

Title: Thailand's Tourism Destination's Traveling Behavior, Information Exposure, Brand Image Perception, and Brand Equity Acceptance.

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to study tourist traveling behavior, information exposure, brand image perception and brand equity acceptance of tourism destinations in Thailand. The survey method employed questionnaires of 377 Thai tourists and 382 foreign tourists. The results are summarized as follows:

1. Thai tourists are mostly 21-30 year old single females, are educated to bachelor degree level, earn 10,001-20,000 baht/month, work in an office, live in Bangkok. Foreign tourists are mostly 21-30 year old single males, are educated to bachelor degree level, earn more than 2,500 US dollars/month, work freelance, and live in Malaysia.

2. Chiangmai is most favored destination for both Thai and foreign tourists because of its good climate, unique culture, and friendly people. Thai tourists travel to Thailand's tourism destinations for trips lasting 3-4 days, once per year, spend 2,501-7,500 baht per trip, use their own vehicle, travel with family, stay in a 1-3 star hotel, and travel during March-June. Foreign tourists travel for trip lasting 3-4 days, once per year, spend more than 10,000 baht per trip, use taxis, travel with family or friends, stay in a guesthouse, and travel during November-February.

3. Thai tourists reported exposure to travel information at an "average" level through travel guides, internet, television, magazine, friends/acquaintance, newspapers, and tourism events/exhibitions. Foreign tourists reported exposure to travel information at an "average" level through travel guides, internet, and television.

4. The brand image of Thailand's tourism destinations which Thai tourists perceive at a "good" level are shopping venues variety, colorful nightlife, tourist attraction variety, tourist attraction beauty, economy growth, accommodation quality, entertainment venues variety, and food taste and food variety. The brand image factors at a "good" level perceived by foreign tourists are: colorful nightlife, economy growth, accommodation quality, entertainment venues variety, food taste and food variety, and integration of foreign residents. However, the only brand image factor perceived by both Thai and foreign tourists at a "bad" level is the problem of beggars.

5. The brand equity of Thailand's tourism destinations which Thai tourists report "agree" are remembering the name of this city, recommending this city, traveling to this city again, and having good fun. Foreign tourists report "agree" with the statements remembering the name of this city, tending to mention this city, traveling to this city again, recommending this city to friends, and choosing to travel to this city again even though others are more interesting.

6. The places which Thai tourists desire to travel at a "high" level are food shops/food centers/food venues, and walking street/weekend markets. The places which foreign tourists desire to travel at a "high" level are food shops/food centers/food venues, local markets/floating markets, and entertainment venues/karaoke/pubs.

7. Thai tourists have a significantly different traveling behavior, information exposure, brand image perception, and brand equity acceptance of Thailand's tourism destination from foreign tourists.

8. Thai and foreign tourists who have different demographic status i.e. gender, age, education, income, and marital status have significantly different information exposure, brand image perception, and brand equity acceptance of Thailand's tourism destination.

9. A varimax rotation produced the five final factor analysis. These factors have been labeled as (1) city's quality and convenience (2) city's social status and culture (3) city's atmosphere and social management (4) city's value for money and livable feeling (5) city's problem management.

10. Factors affecting Thai tourists' desire to travel to Thailand's tourism destinations are brand image perception and factors affecting foreign tourists' desire to travel to Thailand's tourism destinations are brand equity acceptance.