INVESTIGATING TOURISM AND SERVICE BUSINESS ATTRIBUTES AS INFLUENTIIAL FACTORS FOR STABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF PATTAYA

SIRAVIT KOOLROJANAPAT

[1]Assoc. Prof. Dr. [1]Development Administration Program SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY Thailand
E-mail: [1]sriavit.ko@ssru.ac.th, [2]phd.md.ssru@hotmail.com

Abstract- The objectives of this paper were to carry out a meta-analysis for the tourism and service businesses in Pattaya, investigate current situation of its tourism, expectations of tourists, problems and obstacles, future tourism and service businesses and influential factors for stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in the studied area. Meta-analysis, Delphi technique and survey research were employed in an integrative approach, with focus group. The findings revealed high significance of attraction business, safety and security service, knowledge, professional skill and experience of tourist guide, and information service that influenced the stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in Pattaya.

Index Terms- Environment, Globalization, Tourism

I. INTRODUCTION

The continuous expansion of international tourists in 2013 reported by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) revealed a 5 percentage increase from the previous year, from the number of 1,035 to 1,087 million tourists, with the Chinese tourists as the majority. It has been forecasted that in year 2030 the number of international tourists will leap to 1,800 million with an average expansion rate of 3.3 percentages per year. Since 2015, there have been the emerging tourist markets from the developing countries, in which the highest expansion rate was derived from those from Asia Pacific Region (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2015, p. 5).

The tourism and service sector has been generating high revenue to Thailand. Tourism creates significant both direct and indirect impacts to the national economy, for instance by inducing foreign currency, creating more jobs and stimulating development in many areas in regional provinces for example transportation, trades and investments. During the national economic crisis tourism was proved to lessen and recover the situation. The tourism industry is one of the biggest and fastest growing industries, resulting in high competition and challenges from several internal and external change forces, of tourism management organizations to manage in order to maintain the sustainability of their tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2011).

For Thailand, it is necessary that steering the national tourism to sustainability correspond with the national reform agenda. The primary policy under the National Council for Peace and Order is the Thailand Happiness, which has become the main theme for the national tourism strategies. There are integrations of the development to drive the tourism competitiveness by incorporating involvement from various groups of stakeholders. For instance creating innovative tourism products, ranging from spa and medical tourism, Thai foods, Thai cultures, MICE and cruise tourism, all aiming for higher competitiveness, seeks for higher skills and cooperation from several stakeholders. Another aspect of the current development has emphasized on more effective dynamism of management and administration for the tourism industry as the main problem of tourism supplies and demands (TAT Review Magazine, issue 4, 2014, October- December). Pattaya is one the international tourist destinations of Thailand welcoming each year the large volume of tourists indicating the third highest number following that of Bangkok and Phuket. The destination was thus selected as the main area of this study. The goal of this study is the sustainability in all dimensions of the tourism of Pattaya

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Tourism and Service Business Attributes

The primary attributes of tourism and service businesses include attractions, transportation, accommodation, tour operation and travel agents, including tourist guide service. The secondary attributes considered as the supporting business level ranges from souvenir business, meeting business, information service, safety and security service and facilitation of destination inflow and outflow accessibility.

2.2. Change Factors of Tourism

Investigating change factors that will have effects on future tourism is important and useful for determining directions for higher competitiveness and risk management for the industry. The review includes some significant trends as follows:

(1) *Globalization*

The world connectivity creates a butterfly effect in economic, social, cultural and technological dimensions. The multilateral effects of the globalization phenomenon include higher workforce flow, integration of countries for cohesive competitiveness and bargaining power, international fund and capital circulation and enlargement of the global markets. These factors have critical influences on tourism entrepreneurs to twist their viewpoints about their tourism business development and management among this high competition and fast changes.

(2) *Ageing society*

There are reports indicating the world transforming into the ageing society. These countries include those in the Europe, United States of America, Japan and South Korea. Thailand is also entering in this state. By the report of the United Nations, the rate of world ageing population was 11.7 percentages in 2013, increasing from 9.2 percentages in 1990. The number was forecasted to reach 21.1 percentages increase in 2050. By the UN forecast, Thailand within the year 2030 will be completing the ageing society. This phenomenon has consequently created a shortage of workforces in some areas due to the world changing demographic structure that, as a result, shapes the direction of the global economy and market shift to the aged tourist market.

(3) *Urbanization*

The population shift from rural to urban areas has allowed more cities to be larger creating the urbanized pattern of development. This has led to opportunities and development of many businesses to grow, and at the same time has caused many drawbacks ranging from crowded living environment, wastes and pollutions, higher cost of living, heavy use of resources to other cultural aspects for example cultural assimilation and loss of local identity. Other issues derived from the urbanization effect regard an ineffectiveness of tourism management of towns and areas with high density of population, which leads to ineffective carrying capacity management, and loss of charms and values of attractions due to high degree of constructions.

(4) *Digital lifestyle*

An advancement of digital technology through mobile devices for instance smart phone, have made it possible for people to travel independently. Availability of information easily retrievable from the Internet with fastness and convenience motivates travelers to make faster travel decision and book rooms and tickets more instantly and real- time. Tourism entrepreneur are well recognized this and have attempted to adopt the e- commerce in their businesses from providing information service, booking and merchandizing.

(5) *Tourist safety and security*

Tourists today have more concern on their travel safety and security. Tourist confidence is easily damaged by negative occurrences, which are widely and fast spread in media impelled by the advanced information and communication technology. Tourists' lower level of confidence and high perceived risk influence their decision to travel or not to destinations with high risk perceived. The issues of travel safety and security cover crisis associated with spread of diseases, terrorism, demonstrations and political unrest, and natural disasters. These events and their aftermath result in decreased number of tourist arrivals. Thailand had also been affected by its political unrests, SARS outbreak and avian influenza or bird flu during the past decade.

(6) *Emergence of low cost airlines*

This is a remarkable event of the global tourism industry which has greatly shaped tourists' travel behavior and decisions. An emergence of low cost carriers has created higher competition in the travel industry by their notably lower prices especially during low season. This stimulates more travels, in particular due to ability to make last- minute decision and facilitation of last- minute booking technology. The Airline Profiler Study reported that in year 2013 23 percentages of passengers around the world used low cost airlines to travel, resulting in the low- cost airline business gaining higher number of seat booked and higher proportion of revenue than those of the standard full- service airlines. Despite passenger satisfaction reports revealed passengers' higher satisfaction level towards full- service airlines, the situation explained that more than 1 of 5 percentages of the passengers still pays more importance to price than comfort.

(7) *Environmental concern*

Mass manufactured productions have caused at a great degree of environmental impacts and consequently led to higher possibility of natural disasters to occur. Many countries have communicated their serious concern on the environment through many concrete activities. More treaties are agreed among countries, whereas tourists are more discerned on the environmental impacts and start to travel smartly with responsibility. The environmental issue has become one of the critical factors which many countries share their point of view for, by seeking for cooperation and formulating national development and tourism plans for their tourism competitive advantages and sustainability.

(8) *Asian Economic Community: AEC*

The Southeast Asia had been reported to have the highest rate of growth in the international travel

during 2005- 2013.The integration of the region into the ASEAN Community has expedited the expansion of the regional tourism making the Southeast Asia be the geopolitical center of the world. Thai tourism has welcomed increasing number of tourists from Southeast Asian region or its neighboring countries.

(9) *Special- interest tourism*

Health tourism, adventure tourism, religion- based tourism, MICE and sport tourism are some of the special- interest forms of tourism activities, which are growing. Tourists today have sought for different travel experiences that allow them to feel connected with nature and fresh air through environmentally friendly tourism activities.

III.DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

3.1. Research Methodology

The objectives of this paper were to carry out meta-analysis for the tourism and service businesses in Pattaya, investigate current situation of tourism of Pattaya, expectations of tourists, problems and obstacles, future tourism and service businesses, and influential factors for stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in the studied area. Delphi Technique was used in investigating the current situation of tourism of Pattaya, expectations of tourists, problems and obstacles, whereas focus group technique was carried out with tourism stakeholders from tourism and service businesses in order to gather considerations and opinions in which positive and negative factors for stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in Pattaya were derived from. Finally, the factors were evaluated for further implementation for tourism sustainability of Pattaya.

The respondents of this paper included 120 Thai and international tourists, utilizing stratified random sampling technique. Another 17 respondents derived from the purposive sampling technique included experts and stakeholders from tourism and service businesses in Pattaya, representatives of Ministry of Tourism and Sports, travel organizations both in public and private sectors. Questionnaire with open-ended questions and 5 points- Likert scale questions were used in collecting the data from tourists and customers of the tourism and service businesses.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 explains the primary attributes that influenced the stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in Pattaya. It was found that the first 3 most significant primary attributes were attraction business, tour operation, travel agents business and tourist guide, and accommodation business, followed by restaurant and transportation business.

From Table 2, the first 3 secondary attributes considered to be influencing the stability and sustainability of tourism and service businesses in Pattaya were safety and security service, information service and facilitation of destination inflow and outflow accessibility. The last 2 significant attributes included souvenir and meeting and seminar businesses.

Table1: Percentage of Primary Influential Attributes towards Stability and Sustainability of Tourism and Service Businesses in Pattaya

Primary Influential Attributes towards Stability and Sustainability of Tourism and Service Businesses in Pattaya	Meta-Analysis (10 books: 100%)	Delphi Tech. (17 respondents: 100%)	Survey R. (120 respondents: 100%)	Percentage	Rank of Importance
1. Attraction business	80.00	88.24	95.83	88.02	1
2. Transportation business	70.00	76.47	79.17	75.21	5
3. Accommodation business	70.00	82.35	91.67	81.34	3
4. Restaurant business	70.00	76.47	91.67	79.67	4
5. Tour operator and travel agent business, and tourist guide	80.00	82.35	90.00	84.12	2

Table2: Percentage of Secondary Influential Attributes towards Stability and Sustainability of Tourism and Service Businesses in Pattaya

Secondary Influential Attributes towards Stability and Sustainability of Tourism and Service Businesses in Pattaya	Meta-Analysis (10 books: 100%)	Delphi Tech. (17 respondents: 100%)	Survey R. (120 respondents: 100%)	Percentage	Rank of Importance
1. Souvenir business	70.00	70.59	83.33	74.64	4
2. Meeting and seminar business	60.00	58.82	58.33	59.05	5
3. Information service	80.00	82.35	93.33	85.23	2
4. Safety and security service	80.00	88.24	95.83	88.02	1
6. Facilitation of destination inflow and outflow accessibility	70.00	76.47	83.33	76.60	3

The findings showed that tourist attractions in Pattaya remained attractive to and accepted by international and domestic tourists, both natural and man- made attractions. The primary issue concerns how to build confidence among tourists in terms of safety and security which is the most concerned factor by tourists in considering and making decision to visit Pattaya. There has always been news reported about crimes in Pattaya related to urbanization; Pattaya is a tourist city with active economic growth and a variety of businesses ranging from manufacturing and service sectors. There have been increasingly migrant workers as well as Thai workers from other regions settling to work in the city. Safety and security issue is thus the very important factor that determines tourism and service businesses of the town, and it requires high concern and active inspection from the authorities. Moreover, tour operator and travel agent businesses and tourist guide service are the main driver of the tourism industry, whereas provision of travel information and content always is fundamental

to the industry, and thereafter is the imperative factor in shaping tourist behavior. Tourists have always been expecting to experience an accountability of travel information and content for their learning, pleasure, enjoyment, happiness and impression. Tour operators, travel agents and tourist guides should be very informative and have well- round knowledge, with professional, impressive personality and service mind. These characteristics contribute to more words of mouth and re-visitations, and therefore guarantee the stability and sustainability of the tourism industry of Pattaya.

CONCLUSION

An emphasis of the administration for tourism in Pattaya should be placed on conservation for tourist attractions of the city, including other service units by incorporating public participation and good governance. An example is a provision of 'volunteering tourist police' or 'home guard police' service that works effectively with information and communication units. Strict detection and monitoring of immigrant worker and visitor movement must be carried out. Moreover, scrutinizing illegal tourist guides must be seriously done.

Tourist guide profession is reserved only for Thai national. Operations of tour leaders must be accompanied with Thai tourist guide to performs as the person who gives travel information and knowledge at destinations. Various forms of travel content and channels should be created in publication with easily portable package, DVD and digital form. Additionally, promotional campaign for re- visitation can be innovative by, for example, providing an incentive for those who invite or persuade visitors to come back to Pattaya.

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