

Mainland Chinese Tourist Behavior and Motivations: Evidence from Two Destinations in Southern Thailand

ความพึงพอใจและพฤติกรรมของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีน กรณีศึกษาจังหวัดภูเก็ต

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ABSTRACT

With more than 70 million Chinese travelers annually, China has recently become the top outbound tourism of the world. This study, therefore, examine Chinese tourists regarding their experience of travelling in Thailand to gain a better understanding of Chinese's tourist behavior and identify the motivational factors that significantly influence their decision to take a trip to Thailand. The finding of this study shows that top three motivation factors that pull Chinese high-value tourists to visit Thailand are beautiful beaches and natural attractions by cultural festival and events and good value for money. Family and/or friends and travel agents are the important players in travel decision making. Lastly, the study reveals that the majority of the research participants have intention to re-visit Thailand as well as making recommendation and sharing their experiences with others.

Keywords: Mainland Tourist Chinese, Tourist Behavior, Tourist Motivation

Introduction

In 2014, tourism industry provided a strong momentum to global economic development employing 277 million jobs worldwide (9.4% of global employment) (WTTC, online, 2015). Consequently, many countries focus on improving and promoting their tourism to motivate inbound tourists. Thailand, therefore, has to compete with other nations, not only in the region but also in the global stage to attract number of traveller in potential market around the world. Given the onset of a new recession and a corresponding weakening of currencies in the US and Europe

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which are traditional source markets for Thailand's inbound tourism, the industry needs to find new sustainable growth markets. China is a logical candidate, especially considering its rising affluence. Trakansiriwanich, Yasothonrsikul and Esichaikul (2011) also support the potential of Chinese tourists, that they can be counted as one of the most attentive target group because China's economy is rapidly expanding at a greater rate than other economic leaders. The main reason behind this is the increase in employment rate which leads toward more disposable income. Furthermore, Hoogewerf indicates that China's affluent set is demanding more when travelling. Likewise, statistic of Ministry of Tourism and Sport in 2014 indicates 4,610,524 of Chinese tourists who have visited Thailand with 190.829 billion Baht for the revenue in that year. Forecast for this year, 5.17 million Chinese travellers will generate 219 billion Baht in revenue of Thailand tourism industry. For further research, it is suggested to compare the results with other high potential visitors like Russia and Malaysia to see if there is significant difference.

This study aims to assess push and pull motivation of travelling to Thailand perceived by mainland Chinese tourists, their perception and satisfaction toward destination image of Thailand. The results from this study will help other business and suppliers to understand Chinese tourist behavior.

Literature Review

Tourist Behavior in Tourism Industry

The behavior which individual adopts in searching, purchasing, using, evaluating and dispensing of the products and services which it is hoped will respond to his/her needs is a meaning of consumer behavior defined by Schiffman and Kanok (1994). However, Pearce (2005) as referred by Page (2011) indicated the critical dimensions that specify differences between consumer behavior and tourist behavior. A main difference lies in the extended stages of tourist activities which include: an anticipation or pre-purchase stage; an on-site experience; a return travel component; and the extended recall and recollection stage. Moreover, unlike other consumer purchases, an experience of travelling may be enduring and existing for a long time impact in terms of reflection.

Tourist's Motivational Factors

Swarbrooke & Horner (2007) give the definition of tourist motivational factors as a wide range of elements that motivate consumers to buy tourism products. According to Fodness (1994), motivation is one of the variables, which is the most important because it is an impulsive force behind all behavior. In other words, efficient tourism marketing strategies are impossible without understanding of tourists' motivations. Howie (2003) indicates that tourists' motivations play a



significant role in destination choice and are trustworthy for the observed life cycle of destination. Moreover, Dann (1977) reported a sociological study of travel motivation factors, which focuses on the push dimension of motive, states that tourism motivations can be linked to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Generally speaking, there are two factors (push and pull factors) in a decision of travelling. Additionally, the study of Meng, Tepanon and Uysal (2008) about measurement tourist satisfaction by attribute and motivation, stated that motivation is considered as a critical indicator and force influencing tourist's behavior, which is answering why tourists response in a certain way. Their study referred to the previous researches, of these was Crompton (1979a), which categorized tourist's motivation into four types: organized mass tourist; individual mass tourist, the explorer; and the drifter, diversely positioning on a continuum. Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) suggested three motivation dimensions consist of excitement/thrills; socialization; and family togetherness.

Moreover, Iso-Ahola (1982) referred that travel motivation is a result of individual internal driving needs and desires to escape from everyday environment called "Push factors". These motivational factors give reasons of these following questions: why person make a trip; what type of experience he/she expected to gain; in which destination and what kind of activities the tourist want to do. Conversely, "Pull factors" refer to the forces that affect a person's decision about of which specific destination is chosen. The related topic for example, Hanqin and Lam (1999) studied the motivations of Chinese tourist on their Hong Kong visits and explored numbers of motivations on both push and pull factors.

According to the framework, pull factors are those forces that lead an individual to choose a specific destination. Those factors have been characterized in terms of the features or attributes of the destinations like beaches or scenic resources, historical and cultural attractions, reputation of tourist activities, events, cost of tourism products and services. Push factors, on the other hand, are viewed as the specific forces that lead the tourist to make decision to take vacation relating to tourists' needs and desire for instance the desire for escape from daily environment, rest and relaxation, adventure, prestige, fitness and health, and social interaction. A study by Klenosky (2002) on the pull factors of tourism destinations supports the findings.

Focusing on the analysis of tourist motivations by nationality (British and German) and destinations by Kozak (2002), each nationality is differently impacted by four motivational groups which are culture, pleasure-seeking or fantasy, relaxation and physical. This study indicates that the variables of relaxation and pleasure factors were ranked as two most important motivations in taking a vacation in both Mallorca and Turkey and for both German and British tourists. This results support by the study on Chinese tourists' motivation and satisfaction to visit South Korea indicated that motivational factors are psychological needs, which is a significant cause of psychological disequilibrium feeling that may be released by travel experience.

Escaping from mundane environment, cultural experience, social interaction and prestige motivational forces are generally cited in the literatures. Additionally, cultural experience and novelty seeking are more significant motivational factors for visiting to foreign nations among Chinese tourists group. Among pull factors, the most influential ones were "quality of accommodation facilities" followed by "quality of tourist's services", "ease of travel arrangement", "shopping paradise" and "quality of local transportation system". The study also found that demographic variables, such as gender, marital status, and education and occupation impact to the differences of both push and pull motivation factors.

Destination Image & Information Sources

Destination image has been studied since the early 1970s (Gunn, 1972; Hunt, 1975). The key criticism of these studies was the lack of a theoretical and conceptual framework for what builds a destination image (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Despite differences in opinions, the acceptance of images significant role in tourists' destination behavior is acknowledged (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993; Gallarza, Saura and Garcia, 2002). The role of image in tourism development was examined by Hunt (1975) and this study is the beginning of the researches on the destination image. After that, the scholars have paid more attention to the impacts of the destination image. They show that the destination image is a multidimensional construct consisting of three dimensions which are cognitive, affective and conative. Page (2011) supported the idea that destinations have to be differentiated by their tourism offering in order to compete with other similar destinations. The process of destination image formation as the development of a mental construct based on impressions chosen from a numerous of information is described by Reynolds (1965) as referred by Echtner and Ritchie (2003).



The numerous information has various sources including promotional print media such as travel brochures, posters, the opinion of other as friends and relatives a kind of word of mouth recommendations from travel agents and the general media for examples newspapers, magazines, books, movies, television dramas and series etc. Moreover, actual experiences of the destination, its images have still affected and modified base on primary source of information or the first-hand information.

To study image of tourist destination is critical since it is significantly impact tourists' behavioral intention to make decision for travelling and their cognition, as well as satisfaction levels and recollection of travelling experiences (Jenkins, 1999; Tasci and Gartner, 2007). The studies of destination image therefore, give benefits for destination marketers and related business planer to plan, develop, position and promote the area. It has been accepted that the image of destination is one of keys to be having successful tourism management and destination marketing.

On-site Experience as Thailand Attributes

In this stage, a number of studies about attributes of Thailand as a tourist destination such as natural attractions, historical and cultural sites and tourist activities have been reviewed as tourists' on-site experiences. Due to the reputation of Thailand features such as a long history, rich culture, diverse nature, favorable local cuisine as well as friendliness and hospitality of Thai people and the world class accommodation etc. (Rittichainuwat, Qu, & Mongkhonvanit, 2008), Thailand have become one of the most famous international tourist destination (ranked 11th in 2011 by UN World Tourism Organization) which the international arrivals in 2011 leaped 19.8 per cent to 19.1 million (Thailand's Tourism Ministry, 2012). According to the category of tourist destination features proposed by Law (1995), there are two main attributes of destination. Firstly, the primary features which are climate, ecology, culture and traditional architecture. Secondly, the secondary attributes referred to hotels, catering, transportations, and entertainment. These two principle elements contribute the overall attractiveness of a particular destination. However, some tourism literatures, the boundary between attributes and attractions of tourist destination is overlapped. According to Lai and Vinh (2012), the destination attributes in tourism industry are categorized into four elements. Therefore, in this study the attributes of Thailand will be classified into four categories comprises with natural resources and activities; cultural resources and historical resources; human resources; and tourism facilities as follow.

First, since 1991 the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared the World Heritage sites of two ancient capital cities of Thailand: Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, those two cities have become more attractive to both international and domestic tourist (Peleggi, 1996 cited by Siri, Kennon, Josiam & Spears, 2012). Currently, Thailand already has five World Heritage sites divide into two categories, which are three cultural and two natural sites. The cultural sites comprised of the Historic City of Ayutthaya was declared in 1991, the Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns was declared in 1991, the Baan Chiang Archaeological site was declared in 1992 (UNESCO, 1992-2012). Peleggi (1996) explored the relevance of Thai's heritage attributes to both international and domestic tourism. The study showed several attributes satisfied the visitors who visited Thailand, for instance traditional villages and temples. Furthermore, Most Chinese people both non-visit and visited group have perception toward Thailand as a Buddhism spirit from the image of Thai Temples.

Second, the natural resources of a tourist destination define the environmental framework which include physiography, climate, scenery, flora and fauna as well as other physical assets (Dwyer & Kim, 2003 cited by Lai & Vinh, 2012). Besides the well-known historical and cultural attractions, Thailand also has reputation of natural resources such as beautiful blue sea, crystal white sand and the tropical climate. According to the declaration of natural cites by UNESCO, Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries was declared in 1991 and Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex was declared in 2005. Chinese non-visitors have positive perception about preserved natural and beaches more than visitors; however the Chinese visitors still satisfied the natural resources especially Thailand's beaches and the various activities on the beach.

Next, as we known that Thailand or the land of smile has represented the hospitality and friendliness of Thai people for the whole history of Thai tourism. According to Lertputtarak (2012), Thai people were well-known for the polite manner and being friendly. The services of Thai staff in the hospitality and tourism industry therefore are polite, warm welcoming, sincerely and trustworthy. Last but not least, Thailand has a wide range of accommodation as one of tourism facilities from homestays, resorts, standard city hotels, boutique hotels or luxury hotels. The reputation of the luxury hotels, resorts and spa is also well-known.



Tourist's Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is an important element to maintain competitive business in the tourism industry because it influent the destination's choices and the consumption of products and services (Kozak and Rimmington, 2000). The study of Thaothampitak & Weerakit refers to Fournier et al. (1999) about definition of satisfaction as "a tourist's post-purchase appraisal of the overall experience both in processes and outcomes". Undoubtedly, tourist satisfaction is important for tourism products and services planning since it affect to the tourists to make decision for re-visit. In general, the satisfied consumer will have motivation to re-purchase the same products and service due to their previous experiences. For example, Pizam et al. (1978) state that measuring tourist satisfaction by each attribute of the destination is crucial because tourist are satisfied or dissatisfied on one of the attributes leads to satisfy or dissatisfy to overall destination. The satisfied tourists tend to transmit their positive experience to the third persons and repeating their visit (Kozak and Rimmington, 2000)(Hallowell, 1996; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000 and Pizam, 1994). In conclusion, tourists' motivation is related to tourists' contentment. High quality of products and services lead high customers' satisfaction. The satisfied tourist is a strong indicator of intention to make a recommendation and re-visit.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study applies the cross-sectional design by using the questionnaire which was translated into Mandarin Chinese (simplified), to gain the primary information. Numbers of studies and various theories have been conducted to better comprehending tourist's behavior. Additionally, the survey instrument was revised and finalized based on feedback from seven lecturers of tourism and hospitality faculty from three different universities in Thailand. The study designed to collect information on Chinese tourists' motivation factors, information sources, by using a five-point Likert type scales questions (where 1 = not important at all to 5 = very important) as well as, the level of agreement in Thailand images (where 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and lastly their satisfaction of performance of each of Thailand attributes. There is also having two closed-ended questions at the last part of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to rate the importance levels of their motivation factors to travel to Thailand, the levels of importance of information sources which were applied, as well as their agreement levels of attitude toward Thailand images and satisfaction levels of Thailand tourism attributes. For the motivational factors, the preliminary questionnaire was developed base upon previous studies of Baloglu (2000); Kozak (2002); Beerli and



Martin (2004); Qiao, Chen, Guan and Kim (2008); Rittichainuwat, Qu and Mongkhonvanit (2008) and Siri, Kennon, Josiam and Spears (2012). Information sources were selected from previous researches by Sparks & Pan (2009). The questionnaire constructed by questions of seven parts:

- I. What are the demographic characteristics of Chinese tourist?
- II. What are their travel patterns of the currently visit of Thailand?
- III. What are the Chinese tourists' motivational factors (both pull and push aspects) to visit Thailand?
- IV. What are the levels of importance and effectiveness of each information sources to support their decision-making process?
- V. What are the images in Chinese tourists' perceptions toward tourism of Thailand?
- VI. What are the satisfaction levels of Chinese tourists on each component of Thai and attributes?
- VII. Do the Chinese tourists intend to return and recommend their travelling experiences in Thailand?

Sample and Data Collection

The population of this research is Chinese tourists who visit Southern Thailand, Phuket and Trang, during 1 January– 15 April, 2015. The respondents will be randomly and priory asked for their willingness and convenience to complete all questions in the questionnaire due to its length and their limited time at the airports and pier. Hence, the convenient sampling method was employed to collect tourist survey data. By randomly asking the respondents to take part also ensures the fairness of the research in order to maximum credibility. To minimize time consuming to collect sufficient data, the researcher has two coordinators to distribute one hundred copies of questionnaire at Trang Airport and Pak-Meng pier. There are another two coordinators with a hundred copies worked at Phuket International Airport and Patong Beach. A total of 155 copies were collected, yielding a response rate of 77.5 per cent.

Data Analysis

The statistical tools employed for descriptive analysis including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation were calculated.



Research Results

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. The gender distribution of the respondents was quite even, with 59.4% female respondents and 40.6% female respondents. The dominant age group of the respondents was 20 to 30 years (46.5%) followed by 31-40 years (32.3%) and 16.2% was elder than 41 years old. About 49% of the respondents were educated Bachelor degree and higher. 45.2% of them were business owner following by bottom line employee (23.2%). The majority of them (49.7%) had personal income between 5,000 – 8,000 Yuan and most of the respondents were first time visitors as 71%.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

	n	(%)		n	(%)
Gender	Times to visit Thailand				
Male	63	40.6	First time visitor	110	71
female	92	59.4	Repeater	45	29
Age	Occupation				
less than 20	8	5.2	Student	15	9.7
20 - 30	72	46.5	Bottom Line Employee	36	23.2
31 - 40	50	32.3	Supervisor/Manager/ Administrator	20	12.9
41 - 50	19	12.3	Professional/Technical Officer	11	7.1
51 - 60	4	2.6	Business Owner	70	45.2
More then 61	2	1.3	Government Officer	3	1.9
Education	Income				
High School and Below	20	12.9	Under 3,000 Yuan	9	5.8
College	59	38.1	3,000 - 5,000 Yuan	18	11.6
Bachelor Degree	68	43.9	5,000 - 8,000 Yuan	77	49.7
Master Degree	7	4.5	8,000 - 10,000 Yuan	49	31.6
PhD or Doctoral Degree	1	0.6	10,000 - 12,000 Yuan	2	1.3

Table 2 Purpose of Visit and Travel Pattern Cross Tabulation

Purpose Of Visit	Travel Pattern				Total
	Individual	Family/Relatives	Friends	Tour group	
Leisure/Holidays	1	30	20	45	96
Visit Family and/or Friend	1	25	13	0	39
Business	10	7	3	0	20
Total	12	62	36	45	155

Table 2 illustrates cross tabulation between purpose of visit and their travel pattern. The majority of respondents were came travelling in Thailand with their family (also referred to spouse) or/and relatives (40%) and taking holiday and leisure were their major purpose of visit. While, tour group were the second largest group (29%) in term of Chinese Tourists' travel pattern followed by friends (23.2%) and individually style of travel were the minority group at 7.7%

Chinese Tourists' Motivational (Push and Pull) Factors

Table 3 importance ranking of Travel Motivation (Pull Factors)

Motivation (Pull Factors)	Mean	Rank	S.D.
Beaches and Natural Attractions	4.6065	1	.50319
Historical and religious Sites	4.1871	4	.39125
Cultural Festival and Events	4.3097	2	.46386
Tourist Activities	3.8258	14	.49868
Nightlife and Entertainment	3.9548	12	.69639
Shopping Opportunities	4.1484	6	.76272
Adventure and Sports	3.6387	17	.59088
Accessibility	3.9032	13	.64238
Infrastructure and Transportation	3.8000	15	.52718
Airport Facilities	3.8000	15	.52718
Quality of Accommodation	4.0645	7	.71784
Quality of Service	4.0129	8	.68364
Restaurant and Local Cuisine	3.9871	10	.66437
Friendly and Hospitality People	4.0065	9	.67897
Cost or Price levels	4.1677	5	.77140
Good Value for Money	4.2258	3	.79404



Motivation (Pull Factors)	Mean	Rank	S.D.
Personal Safety	3.5226	18	.53858
Tourist Information Centre	3.3677	20	.66469
Cleanliness	3.5226	18	.53858
Souvenirs	3.9871	10	.67408

We intend to examine Chinese tourist's motivation factors that significantly influent to them to make decision taking holiday in Thailand. The motivational pull factors that Chinese tourist reported when deciding to take the trip to Thailand ranged from the highest means score of 4.60 to the smallest mean score of 3.36 (Table 3). From twenty pull factors, five core dimensions that influence Chinese tourists in making the decision to visit Thailand were determined included: beaches and natural attractions (mean = 4.60), cultural festivals or events (mean = 4.30), good value for money factor (mean = 4.22), historical and religious sites (mean = 4.18) and cost or price level (mean = 4.16). Conversely, the three least important in term of pull factor were tourist information centre (mean = 3.36), personal safety and cleanliness had same ranking at 18 by mean 3.52.

Table 4 Importance ranking of Travel Motivation (Push Factors)

Motivation (Push Factors)	Mean	Rank	S.D.
Escaping From Daily Routine	4.0774	3	.72556
Relieving stress and tension	3.8194	7	.65931
Experiencing New/Different Place	4.3226	1	.72930
Feeling Exotic Atmosphere	3.8258	6	.61526
Enriching Knowledge And Experience About A Foreign Destination	4.1548	2	.76568
Going to place my friends have not been	3.2452	13	.66469
Meeting New People	3.4774	10	.60662
Physically Relaxing	3.8774	4	.56218
Seeing Something Different	3.8774	4	.56218
Influence By Films And Dramas (i.e. The Beach, Bangkok Dangerous , Tom Yum Kung)	3.3161	12	.58303
Visiting Friends Or Relatives	3.7032	8	.59589
Visiting Cultural And Historical Sites	3.5226	9	.56700
Visiting A Destination Which Most People Value and Appreciate	3.3484	11	.57653

Table 4 reports the importance of mean and ranking of each push factors. Experiencing new of different place was the most important force among all push motivational factors (mean = 4.32), followed by enriching knowledge and experience about foreign destination (mean = 4.15), escaping from daily routine (mean = 4.07), physically relaxing and seeing something different were at the same rank (mean = 3.87). On the contrary, the three factors that ranked at bottom were going to place my friends have not been (mean = 3.24), influence by films and dramas (mean = 3.31) and visiting a destination which most people value and appreciate (mean = 3.34).

The Importance of Information Sources

The third object of this study was purposed to examine the level of importance of information source from the Chinese tourists' perception. From our study, we found that the most important source of information for the respondents were family and friends (mean = 3.73), followed by travel agent (mean = 3.67) while social media like facebook or socialcam were the least important as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Mean Score and Ranking of the Importance of Information Sources

Information Sources	Mean	Rank	S.D.
Family and Friends	3.7355	1	.77357
Travel Agent	3.6710	2	.68633
Guide Books	3.6387	3	.71062
Travel Brochure	3.6516	4	.76677
Travel Magazines	3.6258	5	.72608
Travel Road Shows/Exhibitions	3.2645	6	.71062
Newspaper	3.2903	7	.75720
Other Travel Websites	3.6194	8	.74824
Movies/Dramas	3.2645	9	.54745
Tourism Authority of Thailand Websites	3.0129	10	.58094
Radio	3.5484	11	.57870
Social Media (i.e. facebook, socialcam)	2.8129	12	.97346

Chinese Tourists' Perception Toward Thai Tourism Image

Moreover, we also intend to analyze the perception of Chinese tourists toward Thailand image. We found that there were 3 of 63 male respondents and 7 of 92 female respondents (6.5% of total) had negative attitude toward Thailand as shown in Table 6.



Table 6 Gender * Attitude Cross Tabulation

	Attitude		Total
	Negative Attitude	Positive Attitude	
Gender: Male	3	60	63
Female	7	85	92
Total	10	145	155

Table 7 shows the mean scores of Chinese perception toward each Thailand destination image. The majority of respondents agree that Thailand has a good image and reputation (mean = 3.94 and standard deviation = 0.23) while, other images have number of standard deviation higher than 0.5.

Table 7 Chinese' Perceptions toward Destination Image of Thailand

Attributes	Mean	Ranks	S.D.
Destination Brand			
Good Image And Reputation	3.9419	1	.23462
Hospitality And Friendly People	3.7548	12	.50119
Offers Personal Safety And Security	3.3032	18	.75053
Standard Hygiene and Cleanliness	3.3290	17	.72174
Good Value For Money	3.7742	7	.52901
Natural & Cultural/Historical Attractions			
Beautiful Beaches	3.7871	4	.54638
Beautiful Scenery and Reserved National Park	3.7871	4	.54638
Gorgeous Buddhism Temples	3.7871	4	.54638
Impressive Historical Sites	3.7226	15	.51642
Amazing Cultural Festivals/Events	3.7226	15	.51642
Unpolluted and Unspoiled Environment	3.2258	19	.88451
Tourist Infrastructure			
Various Categories Of Accommodations	3.7742	7	.52901
Good Quality Of Accommodation	3.7742	7	.52901
Appealing of Local Food	3.7742	7	.52901
Easy to travel around	3.7742	7	.52901

Attributes	Mean	Ranks	S.D.
Tourist Leisure and Recreation			
Good night life	3.7419	13	.54462
Wide range of activities and entertainment	3.7419	13	.54462
Opportunity for Shopping	3.8065	2	.57090
Luxury Spa	3.8065	2	.57090

Chinese Tourists' Satisfaction

We try to identify the level of satisfaction of Chinese tourists on their experience, therefore the question we focus on Chinese visitors' expectations of and satisfaction with, particular components of the range of Thailand attributes that contribute to their experience. The results are shown in Table 8 present that three of twenty components of attributes got the lowest score at 2. Those were unpolluted and unspoiled tourist attractions, sufficiency of Chinese tour guide and tourist service center and the tourist service center had smallest mean= 3.0. In opposite way, the highest mean were 4.79 for Beaches and natural attractions. Friendly and helpful local people had the highest amount of stand deviation at 0.80 which shows that data has several extreme values.

Table 8 Chinese Tourist's Satisfaction

Thailand Attributes	Rank	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.	Variance
Beaches And Natural Attractions	1	4.00	5.00	4.7908	.40804	.166
Historical And Religious Sites	8	4.00	5.00	4.3725	.48507	.235
Cultural Festivals And Events	5	4.00	5.00	4.5490	.49923	.249
Unpolluted/Unspoiled Tourist Attractions	12	2.00	5.00	3.8170	.71117	.506
Overall Activities And Entertainments	10	4.00	5.00	4.3333	.47295	.224
Shopping Opportunities	15	3.00	5.00	3.5163	.51433	.265
Public Transportation	16	3.00	4.00	3.3595	.48142	.232
Quality of Accommodations	4	3.00	5.00	4.6013	.59978	.360
Quality of Services	3	4.00	5.00	4.6340	.48330	.234
Restaurants and Local Cuisine	6	4.00	5.00	4.5098	.50155	.252
Hygienic of Food And Beverages	11	3.00	5.00	3.9412	.64109	.411
Airport Facilities	18	3.00	4.00	3.1373	.34525	.119
Tourist Service Centre	20	2.00	4.00	3.0065	.49333	.243
Friendly and Helpful Local People	9	3.00	5.00	4.3987	.80573	.649



Thailand Attributes	Rank	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	S.D.	Variance
Sufficiency of Chinese Tour Guide	19	2.00	4.00	3.0784	.53224	.283
Personal Safety and Security	14	3.00	4.00	3.5229	.50112	.251
Signage and Notices At Attractions and Facilities	13	3.00	4.00	3.6863	.46553	.217
Ability to Speak English of Locals	17	3.00	4.00	3.4510	.49923	.249
Reasonable Price of Products and Services	7	3.00	5.00	4.4902	.52713	.278
Value for Money	1	4.00	5.00	4.7908	.40804	.166

Discussion

Since China has become one of the largest markets in term of outbound tourism and with their high potential of spending, the Chinese tourists' perception and their behavior have been widely researched by numerous of scholars. Most of the previous researches in this field have focus on the tourists' perception and their satisfaction on Thai tourism industry. This study was designed to identify and examine Chinese's demographics and their travel pattern like the motivation on the Thailand holiday as well as the perception of Chinese toward Thailand destination image. In addition, the study was to explore the level of overall satisfaction of Chinese tourists on their travel experience on Thailand attributes. Moreover, the intention to return and share their experience also recommends Thailand as a favourable destination. Accordingly, this paper has the significant value to analyse the trend of Thailand tourism from the Chinese's perspectives.

The first objective of the research is to identify Chinese tourists' demographics and travel patterns as well as their behavior while travelling in Thailand. The study found that Chinese tourist who visited Thailand were mostly female on the early adulthood (20 – 40 years old), most of them were educated in college and university at bachelor degree. These all results were similar to the previous research by Qiao, Chen, Guan and Kim (2008) who found that most Chinese tourist who visited South Korea. The majority were business owner means they were self-employed which had personal income 5,000 – 8,000 Yuan. These Chinese tourists were first-time visitors who had mainly leisure and holiday of visit. This finding supported the research by Siri, Kennon, Josiam and Spears (2012) which explored that most Indian tourist visited Thailand for their vacations and leisure and the majority of them were first-time visitors. Interestingly, this study found that the major of Chinese tourists travelled with their family or spouse more than tour group. However, it was different from the earlier study by Sparks & Wan Pan (2009) which indicated that most Chinese tourists preferred packaged tours (fully packaged was the most preferred type of travel) than individual tours.

The study also explored that word of mouth by friend and/or relative was most often used and important source for collecting information about the destination. It was also consistent with the study of Molina et al. (2010). Among twenty pull factors that motivate tourist come to visit Southern Thailand, beaches and natural attraction is the most outstanding force which influence to Chinese tourists. Contrastively, Hanqin and Lam (1999) explored influent pull factors motivated Chinese tourist on their Hong Kong visits are international cosmopolitan city, convenience of transport, shopping paradise etc. It might have different results due to the attractiveness of Thailand and Hong Kong is dissimilar. However, this study had the results of factor analysis of push factors which was generally supported by the study of Hanqin and Lam (1999) who discovered that Chinese tourists had push factors to see something different and increasing knowledge about the foreign destination.

Conclusion

The contributions of this research should be interpreted as follows. Firstly, the participants give their suggestions about the most impressive things in Thailand, according to those things, the board of Tourism Authority of Thailand and related business marketers can advertise those things to build Thailand destination brand so that the advantages can attract more travelers and increase the tourism revenue. Secondly, the pull factors of the travel motivations can attract the travelers as well. Thirdly, based on the various factors which affect the decision-making of the travelers, the related tourism industry can modify the tourism system and consummate the tourism facilities.

This research paves the way for a number of future studies. Therefore, future research similar to this study is highly recommended. However, the duration of the survey should be extended to gain a larger sample size and to support the findings that could be adapted to the rest of the Chinese tourist population. This research can be replicated for other nationalities to determine if there are similarities to or differences from this study. Lastly, by adding more detailed opened-ended questions is recommended in order to gain better and in depth information or Chinese tourist's opinion for the qualitative research.



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