

Domestic Tourist Behavior of Foreign Tourists in Prachuapkhiri Khan Province

NipolEk-udom, Urai Makkana, Thanuttchayanin Doksroifa, Bundit Anuyahong and Wipanee Pengnate

Abstract

The objectives of this research were to study 1) domestic tourism behavior of foreign tourists; 2) factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists; 3) tourism patterns affecting personal relationship with tourism behavior of foreign tourists; and 4) travel problems of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. Research samples were 400 foreign tourists in Prachuapkhiri Khan Province. Research instrument was a questionnaire. Data analysis was percentage, mean, standard deviation, and chi-square.

The research findings were as follows: 1) the purposes of foreign tourists were to travel and ecotourism; 2) Factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists were economic, political, and status and reputation; 3) tourism patterns affecting personal relationships were ecological, health, nature, history, culture, art and science and sports and recreation; and 4) problems in traveling for foreign tourists were the epidemic of the Covid-19, followed by government measures and accommodation.

Keywords: Tourist Behavior, Domestic tourism, Tourist Foreigners

Introduction

Tourism is regarded as an industry that plays an important role in the development of the country's economy. Thailand recognizes the importance of tourism as the main mechanism in helping to maintain stability and drive the country's economy. According to the Thai Tourism Strategy 2016 - 2025, it is to focus on the development to achieve the goal of becoming a more quality tourist destination, connecting tourism within and among tourism groups which lead to the distribution of tourists as well as income to a local community in a form of sustainable development (Foreign Affairs Division Office of the Permanent Secretary Tourism and Sports, 2015). Moreover, emphasizing on the development of Thailand as a tourism destination by presenting Thai identity is able to generate and distribute income to various sectors. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2017).

According to tourism statistics surveyed during January - December 2019, foreign tourists from around the world traveled to Thailand approximately 39.79 million tourists. This was an increased number from the previous year as the figures in 2018 as shown 38.17 million tourists

Prachuap Khiri Khan Province is regarded as another destination of tourism where charm and peace are provided. The beauty of the sea and nature with a traditional Thai culture attracts a large number of foreign tourists. From the summary of tourism situation within Prachuap Khiri Khan Province in 2019, there were 1,055,030 foreign tourists which the statistic presents an increase of 0.75% comparing to 1,047,199 foreign tourists in 2018 (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018).

Research objectives

The objectives of this study were

1. to study the domestic tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province;
2. to study the factors affecting the tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province;
3. to study tourism patterns that affect personal relationships and tourism behaviors of foreign tourists; and
4. to study the problems in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

Conceptual Framework

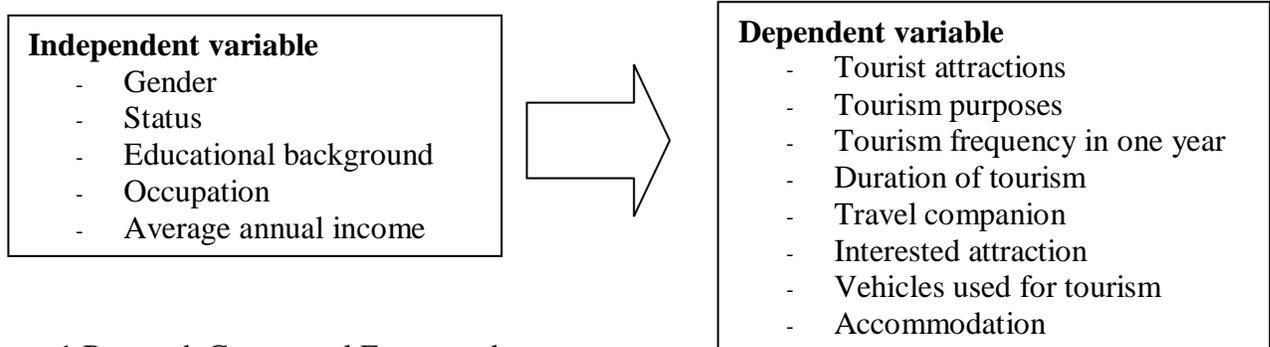


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This research employed quantitative research using a questionnaire to collect data from a sample group to investigate domestic tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

Population of this study was foreign tourists who traveled in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province. The samples were 400 foreign tourists traveling to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province derived through Simple Random Sampling technique

In this research, questionnaires were constructed which consisted of Part 1 Respondent Demography; Part 2 Tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province; Part 3 Factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province; and Part 4 Problems in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

Five levels of scoring criteria were presented as follows:

\bar{x} = 4.21 – 5.00 The highest agree

\bar{x} = 3.41 – 4.20 Highly agree

\bar{x} = 2.61 – 3.40 Moderately agree

\bar{x} = 1.81 – 2.60 Slightly agree

\bar{x} = 1.00 – 1.80 The least agree

For Content Validity checking, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in terms of content suitability, language used in the questionnaire and the consistency between research questions and objectives (IOC: Item-Objective Congruence Index). The result of IOC analysis was between 0.70-1.00 points. For the questionnaire reliability, 40 questionnaires were used in the Pilot Study and found that the questionnaire's confidence was 0.78.

The statistics used in this study were Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D) and Chi-Square.

Results

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Factors Affecting Tourism Behavior of Foreign Tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province

Factors Affecting Tourism Behavior of Foreign Tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province	Analysis		
	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level
Physical factors	4.12	0.16	High
Cultural factors	4.29	0.16	Highest
Status and reputation factors	4.31	0.15	Highest
Economic factors	4.56	0.85	Highest
Political factors	4.41	0.33	Highest
Social factors	4.00	0.09	High
Total	4.28	0.29	Highest

Table 1 showed that Factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province were at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.28$, $SD = 0.29$). The highest level was economic factors ($\bar{x} = 4.56$, $SD = 0.85$), followed by political factors ($\bar{x} = 4.41$, $SD = 0.33$) and status and reputation factors ($\bar{x} = 4.31$, $SD = 0.15$).

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Problems in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

Problems in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province	\bar{x}	S.D.	Level
Travel planning	3.50	0.50	High
Travel budget	4.41	0.49	Highest
Accommodation	4.55	0.55	Highest
Tourist attractions	4.04	0.85	High
Restaurant	4.04	0.85	High
Vehicle	4.04	0.85	High
Service/food price	4.27	0.44	Highest
Communication	3.50	0.50	High
Government measures such as lockdowns	4.60	0.49	Highest
Epidemic	4.97	0.15	Highest
Total	4.19	0.21	High

Table 2 presented problems in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province were at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.19$, $SD = 0.21$). When considering each aspect, it was found that the highest problem in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province were epidemic ($\bar{x} = 4.97$, $SD = 0.15$), followed by government measures ($\bar{x} = 4.60$, $SD = 0.49$) and accommodation ($\bar{x} = 4.55$, $SD = 0.55$).

Table 3: Relationship values between tourism patterns on personal relationships and tourism behavior of foreign tourists

Tourism behavior	Chi-Square*						
	Ecosystem	Health	Nature	History	Culture	Art and science	Sports and recreation
Tourist attractions	38.11	14.15	29.25	25.64	45.69	12.54	42.56
Tourism purposes	42.53	47.59	44.82	10.28	19.26	38.19	56.49
Tourism frequency in one year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Duration of tourism	-	9.26	12.73	-	-	-	-
Travel companion	36.4 _n	5.37	37.81	12.59	-	-	36.18
Interested attraction	22.18	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles used for tourism	-	-	16.24	-	-	-	38.24
Accommodation	-	31.64	-	-	-	-	-

*Statistically significant difference at 0.05 level

- No statistical correlation

Table 3 illustrated that tourism patterns affecting personal relationships include ecosystem, health, nature, history, culture, art and science and sports and recreation. There was a statistically significant relationship with tourism behavior at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion and Discussion

A study of domestic tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province was summarized and discussed as following issues.

1. The majority of foreign tourists traveling to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province was male, with bachelor's degree, company employee and 20,001 - 30,000 US dollars average annual income. The main purpose to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province was to travel, followed by relaxation. The interested area for the tourists was nature. This is consistent with the research of Binprathan (2019) who studies the image of Mae Hong Son Province from the perspective of foreign tourists. The findings display that most of the tourists who came to travel were male with a bachelor's degree, working as an employee of a private company. The purpose to visit Mae Hong Son Province was for sightseeing and leisure.

2. Factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province found that the factors affecting tourism behavior of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan province were economic factors, followed by political factors. and status and reputation factors. This is consistent with the research results of Panyakham (2014) studies the tourism behavior of tourists in ASEAN countries. The findings were found that the factors affecting the decision to travel to Thailand are inexpensive, famous tourist attractions and taste of food.

3. The problem in traveling for foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province was the epidemic problem, followed by the problem of government measures and accommodation.

4. Tourism patterns affecting personal relationships were divided into ecosystem, health, nature, history, culture, art and science and sports and recreation. There was a statistically significant relationship with tourism behavior at the 0.05 level. The result presented that tourist

attractions and tourism purposes were used to determine the tourism style of foreign tourists in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.

Recommendations from the study

1. The promotion of family tourism activities should be promoted to make the foreign tourists impress and return to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province again.
2. The situation of the epidemic of the Covid-19 led to the decrease in the tourist numbers. Therefore, government, private and public sectors should help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 with encourage tourism measures in Prachuap Khiri Khan Province to recover tourism situation and welcome more foreign tourists.

Suggestions for the next research

1. Information of foreign tourists residing in Prachuap Khiri Khan for several years should be collected. This could be done in a form of an in-depth interview to know the purpose of deciding to travel to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.
2. A survey gathered from Asian tourists traveling to Prachuap Khiri Khan Province should be considered to design marketing tourism strategies.

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