dyeing, printing, and painting together with Dhamma poem are applied to the batik cloth, cotton cloth, plastic and vinyl. The Pha Bot cloth was celebrated for seven days and nights when a lot of Buddhists from 12 countries join the festival.

A study on comparison of needs for the participation in Hae Pha Khuen That festival of various party groups

Findings showed that most of the 375 representatives of stakeholders were males (77.30%), 41-50 years old (43.20%) and followed by 51-60 years old (30.70%), bachelor’s degree graduates (34.70%). Only 1.01 was diploma holders. Majority had a monthly income of 10,001-20,000 baht (41.30%), followed by less than 10,001 baht (25.10%). They were government personnel, ordinary people, educational personnel, religious personnel, and private employees (36.00, 29.60, 18.90, 11.50, and 4.00 percentages, respectively). They had a low level of participation in the festival (\(\bar{x}=2.46\)) in terms of the following: Plan (\(\bar{x}=2.32\)), Check (\(\bar{x}=2.29\)), Action (\(\bar{x}=2.23\)), and Do (\(\bar{x}=3.03\)). Comparing the difference of an average mean score of needs for the participation based on the 4 aspects, the following were found:

**Plan**

Most of the stakeholders had a low level of needs for the participation in planning (\(\bar{x}=2.32\)). Most of them had a low level of needs for the participation in the budget allocation (\(\bar{x}=1.77\)); determination of rules and regulations (\(\bar{x}=2.23\)), determination of the festival place (\(\bar{x}=2.3\)), and brain storming (\(\bar{x}=2.35\)). With regards to party classification, the government sector had a low level of needs for the participation in planning but the education and private sectors were found at a high level. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Besides, there was the difference between the religion sector and the government, education, private, ordinary people sectors.

**Do**

Most of the stakeholders had a high level of needs for the participation (\(\bar{x}=3.03\)). It was found that most of them had a high level of need for the participation in local culture rehabilitation and conservation (\(\bar{x}=3.29\)); knowledge extension about Hae Phra Khuen That
festival \((\tilde{x}=3.07)\); participation in the activities about the festival \((\tilde{x}=3.06)\); and workforce sacrifice for the festival \((\tilde{x}=3.02)\). The following sectors had a high level of needs for the participation: private, government, religion, education, and ordinary people.

**Check**

Most of the stakeholders had a high level of needs for the participation in monitoring and evaluating \((\tilde{x}=2.29)\). Most of them had a lowest level of needs for the participation in the monitoring of budget allocation \((\tilde{x}=2.27)\) and conclusion of the festival fair, monitoring and evaluating \((\tilde{x}=2.30)\). It was also found that the religion, ordinary people, and government sectors had a low level of needs for participation in monitoring and evaluating. The private and education sectors had a high level for the participation. It was found that the difference of parties had the difference in needs for the participation in monitoring and evaluating.

**Action**

Most of the stakeholders had a low level of needs for the participation in the improvement \((\tilde{x}=2.23)\). It was found that most of them wanted to participate in the improvement of: Phra Thamamtessana Patimoke and Dhamma proclamation \((\tilde{x}=1.89)\); raw materials and equipment for Khao Mathupayard stirring ceremony \((\tilde{x}=2.02)\); production, celebration, and Pha Phra Bot procession \((\tilde{x}=2.18)\); and local culture performance \((\tilde{x}=2.22)\). There was a statistically significant difference in needs for the participation in the improvement among the party groups. That was, the private sector had a high level of needs for the participation whereas the rest was found at a low level.

**Table 1.** An average mean score of the level of need for the participation in the Hae Phra Khuen That festival holding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs for the participation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Multi partied participation model for Hae Phar Khuen That festival in Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province**

Community participation creates the process that people are able to express their needs for the direction and determination of the management on the basis of everyone as culture owner. Needs interaction of various party groups causes changes in the management process, leading to the determination of participation form which can be practiced in the actual situations.

The coordination model was investigated for 2 periods: period 1 – investigation of the improvement and period 2 – genuine participation, cooperation level, delegated power, and dialogue. The research process consisted of the following 5 steps:
1. Data review stage

Nakhon Sri Thammarat was chosen to be locale of the study because it is the only place that holds the Hae Phra Khuen That festival at Phra Mahathat Worawihan temple in Thailand. Public relations involved inviting government and private sectors, tourism entrepreneurs, educational institutions, monks, and local people to take part in the festival based on their capability.

“I am competent in holding activities based on common concept to elevate the level of Muang Nakhon Makhabucha fair.” (Silver Bakery and Foods Managing director 2011: interview).

“The Buddhism ceremony particularly on the Wiean Tien activity is the task of monks which has been practiced under the supervision of the temple. (The abbot of Na Phra That temple, 2011: interview).

2. Problem determination stage

There were many steps and details on the planning of Hae Pha Khuen That festival. Thus, Loardmare of Nakhon Sri Thamarat Municipality had designated counselor committee to be responsible for giving suggestions and assistance to committee of various sections. They were responsible for providing convenience and solutions to problems for committee of various sections. Operation committee was responsible for activities promoting Buddhism but did not clearly understand the problem issue on participation as cited:

“The weak point of the festival operation is that few people participate in the operation” (Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011: interview).

“There are a lot of concerned agencies in the preparation of Hae Pha Khuen That festival but there is little coordination and few people truly work.” (Abbot of Phra Borrommahathat temple, 2011: interview).

3. Research planning stage

Hae Phra Khuen That festival is held twice a year, the first one is held on Makhabucha day. The committee for the festival holding was designated to be responsible for the smooth organization of the festival cited as follows:

“The coordination of major agencies helps understand objectives and style of the festival. This contributes to convenient, rapid and clear preparation of the festival.” (A teacher of Wat Maheyong Municipality School, 2011: interview).

“The operational style is to send a letter of invitation for a meeting on the explanation of plans, forms of the fair and activities. Then, determine roles and responsibilities for each temple of each day.” (Monk head of Ronphiboon-Cha Oat district, 2011: interview).

4. Examining and improving stage

This stage was conducted after finishing the Hae Phra Khuen That festival fair on Makhabucha day. This was only dependent on problem data of all party groups. Although there were a lot of committee members for the preparation of the fair, only few truly devoted their private time to their duties. Thus, there was a plan for the improvement in the second stage for examining the success in the festival holding. If not, the fair operation must be improved for more efficiency.

“The government sector will designate a committee for the festival fair operation. This comprises the committee for the preparation of the fair – responsible for the provision of components for Khao Ya Khu stirring; committee for place preparation; committee for Buddhist ceremonies; and committee for personnel...
recruitment in which the provincial administrative organization allocates some fund.” (Monk head of Phraphrom district, 2011: interview)

5. Conclusion of results of the study stage

There was assessment of multi partied participation model for Hae Pha Khuen That festival on their level of agreement or disagreement. They gave data and showed opinions like the following:

“The guerrilla battle, its operational style though without commanding center is successful. Likewise, the preparation of Hae Phra Khuen That festival / fair need not to have the commanding center. Few people work for the fair based on their assigned tasks. There were meetings at various places based on their convenience such as in a local coffee shop. They used telephone for the appointment of time and place.” (Rector of Nakhon Sri Thammarat Rajabhat University, 2011: interview).

“I agree with various party cores coordinating in the form of networks and using personal relationships. If colleagues are close, considerate, and working in the same line, working will be easy and convenient.” (Grand Park Hotel Managing director, 2011: interview).

It could be concluded that multi partied participation in Hae Pha Khuen That festival is based on their knowledge and capacity. There were designation of festival committee and invitation letter for a meeting, explanation of fair style. In this case, the fair was successful because all concerned parties showed responsibility for their tasks. However, there was one problem, that was, there were a lot of committee members but few were truly did their duties. All concerned parties held a meeting for discussing problems encountered and then they adapted the form of participation for improvement. Then, they used it for the activities on the Buddhism promotion week in the Wisakhabucha day. Genuine participation was at a level of cooperation by various concerned parties in the form of delegated power, that was, there were the designation of committee member, sequences of management and informal sub-meeting in various places. This was dependent on convenience and close relationships.

DISCUSSION

The study on multi partied participation tourism management model for Hae Phra Khuen That festival in Nakhon Sri Thammarat province, Thailand was both quantitative and qualitative research focusing on participatory action research. Various issues discussed are as follows:

Tradition is on the basis of beliefs, values, and faiths of people in the community. Hae Phra Khuen That is the cultural heritage. Various concerned party participation is on knowledge and experience exchange on traditional fair. Participation is an indicator of group survival because it creates a sense of belonging, bonding, need for working, and group covenant (Hutanuwat and Hutanuwat, 2003)

Structural participation would not occur at the initial stage of the project or during the planning stage. However, it would occur after having already made a decision (Michelle, 2008). Participation was considered as people participation in development activities (Cohen and Uphoff, 1977). Tourism is an activity concerned with many groups of people. The community should learn and understand whom, what, and how are the concerns with tourism. This is for the determination of cooperation and participation creation in an appropriate time (The project for life and nature tourism,
The development will be sustainable only if all stages of development are done continually in the management process; particularly on community participation (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Job opportunity in local community results in the community when people realize the conservation of their tourist spots.

The operational and stage process as well as key persons have changed - from local people to the government agencies grouping themselves based on their knowledge and capacity. Thus, community power concerns with empowerment or potential of an individual (Wright and Nelson, 1995). The establishment of a new local member group is the strength enhancement for the existing local member group (Pretty, 1995: pp. 4-5). The task operation is divided among government agencies and there is no working center unlike in the past.

Therefore, it is essential that the government sectors provide opportunity for all stakeholders as the resource owners. This can be done by discussing, and analyzing problem condition. Besides, they must be ready to create cooperation without being dependent only on the government sector like in the past. Importantly, in the creation of multi-partied cooperation, people in the community must reflect their needs as well as problems for the government sector. This will lead to the strength enhancement of the community focusing on “man is the center for development,” resulting in long-term cultural tourism. Thus, it is regarded that the participation model is suited to the community context and various party participation creates clear social networks at present.

It could be stated that the success of the festival fair can elevate as the fair for international level. It is also placing the importance of Buddhism tourism and systematic educational tourism, or the elevation of the standard of Pha Phra Bot cloth production, celebration procession and international Pha Phra Bot exhibition. Faith tourism is popular among tourists who want to learn lifestyle and beauty different from other nations. (Angkul, et al., 2010). To make Hae Phra Khuen That festival be interesting attractive, and impressive, it needs to adjust the style activities, ceremony and other details to be great and amazing.

All of this can achieve the set goals. The provision of an opportunity to local communities to participate in the traditional fair can truly create an awareness of sense of belonging. Besides, the development on the basis of community participation is the empowerment of the community (Sarobol, et. al., 2003).

The variety of people working together creates rich knowledge skills which are derived from different experiences. It is the cooperation mechanism among various concerned parties that cause great reinforcement. The relationships from the operation of agencies of each party were found to work better because of acquaintance and same work line. Cooperation becomes easier and more convenient. Besides, social relationships create common networks and sub-networks, part of relationships of the common networks (Barnes, 1968).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it confirmed an appropriate participation model of Hae Phra Khuen That traditional fair. It is a truly participation model at the level of cooperation. It is the process where various party groups elevate the fair to the international level in the form of delegated power. Decision-making is based on informal discussions. Thus, various party groups participated in the
festival fair had the fights and authority on the festival fair operation. However, they did not have freedom in making changes on any structural system.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The following are suggested:

1. **Plan**

   The committee should hold a meeting for brainstorming among counselor committee and operation committee. Provision of presenting opinion should be provided to all committee members for the creation of covenant of all committee members in the determination of rules and regulation, activity places, guideline for the traditional fair holding responsive to needs of the communities.

2. **Do**

   The committee should promote and support various party groups to conserve and rehabilitate local culture more because stakeholders take part in the dissemination of knowledge about Hae Phra Khuen That tradition, as well as in the activities, workforce sacrifice, and asset donation.

3. **Check**

   The committee takes charge of the accounting on debit and credit. Thus, they should present income and expenses to the counselor committee and operation committee in a meeting. All committee members can inquire about their doubts or questions for accurate accounting.

4. **Action**

   The committee should hold a meeting for brainstorming and improvement of the local tradition performance. All local people are owners of local resources and stakeholders of tourism.

**Suggestions for further study**

1. This study investigates only multi partied participation in Hae Phra Khuen That festival fair in Nakhon Sri Thammarat province. Further study should cover all four main components of tourism: area, management, activities and process, and participation.

2. Further study should explore potential on the fair holding because there are a lot of tourists visiting the fair. This will help results of the study be beneficial in the planning, practice, monitoring, and improvement of the fair.

3. Further study should explore the issue on income distribution of the Hae Phra Khuen That festival fair. This can directly affect the local communities on welcoming tourists who prefer faith tourism.

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The Determinants of Inbound Tourism in Thailand: A Gravity Model Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is widely recognized for its important role in generating income and employment for regional and national economic development. The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of political incidents on inbound tourism in Thailand. The analysis is based on the gravity model and a quarterly dataset of inbound tourism from 46 countries over the decade 1999-2009. The empirical results reveal that political crises including violent riots, a closure of Suvarnabhumi Airport and the invasion on the East Asia Summit negatively affected the inbound tourism in Thailand. This paper also examines the influence of variables such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which represent the living standard of countries and also foreign exchange rates which represent the purchasing power of their income. This study finds that the length and degree of political crisis significantly affected the number of inbound tourists.

Key words: Gravity model, inbound tourism, Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

Many countries perceived tourism as one of the most important sectors for their economic and social development. This is due to its role as a source of foreign exchange earnings and employment generation. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) 2010 satellite study, Thailand’s travel and tourism industry is expected to generate about 14% to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) or approximately 1,300 billion Baht and create almost 10.4% of total employment or 4 million jobs.

Furthermore, the study also forecasted that Thailand tourism industry contribution to GDP would rise to 17.8% and for employment would increase to 14.1% by 2020. With the growth of tourism industry, this would bring economic benefit to other related industries such as retail, entertainment and transportation. Besides, tourism industry also helps to enhance and promote the cultural values and natural sceneries of Thailand. From the following fact, tourism industry can be claimed as an important sector of the Thai economy.
The number of inbound tourism arrivals has a direct effect on the tourism industry. Thus, it is necessary to identify the key factors that influence the number of inbound tourism, in order to effectively understand the changes of tourism behavior. However, the factors that affect the number of inbound tourism are diverse, ranging from financial crisis, international conflicts, outbreak of virus to national disturbance.

Over the past decade, Thai economy had faced with various crises and incidents such as bird flu, tsunami, political instability, oil crisis, the southern violence, the declaration of state emergency, the closure of airport and the outbreak of H1N1. Thus, it is no surprise that the effect of those incidents on the tourism industry always become a subject for headline discussion. Some critics perceived those occurrences as a short term incident and might cause a minor damage to tourism but, for many, those incidents have brought down the reputation of Thailand tourism and tourist’s confidence in the long-run. Hence, understanding the effect of such incident on tourism is essential for strategic planning for tourism industry to both private and public sectors.

Since, it would help to avoid wasting resources or losing investments due to improper planning or capital expenditures. In summary, an understanding of the factors that determine inbound tourism and the analysis of such incidents are critical for government and industry alike.

The incidents that occurred in Thailand can be divided into two categories; 1) natural disasters, such as tsunamis, and epidemic and 2) man-made disasters, such as political turmoil. There are several studies that have investigated the impact of natural disasters on tourism and found that natural disasters do significantly affect the tourism industry (Chu, 2008; Huang & Min, 2002; Lim & McAleer, 2005; Okumus, Altinay, & Arasli, 2005; Pizam & Fleischner, 2002; Prideaux & Witt, 2000). The impact of a major disaster is immense that the production value of the tourism industry can fall dramatically; however, the industry has always managed to resume or exceed its former production values within a period of just one or two years. For man-made disaster, several studies found evidences supporting that human rights violations, conflict, and politically motivated violent events negatively affect tourist arrivals as well (Neumayer, 2004; Sonmez & Graefe, 1998; Sonmez, 1998).

This study focuses on examining the man-made disaster, which is the political instability in Thailand from 1999-2009. During the past decade, Thailand tourism industry experienced several political crises. However the major political movements started to take place in 2006 when the People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD) which is led by Sondhi Limthongkul, gathered hundreds of protestors at the government house to protest against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Since then the political environment in Thailand began to change and turned to be crisis.

To analyze the impact of each political incident, it is necessary to classify the incidents. Thus, the study has determined the political incidents into two categories; 1) political incidents that involve violence which cause injury and death to the citizens and 2) political incidents that involve takeover of public and government premise. By categorizing the degree of political incidents, this could help to distinguish and analyze its effect on the behavior of inbound tourism in Thailand.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature of macroeconomic variables and crisis events toward tourism industry, while Section 3 provides details on methodology, model
specification, and the aforementioned data. Section 4 provides the discussion of the empirical results. Finally, Section 5 provides a summary and concluding remark.

**Literature review**

One of the important objectives of tourism industry study is to improve the understanding of traveler behavior towards a particular destination. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate what factors determine traveler decision. The interaction between tourism and macroeconomic variables has been discussed in the several studies. Lee (1995) studied the significant influence of income, relative prices, and exchange rates on tourists visiting South Korea. Vanegas and Croes (2000) examined data from 1975 to 1996, and also found that income was an important factor that influenced US tourists visiting Aruba.

Lim and McAleer (2001) summarized data for three macroeconomic variables, income, price, and exchange rate, and used the cointegration method to examine the long-term interaction of tourists from Hong Kong and Singapore visiting Taiwan. Besides, diplomatic variable as embassies and consulates also have impact on tourism. Gil-Pareja, Llorca-Vivero and Martinez-Serrano (2007) examined the effect of embassies and consulates on tourist flows and the result indicated that embassies and consulates have a positive and significant effect on tourism.

Wang (2009) mentioned that many studies investigating tourist demand frequently used explanatory variables as income, prices, exchange rates, transportation costs, and some dummy variables. Among these, income is the most statistically significant variable, followed by prices, exchange rates, and currencies. Dummy variables are used to explain the influence of special events on tourism demand.

Moreover, there are also much of literatures that investigated the impact of man-made crisis incidents on tourism. Neumayer (2004) used a fixed-effects panel estimator and a dynamic generalized method to test the impact of various form of political violence on tourism. Both models showed strong evidence that human right violations, conflict, and other political violent events negatively affect tourist arrivals. Sonmez and Greadfe (1998) explored the relationships of international travel experience, international travel attitude, risk perception level with the decision-making process. The result revealed that international attitude, risk perception and income directly influence international vacation destination choice.

Huang and Min (2002) examined the impact of the 21st September 1999 earthquake in Taiwan, and found that the recovery period exceeded 11 months, with restricted growth of inbound tourist arrival. Chu (2008) used the Asian financial crisis and the September 11 attacks as examples of economic and political blows, and analyzed the accuracy of using a fractionally integrated ARMA model to predict tourism and make comparisons. Bhattarai & Conway and Shrestha (2005) found that political turmoil (Maoist War) and September 11 incidents have a strong impact on tourism in Nepal.

In general, most of the studies found that tourists often avoid sites of terrorism and seek places with stable political situations that ensure their safety. This implied that such political crises which occur at the destination country had affected on the tourists’ decision and number of international tourist arrival. To provide a deep insight into this complex environment, it is necessary to perform more studies on how tourism organizations respond to and cope with crises.
Therefore, this paper intends to analyze the relationship of international tourist arrivals in Thailand with macroeconomic variables like income, exchange rate, distance, population and political crises using a modified Gravity model. This is done to provide relevant information that may serve as a reference for management and strategic planning by the international tourism industry to cope with crises more effectively.

METHODOLOGY

The Gravity Model

In this paper, we will estimate the effect of political incidents on international tourist arrival using the gravity method with a panel dataset of 46 countries (see the country list from Appendix A: Table A1) over the past decade (1999-2009).

The gravity model has a long and successful history in predicting bilateral trade flows (Gil-Pareja et al., 2007). The initial attempt to apply a ‘gravity model’, widely used in physics, to international trade was done by Isard (1954). Then the model was further developed by Tibergen (1962) and Poyhonen (1963). In its basic form, the amount of trade between two countries is assumed to be increasing in their size, as measured by their national incomes and decreasing in the cost of transport between them as measured by distance (Khadaroo & Seetanah, 2008). Frankel et al. (1996) has given three reasons for the success of the gravity model as follows: i) the success in predicting bilateral trade flows, ii) the improvement of modern trade theories and iii) the expansion of economists interests in adopting countries or regions as a physical entity in the study on international trade.

With such theoretical and empirical support, the gravity model has been used for many research topics and purposes. An example of an empirical application of the gravity model includes the international immigration study of Karemera et al. (2000). The model has also been used to test or measure the effects of specific factors in international trade, such as technology, infrastructure, spatial factor, and so on (e.g., Eaton and Kortum 1997; Bougheas et al. 1999; Porojan 2001). Many attempts have been made to indentify the impact of economic sanctions or discriminatory trade arrangements in international trade through the gravity model (e.g., Oguledo and Mac-Phee 1994; Wall 1999; Yang et al. 2004). In addition, a subject associated with economic or political union trends worldwide has also been a prevalent topic among international economists using the gravity model (e.g., Bikker 1992; Endoh 1999; Byers et al. 2000).

The simplest specification of the gravity equation takes the following form:

\[ F_{ij} = b [(M_i)^b (M_j)^b / (D_{ij})^b] u_{ij} \]

Where \( F_{ij} \) is the flow from origin i to destination j, \( M_i \) and \( M_j \) are the relevant economic sizes of the two locations, \( D_{ij} \) is distance between them and \( u_{ij} \) is a log-normally distributed error term. If \( F \) is measured as a monetary flow (such as trade) then \( M \) is usually the Gross Domestic Product (Gil-Pareja et al., 2007). Rodrigue (2004) used the Tinbergen Gravity Model for the purpose of estimating tourism demand. A slight adjustment has been made by converting the variables proposed by Tinbergen (1962) to suit the tourism related variables. The tourism demand estimation modified by Rodrigue’s are as follows:

\[ T_{Di} = k (M_i M_j) / d_{ij}^2 \]

Where \( T_{Di} \) is the total tourist arrival from country i and visiting destination country.
j, k is constant, Mi is measured as a factor to generate movement of international tourism, Mj is measured as a factor to effect movement of international tourism and dij is the distance between the origin country and destination.

Model specification

This paper adopts the panel data regression approach based on Gravity model, testing the number of international tourist arrivals (inbound tourism) in Thailand with respect to macroeconomics variables and political crisis dummies. The data analysis combining cross-sectional and time series data enable us to estimate the different effects of interested variables. The corresponding econometric model is written as follows:

\[ \text{IBT}_{itq} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{QGDPC}_{itq} + \beta_2 \text{POP}_{itq} + \beta_3 \text{DIS} + \beta_4 \text{USD}_{itq} + \beta_5 \text{EMB} + \beta_6 \text{MOB}_{itq} + \beta_7 \text{V-event}_{itq} + \beta_8 \text{T-event}_{itq} + \beta_9 \text{Army}_{itq} + \beta_10 \text{Coup}_{itq} + \epsilon_{itq} \]

The specification is log linear and the capital letters denote that the variables are in natural logarithm; IBT\textsubscript{itq} represents inbound tourism from country (i) at a quarter (q) of a given year (t), QGDPC\textsubscript{itq} is the value of GDP per capita country (i) at a quarter (q) of a given year (t) in US dollar, POP\textsubscript{itq} is the population size of origin country (i) at a quarter (q) of a given year (t), DIS is the distance of country (i) to Thailand, measured in mile, USD\textsubscript{itq} is the average quarterly exchange rate of US dollar adjusted with origin country currency in quarter (q) of given year (t), EMB is the number of year that origin country established diplomatic relationship with Thailand, MOB\textsubscript{itq} is dummy variable measured political demonstration that occurred in Thailand in a quarter (q) of given year (t), V-event\textsubscript{itq} is dummy variable measured the occurrence of political violence that occurred in Thailand in a quarter (q) of given year (t), T-event\textsubscript{itq} is dummy variable measured occurrence of demonstrator takeover public and government premises or office, that occurred in Thailand in a quarter (q) of given year (t), Army\textsubscript{itq} is dummy variable measured if army have to control the crisis in a quarter (q) of given year (t), also represents when the government declare the state of emergency and Coup\textsubscript{itq} is dummy variable measured if there was coup d’état in a quarter (q) of given year (t).

The following analyzed in this paper is the number of tourists arriving to Thailand from country i. In the case of tourist flows, the variables that best measure the destination economic size are population and GDP per capita. In relation to the economics size of the origin country it is obvious that, ceteris paribus, the greater the population the larger the number of tourists (Gil-Pareja et al., 2007). The independent variables are the baseline gravity variables plus other determinants of tourism flows. The data set is subsequently disaggregated into two categories (macroeconomics and political crises) for comparative and deeper analysis. Particular emphasis is the effect of politics crisis on the inbound tourism in Thailand.

DATA

The summary of the dataset and variables are summarized in Table 1 as shown below. The dataset is collected in quarterly measurement from the period 1999 to 2009. The country list of 46 countries can be seen from Table A1 of Appendix A. The data was analyzed using STATA version 9.0

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

By looking at the regression result from Table 2, we can see that most of the
macroeconomic variables have a positive correlation with inbound tourism. GDP per capita which represents as measurement of income and standard of living of international tourist increases, it would lead to an increase in the number of international tourism in Thailand by almost 0.637 per cent. Thus, this implied that the economics growth of origin country, also the world economy have impact on Thailand tourism. Similar result also found as Gil-Pareja et al. (2007) mentioned on population. Our result shows that the size of population is correlated with the number of the tourists. Larger population size of origin country shows a greater number of tourism arrivals from that country by 0.497 per cent. When looking at the distance, an increase of 1 per cent distance between the tourist’s origin country and Thailand, would reduce the tourist arrivals by 1.10 per cent which could be due to the transportation cost which is higher as the distance is greater.

Table 1. Summary of variable used in the model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Data source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOUR</td>
<td>Tourist arrival</td>
<td>Quarterly, number of international tourist arrivals (in 10,000 persons)</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Office of Tourism Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDPPC</td>
<td>Income of origin country</td>
<td>Quarterly, real income per capita measured in Million US dollar</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund (DATA STREAM, CEIC DATABASES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Distance is measured by the distance in miles between capital cities of the origin and destination country</td>
<td>Data from website <a href="http://www.mapcrow.info/">http://www.mapcrow.info/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP</td>
<td>Population of origin country</td>
<td>Quarterly, size of population (in million persons)</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund (DATA STREAM, CEIC DATABASES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US_Currency</td>
<td>Purchasing Power measured in US Dollar currency</td>
<td>Quarterly, purchasing power of a origin country adjusted by US Dollar currency ( Eg: 1 Jap Yen = 0.008333 US Dollar)</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund (DATA STREAM, CEIC DATABASES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMBYEAR</td>
<td>Year of diplomatic relationship</td>
<td>Quarterly, year of diplomatic relationship with origin country</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOB, V-event, T-over, Army, Coup</td>
<td>Crises incidents; Mob, Violence event, Takeover or Seize public and private area, Army take control (state of emergency) and Coup d’état</td>
<td>Dummy that measure the crises incidents, a value of 1 if the crisis take place</td>
<td>Author’s judgment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2. Estimation results of the gravity equation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Estimated Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>t-Statistic</th>
<th>Prob&gt;t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LQGDPC</td>
<td>0.6376146</td>
<td>0.0369398</td>
<td>17.26</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPOP</td>
<td>0.4979683</td>
<td>0.0226467</td>
<td>21.99</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS</td>
<td>-1.104801</td>
<td>0.0717135</td>
<td>-15.47</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>-0.1425128</td>
<td>0.0335506</td>
<td>-4.25</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMB</td>
<td>0.0036408</td>
<td>0.0003384</td>
<td>10.76</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOB</td>
<td>0.0693767</td>
<td>0.2416148</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-EVENT</td>
<td>-0.3462785</td>
<td>0.1535344</td>
<td>-2.26</td>
<td>0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-EVENT</td>
<td>-0.3743362</td>
<td>0.2027325</td>
<td>-1.85</td>
<td>0.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMY</td>
<td>0.1179479</td>
<td>0.1388164</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUP</td>
<td>-0.0573945</td>
<td>0.1817979</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>0.752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of observation is 1,835, R-squared is 0.5006 and Root MSE is 1.0523

In addition, the diplomatic relationship also shows a positive correlation but with a minor impact. Generally, embassies and consulates play an important role for international tourists as they are the sources of information facilitating people traveling abroad. The result reveals that the diplomatic relationships between Thailand and origin countries have a small effect on the number of international tourist arrivals, if the relationships increase by 1 year the number of international tourist arrival will increase by 0.0036 per cent. Without a surprise, the USD variable which measures purchasing power of origin currency adjusted with US Dollar currency shows a negative correlation with inbound tourism. If US dollar depreciates relatively to origin country currency then there will be less number of international tourist arrivals by 0.14 per cent.

Conversely, political variables as V-event and T-event show a negative correlation and significant to the number of international tourist arrivals. The estimation effect shows that political crises could reduce the number of tourist arrivals more than 35 per cent. When political demonstration turned to violence and ended up with death and injuries of citizens, it affects the choice of destination among the international traveler. This usually occurred when there was a clash between police officer and demonstrators or between two groups of opposite protesters (Red-shirt mob vs Yellow-shirt mob). In addition, the length of time that demonstration consumes could affect the number of tourist; the longer days of demonstration would make the travelers worry and change their destination.

Similarly to takeover events like the seizure of Suvarnabhumi International Airport, reveals a strong impact on the tourist arrival which reduced the number of international tourist by 37 per cent. As noted by Neumayer (2004) tourists are sensitive to events of political violence in their holiday destination because such events jeopardize a relaxed and unconcerned holiday. Therefore, substantial increases in political violence lower tourist arrivals.

However, variables like mob and army have a positive correlation to the number of tourist. Even though, those variables are not significant to the model we can interpret that if political movement is non-violence then it may have little impact on tourist. For army variable, which is represented when the army takes control over the crises situation (state emergency declaration) has no effect? This can be due to the length of time it took.
place which is a short period, therefore it causes little impact to tourist.

**SUMMARY**

This paper aims to estimate the number of international tourist arrivals to Thailand by applying Gravity model. Macroeconomics variables were found to have similar effects like other studies as mentioned earlier; where GDP per capita, size of population and number of diplomatic relationship years have a positive effect on inbound tourism. It implied that the international tourism flow would take place more where the income or economic size of the origin and destination countries is larger and the distance between the two countries is closer. Our main findings confirm the empirical result that political crises have a negative effect and direct impact on tourist.

The number of inbound tourism arrivals has a direct effect on the number of Thailand tourism industry. Therefore policymaker should gain more understand of how political crisis affect international tourist decision choice of destination. When political violence harms and kills innocent citizens, policymaker should consider policy that aim to contain the violence and achieve stability and peace. Proper pre-warnings and non-violence response to political incidents are important steps that may reduce the impact of such crises. Violent conflict is well known to be detrimental to economic growth in developing countries, at least in the short run, and the negative impact on tourism is one of the ways in which violent conflict harms the economy.

In sum, despite the political crisis, policymakers need to implement passive policy toward crisis management in order to minimize the effect that could impact on tourism industry as well as the economy.

**REFERENCES**


World Travel and Tourism Council. 2010. Travel and Tourism Economic Impact: Thailand


Appendix A

Table A1 - List of Inbound Tourism by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Argentina</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>U.A.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>S. Africa</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B

Table B1- Summary of the violent incidents

Dummy –violent

Violence on 22 July 2007 (Si Sao Thewes Event)
On 22 July 2007, 15 leaders of United front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) and 20,000 supporters. They went to surround Gen Prem’s house at Si Sao Thewes in order to call on him to resign as Privy Council president. As the result of the event, there were 173 injured, who were accounted as 145 policemen, 1 soldier and 27 citizens

Violence on 2 Sept 2008
On 2 Sept. 2008, the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) supporter rallied from Sanamluang to gather at The Makkhawan Rangsan Bridge, Ratchadamnoen Klang road in order to attack the People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD) demonstrators. As a result many demonstrators were injured. There were 44 injured and 1 dead.

Violence on 6-7 Oct 2008
On 6 Oct. 2008, the People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD) surrounded Parliament House blocking the Member of Parliament to enter. As the government must hold a meeting on 7 Oct. 2010, the police took action to dissolve the protest by shooting tear gas at PAD demonstrators. Due to the police action, it led to the battle between polices and PAD demonstrators. As the result, 2 citizens were killed and nearly 400 people were injured

Violence on 13-14 Apr. 2009
On 13 -14 April 2009, United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) rallied around Thailand and broadcasting the meeting via Cable TV including teleconference of former Prime Minister Thaksin, later the rally became violent. As a result, Thai soldiers had to take control of the situation and more than 70 people were injured
The protest of PAD in 2006
On 14 Jan 2006, Sondhi Limthongkul led hundreds of protestors to the Government House. Since then the political environment in Thailand had changed and became unstable. On 2 Feb 2006, many Anti-Thaksin supporters, gathered around and rallied at Royal Plaza, causing to close down the road.

The protest of UDD in 2009
Due to Anti-military government and military coup, the United front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) was formed in 2006. During March 2009, many UDD supporters around 100,000 people gathered together at Sanam Luang.

The protest of PAD in 2008 (closure of Makkawan Rangsan Bridge)
On 25 May 2008, demonstrations and street protests by PAD restarted at Democracy Monument on Ratchadamnoen Road. The PAD supporters amassed to protest against the proposed constitutional amendments. The rally attracted ten thousand supporters. The plan was to march the supporters from Democracy Monument to the front of Government House. However, the crowd was stopped by a large police barrier at Makkawan Rangsan Bridge. PAD settled at Makkawan Rangsan Bridge and staged continuous rally there until 3 December 2008 (around 7 months)

Seizure of Suvarnabhumi International Airport and Don Mueang Airport
On 25 November 2008, hundreds of PAD members dressed in yellow blocked the two ends of the road in front of the terminal building of Suvarnabhumi International Airport and blockaded the main road to the airport. PAD forces quickly overpowered hundreds of policemen armed with riot gear. PAD leaders mounted a mobile stage and proceeded to criticize the government. All Suvarnabhumi flights were soon canceled, leaving thousands of travelers stranded in the airport.

On the night of 26 November 2008, the services at the Don Mueang Airport were stopped after the People's Alliance for Democracy seized control of the domestic passenger terminal.Shortly after the Constitutional Court dissolved the three parties of the government coalition on 2 December 2008, the PAD held a press conference where they announced that they were ending all of their protests as of on 3 December 2008

Riot in Asian meeting
On 11 April, 2009, the protests led by the red-shirted National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) expanded to Pattaya, causing the Fourth East Asia Summit to be canceled and a state of emergency to be declared in the region

Table B2- Summary of the Takeover (siege) incidents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The protest of PAD in 2006</td>
<td>On 14 Jan 2006, Sondhi Limthongkul led hundreds of protestors to the Government House. Since then the political environment in Thailand had changed and became unstable. On 2 Feb 2006, many Anti-Thaksin supporters, gathered around and rallied at Royal Plaza, causing to close down the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The protest of UDD in 2009</td>
<td>Due to Anti-military government and military coup, the United front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) was formed in 2006. During March 2009, many UDD supporters around 100,000 people gathered together at Sanam Luang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riot in Asian meeting</td>
<td>On 11 April, 2009, the protests led by the red-shirted National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) expanded to Pattaya, causing the Fourth East Asia Summit to be canceled and a state of emergency to be declared in the region</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table B3- Summary of the Coup incident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dummy-Coup d'état</td>
<td>2006 coup d'état</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riot in Asian meeting</td>
<td>On 11 April, 2009, the protests led by the red-shirted National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) expanded to Pattaya, causing the Fourth East Asia Summit to be canceled and a state of emergency to be declared in the region</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On 19 September 2006, a military junta overthrew Thaksin’s government. The junta abrogated the constitution, dissolved Parliament and the Constitutional Court, detained and later removed several members of the government, declared martial law, and appointed one of the king's Privy Counselors, General Surayud Chulanont, as the Prime Minister. Martial law was partially revoked in January 2007. The ban on political activities was lifted in July 2007, following the 30 May dissolution of the Thai Rak Thai party. The new constitution has been approved by a referendum on 19 August, which led to a return to democratic elections on 23 December 2007.
HOSPITALITY ACADEMIC PROGRAMME –
STAKE-HOLDERS’ PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the stake-holders’ perspectives of an ideal hospitality management degree curriculum as a preferred and global product. The study is descriptive and exploratory. A qualitative approach was adopted using focus group and in-depth interview techniques. Four to six cases from each stake-holder group (i.e. educators, students, alumni, & industry) were selected through purposive sampling from two programmes funded by the Hong Kong Government.

Overall, the internship, competencies, learning environment emerged as prominent issues which define the quality of the curriculum and graduate. The study was limited to the key stake-holders of the only two government-funded bachelor degree programmes in Hong Kong due to resource and manpower constraints. The researchers recommend that a similar study be conducted for programmes at other levels such as the certificate, diploma, higher diploma and also the self-financed non-Government funded top-up degree programmes. As the study adopted a qualitative approach, no attempt is made to generalise the study findings. Educators can improve the curriculum based on the study findings which may serve as a benchmark for other existing and new programmes. Industry and education policies could emphasize collaborative roles in educating a hospitality student for a better fit in society and long-term programme sustainability. Students’ attitude towards selection, study and practice of hospitality would be enhanced.

The study added a body of knowledge to the existing literature on stake-holders’ perspectives on an ideal hospitality curriculum. Typically, studies of this nature focus on the educators and industry perspectives. However, this study incorporates the opinions of both graduates as well as students.

Key words: Hospitality, curriculum, stake-holders, sustainability.
INTRODUCTION

The quality of any educational curriculum is essential in keeping it competitive and since globalization has created a great competitive environment (Tan & Morgan, 2001; Aloi, Garner & Lusher, 2003; Khilji, Davis & Cseh, 2010), and pose a lot of threat, and opportunities, necessitates strategic planning (Leslie, 1993). Industries and universities as business institutions would have to find ways to achieve competitive advantage and sustainability. In the same vein, a programme curriculum has to undergo continuous review and restructuring, in order to incorporate contemporary needs (Kotter, 1996; Wiles & Bondi, 2007; Oliva, 2009).

Hospitality as a field of study (curriculum) is a relatively new area and consequently, needs to continuously go through a process of rigorous research in order to build adequate body of knowledge. Moreover, the hospitality industry, as a mass end user of an educational programme product, is a very vibrant industry with demanding and sophisticated consumers, who would have to be sufficiently satisfied. There is a need to constantly integrate innovative and emerging ideas from industry and dynamic society to make curriculum trendy, economical and sustainable.

Asia, and Hong Kong specifically, a place where the “East meets West” is an emerging and huge tourism market (UNWTO, 2010), has numerous tourism attractions and features, needs a very attractive and a high quality hospitality educational programme to feed the industry and needs of the graduates.

Furthermore, little research has been carried out on hospitality and tourism curriculum in Asia, especially in Hong Kong. Most of the existing body of knowledge in hospitality curriculum design, development, and review issues have been generated in the West and viewed from a Western cultural perspective (Lu, 1999; Barrie, 2009).

Besides, holistic studies of key stakeholders (students, graduates, industry and educators) views are very limited worldwide (Koh, 1995; Cooper & Westlake, 1998) and according to the authors' knowledge, such studies have not been undertaken in Hong Kong. Finally, required competencies could be different according to place and culture (Mayo & Haysbert, 2005).

Background

The background to the study is presented in four sections thus, hospitality academic programmes, curriculum, stake-holders and sustainability.

Hospitality academic programmes

For academic programmes to be at competitive advantage and remain sustainable, quality cannot be downsized. Educational quality could be defined differently by different researchers. Harvey and Green (1993) defined it in terms of excellence, threshold, fitness of purpose, fulfillment of an institution’s aims and objectives, meeting customer requirements, transformation and value for money. And to Tribe (2003) educational quality is judged by the institution’s ability to produce evidence to support educational claims.

Since demand for accountability of education has been on the increase, educators are usually faced with a challenge of being alert to constantly and regularly monitor the quality of the programmes. The domain of hospitality education however, has been problematic since it is deficient of explicit and consistent dimensions across various programmes and institutions. Depending
on where the programme is situated, the title, objectives and mission are formulated to suit the base department, school, faculty, or university and also on what were the foundation: business; home economics; catering; life skills; institutional management; food science and management; geography; leisure; sports; travel; tourism; applied science; or applied art. These variations and diversified base creates such inconsistencies. All the same, continuous research in this interest area could help alleviate some of these problems. If standards and indicators are set for characteristics, to serve as measuring tool, that is relevant, valid, manageable, then eventually, a kind of equilibrium could be attained and will be in support of Horng, Teng and Baum’s (2009) study.

**Curriculum**

Mylona (2009) noted curriculum is a document which describes a structured series of learning objectives and outcomes for a given subject matter area. It includes a specification of what should be learned, how it should be taught, and the plan for implementing/assessing the learning. Dopson and Tas (2004), defined curriculum as an organized set of experiences to which learners are subject so that their behaviour will be modified in a desired and predetermined manner. Curriculum for Taner (1980) is the planned and guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school for learners’ continuous and willful growth in personal and social competence. Stark and Lattuca (1996) in Williams (2005) described curriculum as an academic plan that includes decisions about what, why and how a specific group of students are expected to learn. Usually the institution, programme and course mission as well as the learners’ and society needs are considered when drawing the plan. Close to the definition of constructive alignment, curriculum is a specialized plan that incorporates the learning outcome / objective, the process or strategies, tools or aids and assessment / evaluation components.

Another study conducted by Hemsen (2000) considered a curriculum as a list of courses and content including credit hour allocation (structural definition). As a process, curriculum is a complex development process and a way of thinking that incorporates world, social, philosophy, moral, ethics, and views and integrates structured learning outcomes, skills, materials and equipment, and building of skills into formulating a blueprint transmitted as a recognised wisdom for lifelong learning (Sutapa, 2009).

Toombs and Williams (1993: 183) viewed the curriculum “as an intentional design for learning negotiated by faculty in light of their specialized knowledge and in the context of social expectations and student’s needs” (in Scotland, 2006). Sutapa (2009) indicated that, curriculum planning should ideally involve all who are affected by it; parents, learners, teachers, administrators, community members and the like. She indicated a successful curriculum requires careful planning, qualified / trained empowerment to implement and adjustment on assessment by desired and actual silo applied and looked at from a broader perspective: social, philosophical, psychological, cultural, moral and political.

Many curriculum development models exist from rational (fixed sequence of curriculum elements), to cyclical (continuum, limit on sequence), to dynamic (interaction, no limit on sequence) or structure and process (Print, 1993).
A valuable education is one that prepares a student to meet the needs of career industry (of choice) who easily employs him / her (William & Brewer, 2009). The hospitality and tourism programmes over the years went through a series of transformation in curriculum design, development and review. There is continuous debate on the direction of hospitality academic programmes in the universities especially on the issue of a vocation (the origin of hospitality and tourism programmes) and academic focus. Nonetheless, the quality of any educational curriculum is essential in keeping it competitive, a situation made inevitable by globalization (Tan & Morgan, 2001; Khilji, Davis & Cseh, 2010). Hence, industries and universities as business institutions needed to find ways to achieve competitive advantage and sustainability. The Hospitality programme curriculum, in the same vein, has to under-go continuous review and restructuring, in order to incorporate contemporary needs (Kotter, 1996; Wiles & Bondi, 2007; Oliva, 2009). The SWOT analytical tool becomes handy in this case in analyzing the stake-holder views.

Stake-holders

According to Mercie (1999), stake-holders are “all of the agents for whom a firm’s development and good health are of prime concern”. Freeman (1984) also believes stake-holders are “any group or individual that can affect or be affected by the realization of a company’s objectives”. Donaldson and Preston (1995) however, indicate stake-holders are defined by their legitimate interest (known and identified). Stake-holder could be equated to democracy.

There are various schools of thought concerning the stake-holder theory; while others believe it gives false evidence, others think otherwise. For this study stake-holder theory which was deemed to provide a comprehensive and continuous in-depth understanding of an issue was adopted by using the key stake-holders perspective.

The stake-holder’s expression started somehow in USA as a liberal reaction to the primacy bestowed upon financial value at a point in time for ideal perfection. But, on a more practical note, share-holder theory started in the US, with racial tension on mass employment and consumer rights and in the UK it started during Shell share-holders agitation and governance.

Sustainability

Sustainability could be traced from the various theories and the literature. It could be traced from the management, economics, education and strategic literature, and theories such as economic theory, industrial organisational theory, market-based view, resource-based view, knowledge management among the others. For something to be sustainable, it has to have competitive advantage and then proceed to sustainability status. What then is competitive advantage? From previous research, a lot has been done in terms of competitive advantage and sustainable competitive advantage.

Despite the difficulty, competitive advantage is defined as the valuable resources, capabilities, dynamic capabilities, position within industry, the form of low costs, and differentiation (Gannon, Lynch, & Holden, 2010). Sustainable development on the other hand, refers to development that helps to meet the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Hopkins & McKeown, 2006).

The growth of undergraduate hospitality programmes around the world create challenges of programme sustain-
ability to existing ones like the two The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Chinese University of Hong Kong. Consequently, accountability demand by students, parents, public among others (Mok, 2000) is on the increase, quality could come in handy as a promising potential solution to this as well as to competitiveness and sustainability (Horng, Teng & Baum, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

To investigate on how to improve and sustain a hospitality curriculum, the study aims to investigate the characteristics of an excellent curriculum towards the production of a preferred and global-oriented employee. To achieve the purpose of the study, the following specific objectives were formulated. 1) To investigate stakeholders’ expected characteristics of the ideal hospitality management degree curricula. 2) To identify and examine stakeholders’ expectations of a preferred graduate employee.

In order to address these objectives, the following methodological approaches were used. The study comprised of both exploratory and descriptive research designs. It also employed the interpretative paradigm by use of in-depth and focus group interviews with comprehensive qualitative data provided by educators, students, graduates, and various industry practitioners. In all, eighteen in-depth and two focus group interviews were conducted. A total of twenty cases sampled from the two Government funded hospitality programmes in Hong Kong and the hospitality industry were all recorded and fully transcribed. The data was analysed through the use of content analysis to identify the pertinent themes and generate conclusions. The analysis stage closely examines the transcribed data to obtain patterns, trends, similarities and differences as well as the connections and relationships. Initially, the manifest meanings were identified and a further, analyses to obtain the latent meanings of the various informants were also conducted. The findings are supported by discussion which encompasses the researcher’s personal opinion, reflections, insights, comments and the existing literature, as appropriate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found difficulty in reaching a consensus on the expectations of what constitutes an ideal curriculum. However, the differing viewpoints have provided a holistic approach in revealing the needs and desires of the key stakeholders in the design, development and review of hospitality management curricula in Hong Kong. Overall, internship, competencies, teaching and learning environment emerged as prominent issues to define the quality of curriculum and graduate. But, this paper presents only a portion of the results of the study. Out of about fifteen overall findings, one of them; “reality experience” is presented and discussed in this paper.

To almost all study informants, they expect the ideal / a quality bachelor degree hospitality curriculum to be one that provides students with both practical and theory experiences in reasonable proportions required for the job market and society. This view cuts across all stake-holder groups; educators, industry, graduates and students, although expressed differently. The mode of practical delivery is somewhat diverse. Consequently, the standard of practical component is also diverse. As some informants think it is a waste to use precious credit hours learning the practical component of hospitality in school (laboratories, live restaurants, kitchens, etc.) (e.g. B2c, 02/10/2010), others deem it very important (A1a, 08/10/2010). The
Internship, which is currently compulsory for all students in these schools together with part-time jobs use of teaching hotels, and self-effort towards reality industry and work-life experience, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities were suggested by all the stake-holder groups as solutions. One of the standard approaches to these practical experiences namely, “reality experience” is presented below.

Reality experience, work life experience, real world, real hotel life, real hotel management, real work life, real thing, were phrases used to describe the quest for hotel / hospitality practice. The issue of a lack of life experience and industry experience rhymes throughout the study. The findings and discussion are presented by the use of SWOT analysis below. Carmeli’s (2004) found out that in a dynamic and competitive environment, the real birthplace of competitive advantage is underscored by the organisation’s ability to consistently meet environmental changes, as well as to change the industry structure, another reason for the choice of SWOT which involves the internal and the external analysis.

**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

SWOT developed by Igor Ansoff, has become a cornerstone of corporate planning. And since a SWOT analysis looks at future possibilities for an organization, establishment, institution through a systematic approach of introspection into both the positive and negative concerns (Sherwin, 2011), it is deemed by the investigator as a relatively simple way of communicating the study ideas, and concerns (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Here, the stake-holders’ perspectives on reality experience emerging from curriculum development will be used in the SWOT analysis towards analysis and development of a competitive hospitality curriculum. For each opportunity the researchers looked at which strength helps to take advantage of the prioritised item, and which weakness inhibits doing so and for each threat which strengths help to fight an item, and which weakness inhibits doing so?

**Strengths**

Teaching hotels: Hotel Icon and the HYATT hotel - Industry and educator Informants (e.g. C3, 17/05/2010; B2c, 02/10/2010; C2, 20/04/2010; C1, 15/04/2010; C4, 04/06/2010; B2d; 11/10/2010) are confident that with the introduction, integration and collaboration of these hotels and the university teaching, graduates will be more prepared for the future needs of this industry. Some industry informants expressed the hotel has come to alleviate our inadequate practical / hands-on problems. But as to whether this is true is an issue to critically look at. Certain industry informants (C2, 20/04/2010; C4, 04/06/2010) were skeptical about the possible delivery in terms of the provision of adequate hours to all students to practice, since the hotels will also have to satisfy the commercial adequacy of being profitable businesses. Another fear was whether customers would be willing to accept service offered by students. If so, how professional will these services be? Luckily, one of the most important personnel involved in those decision making issues promised a balance, but further impressed that, outstanding students will stand a better chance. Students are by this encouraged to strive had to fit themselves into the elite group. This in a way is healthy, as the competition could improve students’ performance in general.

Internship - All informants believe strongly that the internship is very good and a very important component of the
hospitality curriculum as it enable students to experience reality of the industry (A1c, 09/03/2010; B1a, 19/05/2010). This is how a student informant put it,

“The hotel school requires us to complete some hotel internships. And it’s a compulsory programme. So I think it’s quite good. We don’t only work in hotel but we also work in club houses and other companies like wine, like in 2002 Olympics games and some of us were sent to assist in the equestrian event. And we also have chance to go to overseas and to the Disneyland in the US. So this is why it is quite impressive for me” (B1a, 19/05/2010).

Another student (A1c, 09/03/2010) respondent said “...it requires summer internship experience during the course of study”.... “It enable us experience the reality of the industry”. There were however, divergent views on its organization, the duration and its timing. Mostly, the industry practitioners are of the view that the current six months (split into two) is woefully inadequate (C2, 20/04/2010; C6, 01/07/2010; A1a, 08/03/2010). They feel it is a waste of time for them and for the student as the students end up not acquiring much. According to them, the nature of the industry is such that there is a constant shortage of labour force and employees and management team alike are always on the run, working long hours to make the guest comfortable within the 24/7 period of stay. Students on internship, become handy to assist the industry deliver. For that matter, they feel a student on internship should not only benefit but should also contribute to the running of the establishment. Hence, they feel more comfortable to take time to train the students so that they in turn could assist the human resource force. But if the internship is short, the worker, supervisor or manager who is in charge of the students finds is difficult to leave his/her job in order to train an intern who will not stay to assist him, but will leave just at the point of mastery of a skill. So, instead, the student is assigned with tasks she can easily do to assist, like filing of files, photocopying, running errands and others. To some of the industry practitioners, one year split into six months each is more ideal for a proper training of the interns. They said the commitment level is higher for all three (students, industry, educator) parties involved and the student end up learning more and establishing linkages at that early level which they could rely on later for job opportunities in future.

Weaknesses

It became apparent that there is an omission or a lack of standard operation procedures from the students’ learning experience. This issue was identified and raised by an industry informant who indicated the hotel standard operation procedures should be placed in libraries and students be encouraged to have it at their figure tips (C4, 04/06/2010). All the same, in contrary to this, another industry executive (C3, 17/05/2010) and graduate (B3e, 15/07/2010), indicated it is good to learn the standard operation procedure for the purposes of understanding the hotel but, every hotel has its own way of rendering service which may deviate from the standard operation procedures.

Some informants (industry, students, and graduates) think there is too much emphasis on the theoretical component as against practical component of the hospitality curriculum. Proposals like a 50:50 split resulted.

A lack of exposure to the Hong Kong and Mainland China industry exists and was identified to be a need by an educator and industry informants (A3g, 02/08/2010; C6, 01/07). Suggestions for exchange
between universities and hotels were of great importance to these informants.

As the issue of a lack of life experience and industry experience rhymes throughout the study, students and young graduates would have to be encouraged to seek any opportunity to experience work-life before and/or during their period of study so that by the time they are out of school, they would be exhibiting some work-related skills. “I think the most common challenge is the lack of experience, the positive mind set”, an educator said. (A2f, 17/05/2010). Another industry executive felt that most graduates are not prepared for the job when they seek employment. Three reasons were given: i) lack of hotel adequate exposure within the 3 years of study; ii) The employer is not explicit on their expectations of the employee during recruitment; and iii) The students themselves did not make the attempt to learn what pertains in the hotel, and what the hotel expects of them.

“And In the past, what I feel, what I actually found out from most of the graduates is that they are not really prepared for the job. I have to be really frank, when I say they are not prepared is that first day they don’t really know what is required or what is the style of the job they are really applying for. Of course there are two reasons: One is because, they haven’t got this idea when they work, perhaps within the three year course. Secondly, is also the employer, maybe the employer, when they employ, when they grant the interviews, they don’t really pay much attention, or really, they forgot to tell the students what exactly they are required or expected to do. So I think and I feel it’s still the responsibility of the student to themselves. They have the responsibility to find out too. So I think it’s like a bit of everything” (C3, 17/05/2010).

While educators are in a dilemma as they try to satisfy industry by providing the two main components of technical skills for lower ambition line positions and managerial strengths for education that is flexible to place the graduate beyond hotels if the need arise in the future, they do neither of the two well. “They neither prepare students very well for line positions, hourly positions, and they neither prepare our students for higher level business opportunities” (B2c, 02/10/2010). The issue of apportioning blame to each other; industry as against educator is not healthy for industry or for educators. The best is to strengthen collaboration work among these parties so that each party understands the other. When the state of deep understanding is reached, then there could be trade-offs and adjustments. The same educator alleged;

“So the universities ... provide an undergraduate degree in hospitality management not as a technical school work but as a university degree are faced with this dilemma: ‘should they provide the curriculum that is geared towards preparing students toward lower ambition and be satisfied with these line positions or ... a true mission and provide the students with an education that will give them the flexibility to leave the hotel industry should the hotel industry not...
provide them with an appropriate opportunity to their talent and their degree and there merit. .... operations oriented curriculum or about half of it .... to provide some very sophisticated business or at least electives that might give the students the chance to do some other things” (B2c, 02/10/2010).

Some educators were of the view to give students more management level courses, more high-order courses, more marketing, finance, and business of hospitality towards managerial and corporate jobs. This informant believes it is a waste of time and other resources for students when educators use precious credit hours to teach them operational skills that will end them at the front desk of hotels as clerks. Most often, universities succumb to the industry decisions based on the strong culture, rather than ethical academic responsibility of providing students to have a choice. With the choice option, even if hotel refuses to provide them with deserving jobs and appropriate opportunities, then they could move out of the hospitality industry into other job befitting markets. The informant noted, “I think they can get those experiences with well-designed summer internships and part time jobs” (B2c, 02/10/2010). This last sentence indicates this educator did not totally refute the acquisition of practice, but when where and how it is done is very important. The question is how best could internships be organized to achieve the expected goals if industry also thinks of using students for their profitability gains as cheap labour?

Opportunities

The rapid growth of tourist arrivals and increased tourist receipts in Hong Kong and neighbouring nations in coupled with the parallel growth in hospitality and tourism industry provides great opportunities for students’ reality practice. Institutions need to find good strategies of strengthening collaboration among the diverse hotel and hospitality firms.

There could also be institutional inter-hotel training to enable students have access to varying facilities and service experience within the two teaching hotels of the respective universities, i.e.; HYATT Hotel and Hotel Icon. There could also be inter-campus sharing of other facilities that will enhance the education and training process geared towards the reality experience.

Threats

The strong pressure from parents and students to get jobs imposes the desire to satisfy industry wants on students and graduates.

I think what ends up happening in Hong Kong is that the pressure from families of students and students themselves to get jobs is so strong that there is a real desire to satisfy what the industry says it wants from the students, from the graduates (B2c, 02/10/2010)?

The other option which could be a solution is if graduates could have in the absence of this pressure is to look for jobs that will enable them make use of the learning experiences from school since the current curriculum prepares students to have more choices. Others could even leave Hong Kong and work outside, gain some higher end experience that they are not likely to get in Hong Kong (C1, 15/04/2010). To this another fear emerged from an educator as, Hong Kong students are not confident and therefore do not want to leave Hong Kong (A2e, 17/05/2010). Students are therefore being encouraged to consider this option, as also realized that most informants believe Hong Kong students lack global awareness, and emotional skills which
could be gained over time living in a different culture. Since the students themselves complained the hospitality job does not require a degree to do it but just few months training (B2e, 15/07/2010), students could be encouraged to look of other jobs outside of hospitality operations.

An additional threat that emerged is the traditional reluctance to change prevalent practice of in Hong Kong universities. Another is the high level of irrationality of the decision making process in the design or redesign of curriculum in universities. An educator said;

*I think that one of the problems in Hong Kong is that there is a cultural isolation in the universities. Too many people making the decisions in the universities are part of the system. And I think one of the consequences is that, if the universities don’t have inbred dialectic working like Old Grey Academy’s do. They don’t tolerate a lot of outside thinking. And I think that the universities in Hong Kong, as a consequence, think they are better than they are, because they don’t want to listen to anybody telling them. If they want to be great, then they have to make changes* (B2c, 02/10/2010).

One more threat is the success of teaching hotel as a business as well as trainer of students, as discussed above (strengths).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Considering a redesign to shift current weak practices towards a sustainable future by trying to input these findings is a concern of this study. Perhaps we need to make adjustment and broaden our visions to take care of these opportunities for the future competitiveness and sustenance.

The study findings provide a benchmarking which other programmes could be measured against and educational institutions can draw from the wisdom obtained in developing new curriculum or reviewing existing ones. The use of the “developed” model (competence, internship and leaning environment) would also produce better graduates and hospitality personnel for society. Besides, the study has added a body of knowledge to existing literature on stake-holders’ views on expectations of the ideal or preferred hospitality management curriculum.

The study was limited to the bachelor degree curriculum of the government-funded hospitality management programmes in Hong Kong due to resource and manpower constrains. Other programmes at the certificate, diploma, higher diploma, and also the self-financed non-Government funded top-up degree programmes, masters or doctoral level programmes were not examined due to resource and manpower constraints. Only key stake-holder’s views were solicited and periphery stake-holders’ views (e.g. parents, government, society) were not obtained. Future studies should solicit the viewpoints of all stake-holders and evaluate the curriculum at all programme levels. As a qualitative and interpretative approach was adopted, future studies could address the topic using a combination of the positivist, critical and interpretative approaches.

In making products competitive, educators in designing their adverts could capitalize and base it on their strengths, and opportunities that emerged. Since quality measures should be carried out with valid, relevant measurable and manageable standards and indicators (Hamalainen, 2003), there is the need to take this study to the next level to develop an instrument to measure the various aspects identified by this qualitative study.
This has to be an on-going process to commensurate with the trends.

REFERENCES


Appendix A. Data collection; Informant, date, time, venue

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A, B = The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Chinese University of Hong Kong; C = Industry
(Appendix)
Guide to Authors

1. Submission of Manuscripts
Three (3) hard copies of manuscripts should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief. A soft copy of the article in RTF or MS Word compatible format should also be submitted with final revised version of manuscript.

2. Preparation of Manuscripts
The following instructions should be observed in preparing manuscripts. Articles that do not conform to these instructions may be returned to their authors for appropriate revision or may be delayed in the review process.

2.1 Readability
Manuscripts should be written in clear, concise and grammatically correct English (British or American English throughout). The editors can not undertake wholesale revisions of poorly written papers. Every paper must be free of unnecessary jargons and must be clearly readable by any specialist in Tourism management related disciplines. The abstract should be written in an explanatory style that will also be comprehensible to readers who are not experts in the subject matter.

2.2 General format
Articles should be typed double-spaced on one side of A4 paper using Times New Roman font. Margins of 3cm should be allowed on each side.
The order of the manuscript should be as follows: Title, Author(s), Abstract, Keywords, Main text (Introduction, Review of Literature, Definitions (if any), Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion), Acknowledgements (if any), References, Appendix (if any). This structure of the main text is not obligatory, but the paper must be logically presented. Footnotes should be avoided. The main text must be written with font size 12, justify, first indent 0.5 cm. Within each main section, two levels of subheadings are allowed and the titles must be with bold, bold and italic, italic respectively.
The manuscript should contain the following information:

a. Title
Title should be brief and informative. The title should reflect the most important aspects of the article, in a preferably concise form of not more than 100 characters and spaces. Font size 14, capital letters, center alignment.

b. By-line
Names (size 11), e-mail and addresses of the authors. Phone and fax number should be also given (size 11, italic). No inclusion of scientific titles is necessary. In case of more than two authors, the corresponding author should be indicated with * in superscript. Authors from different institutions must be labeled with numbers in superscript after their names.

c. Abstract
A summary of the problem, the principal results and conclusions should be provided in the abstract. The abstract must be self-explanatory, preferably typed in one paragraph and limited to maximum of 250 words. It should not contain formulas, references or abbreviations.

d. Keywords
Keywords should not exceed five, not including items appearing in the title. The keywords should be supplied indicating the scope of the paper. Size 10, italic, justify.
Authors should include Abbreviations and Nomenclature listings when necessary.

e. **Introduction**
   
The introduction must clearly state the problem, the reason for doing the work, the hypotheses or theoretical predictions under consideration and the essential background. It should not contain equations or mathematical notation. The Introduction should also contain a brief survey of the relevant literature, so that a non-specialist reader could understand the significance of the presented results. Section numbering and headings begin here.

f. **Materials and Methods**
   
The Materials and Methods should provide sufficient details to permit repetition of the experimental or survey work. The technical description of methods should be given when such methods are new.

g. **Results**
   
Results should be presented concisely. Only in exceptional cases will it be permissible to present the same set of results in both table and figure. The results section should not be used for discussion.

h. **Discussion**
   
Discussion should point out the significance of the results, and place the results in the context of other work and theoretical background.

i. **Acknowledgement (if any)**
   
Acknowledgement should be placed in a separate paragraph at the end of the text, immediately before the list of references. It may include funding information too.

j. **References**
   
Publications cited in the text should be listed in a separate page of references. In the list of references, the arrangement should be alphabetical; all co-authors should be cited. The following style should be adhered to in writing references:


i. **Tables**
All Tables should be typed on a separate page and numbered consecutively according to their sequence in the text. The text should include references to all tables. Vertical lines are not allowed but horizontal lines should be used to separate headings and to demarcate the limits of the table. A short descriptive title should be given at the top.

m. **Figures**
This should be produced with a good printer. The title of each figure should be given at the bottom. One original plus three copies should be sent.

n. **Photographs**
Photographic illustrations must be glossy, original prints mounted on light card. They should be identified in pencil on the reverse side. All illustrations should be in black and white; however authors who want to publish coloured illustrations will bear the cost of producing such illustrations.

3. **Assessment**
All manuscripts will be peer-reviewed by at least two independent referees. Papers accepted for publication by the editorial board are subject to editorial revision. Where an article is found publishable a publication levy of one thousand Baht (THB 1,000) will be charged for articles that do not exceed 12 pages. Any additional pages will attract two hundred and fifty Baht (THB 250) per page. Authors of accepted articles will be expected to submit two hard copies of the corrected version of their paper and an electronic copy in CD.

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