Inclusive Innovation for ENHANCED LOCAL EXPERIENCE IN TOURISM

August 28 - 31, 2018
Phuket Graceland Resort & Spa, Phuket, Thailand
WORKSHOP ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

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PREFACE

On behalf of the organizing committee, we are pleased to welcome you to the workshop Inclusive Innovation for Enhanced Local Experience in Tourism co-hosted by University of Birmingham, United Kingdom, University of Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok, Thailand, British Council Researcher Links, Newton Fund and The Thailand Research Fund. The Research Links Workshop provides a unique opportunity for early career researchers from the United Kingdom, Thailand and internationally to share research expertise and network, exploring opportunities for building long-lasting collaborations related to inclusive innovations and new business models in tourism. Thank you for joining us and we hope that you will enjoy Thai hospitality while attending the workshop and have an unforgettable and rewarding stay in Phuket, Thailand.

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Ratchadavan Kongsatt and Chanin Yoopetch

GASTRONOMY ROUTES AS A TOURIST DESTINATION ATTRACTION: A CASE STUDY OF TRADITIONAL FOOD IN PHUKET

Chatchawan Wongwattanakit
PROGRAM

DAY 1: EXPLORING THE CONTEXT

15:00 – 17:00   Registration
17:00 – 18:30   Introductory session: Getting to know each other
18:30 – 21:00   Welcome dinner outside

DAY 2: MATCHING THEORIES, CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGIES

09:00 – 9:15   Opening address
9:15 – 10:30   Academic keynote: Levent Altinay ‘Global inclusive innovation trends, challenges and opportunities for the developing countries in tourism’
10:30 – 11:00  Tea and coffee break
11:00 – 12:30  Local experience tourism

Chatchawan Wongwattanakit – Gastronomy Routes as a Tourist Destination Attraction: A Case Study of Traditional Food in Phuket

Chootham Tangjaitrong – Strategies to Enhance Tourism Before and After International Conventions in the Lanna Area

Emmanuel Akwasi Adu-Ampong – Institutional thickness, inclusive innovation and tourism-led local economic development planning

Louise Todd – Visualising the ‘festival city’: towards a stakeholder semiotic framework

Mokter Hossain – Sharing Economy: A Comprehensive Literature Review

12:30 – 13:30  Lunch
13:30 – 15:00  Tourism marketing

Aaron Yankholmes – Stakeholders’ opinions on how to brand and diversify Macau’s tourism product

Chanin Yoopetch - Cross-cultural Study on the Perception of Hospitality: The Case Study of Thailand

Eric Jensen – Building consumer insights through inclusive analytics and audience research innovation in nature and culture/heritage tourism
Lily Lavanchawee Brahmopala Sujarittanonta – Food Supply Chain Management of Wetlands: Tourism Destination & Home of Well-Loved Recipes

Pachernwaat Srichai – Developing online marketing abilities of the local fabric’s entrepreneurs to support creative economy and tourism in Northern Thailand

15:00 – 15:30 Tea and coffee break

15:30 – 17:00 Methods school for multidisciplinary research in the topic areas

Babak Taheri – Innovative workshop on: Innovative mixed and multi method approaches to hospitality and tourism research

Philipp Wassler – Lived experience: Demonstrating phenomenological research methods in tourism

Moderator: Prof Paul Robson

17:00 – 18:00 Research speed networking (informal)

18:00 – 19:00 Free time

19:00 – 21:00 Dinner

DAY 3: TRANSLATING INNOVATION TO DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

09:15 – 09:30 Opening

09:30 – 10:30 Keynote panel – Practitioners perspective and research

Arpaparn Chanaiyom, Kullanart Obsuwan

Moderators: Pussadee Polsaram, Sameer Hosany

10:30 – 11:00 Tea and coffee break

11:00 – 12:30 Digital innovations for tourism

Alisha Ali – ICT as a force for Tourism Community-based Social Transformation

Ed Cottam – Smart tourism technology continuance, perceived value and resident wellbeing
Wilawan Inchamnan – The new technology services the aging society in Thailand

Montakan Chubchuwong – Benefits and Problems of Using Online Travel Agencies: A Study of Small, Independent Hotels in

Daisy Xuefeng Fan – Online Social Contact and Tourists’ Value Co-Creation

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 – 15:00 Social welfare

Anyu Liu – Could Air Pollution Keep International Visitors from China? -An Investigation of the impact of PM 2.5 on Tourism Demand

Daniel Wright – Scenario Planning of the Future of Tourism in Phuket

Kitsada Tungchawal – Residents’ Involvement in Tourism and Coastal Conservation: A Case of Bang Ta Boon Village, Phetchaburi, Thailand

Niorn Srisomyong – Agritourism: an approach to rural development in Thailand

Rawinkhan Srinon – Smart Mobility Systems Planning: Incorporating Customer Insights to Enhance Local Experience

15:00 – 15:30 Tea and coffee break

15:30 – 17:00 Local culture and community development

Karuna Yampray – Game-based learning for a tourist to learn Thai etiquettes and customs

Maysa Utairat – The Theatrical Play in the Mahachat Sung Sermon, a Gift of Wellness

Bailey Ashton Adie – Film tourism and cultural performance: Mexico City’s Day of the Dead parade

Charles Mansfield – Way-tales: archaeological topophonics for emerging tourist spaces

David Ross – Creative interpretation in archaeological heritage Tourism: insights from Alentejo, Portugal

17:00 – 18:00 FailFaire: Celebrating and learning from failure (semi-formal)
DAY 4: COLLABORATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

09:15 – 09:30 Opening

09:30 – 11:00 Experience tourism and services

- **Hai Nguyen** – The determinants of (in)authentic heritage experiences
- **Louis Rice** – Healthy cities and tourism: integrating healthy lifestyles and tourism practices
- **Rochaporn Chansawang** – Promoting Agritourism through Connecting Young Farmers using Mobile Technology in Thailand
- **Ratchadavan Kongsatt** – Attitude and Perception of Tourism and Hospitality Students towards Career Choice as a Tour Guide
- **Thitikan Satchabut** – Serving Tourism Education with Service Quality

11:00 – 11:30 Tea and coffee break

11:30 – 12:30 British Council Keynote: Exploring research funding opportunities between UK and Thailand

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 – 14:15 Exploring opportunities for research impact – (on the way to Tiger Muay Thai)

14:15 – 15:00 Community centre visit and seminar with managers – Tiger Muay Thai

15:00 – 15:30 Closing and planning for the future
ACADEMIC KEYNOTE: GLOBAL INCLUSIVE INNOVATION TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN TOURISM

Professor Levent Altinay

Keynote Speaker Profile: Professor Altinay, Research Lead of Oxford School of Hospitality Management, is the Director of the Centre for International Tourism and Events Management Research (CITEM). A researcher of international renown, Professor Altinay is also the Editor-in-Chief of the Service Industries Journal (SSCI) and he sits on the editorial boards of more than twelve journals including Journal of Business Research and Journal of Services Marketing. Professor Altinay has a strong record of attracting blue chip external funding, including funding from the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council), the British Academy and Newton Funding. His recently funded research projects look at the role of entrepreneurship for the socio-economic integration of refugees (Newton Funded); the role of hospitality and tourism businesses in helping elderly population with their social isolation (Hong Kong Polytechnic Funded); and empowering women through entrepreneurship in order to enhance the well-being of the community. Altinay has co-authored strategic management, entrepreneurship and research methods textbooks.
STAKEHOLDERS’ OPINIONS ON HOW TO BRAND AND DIVERSIFY MACAU’S TOURISM PRODUCT

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: RESEARCH PAPER

Keywords: Branding, brand attitudes, Macau, public participation, product development innovation, planning.

TOPIC AND AIM

This paper reports findings derived from public consultations on developing a tourism plan for the Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China. The aim is to show public opinions how branding the SAR in the international tourism market place. Understanding stakeholders’ attitudes towards destination branding could lead to a better product development that reflects their values, identity and pride.

CONTEXT

Theoretically, Macau does not need to position itself or create a brand image. It is the only place in China where gambling is legal, and it has in relatively short period become the world’s biggest casino gaming hub in terms of revenue. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2016), the city is a top North-East Asia destination recording over 30.95 million visitors in 2016 mostly interested in casino gambling. Thus, casino gambling tourists (66.1% from the Chinese mainland) brought in US$30.1 billion in 2015 (UNTWO 2016).

However, the amount of time international visitors spend in the city is relatively short. Available statistics indicate the average length of stay for all visitors is 1.9 nights. The reasons for the short length of stay are not hard to find with most important reason related to its core product– casino gambling. As previously mentioned gaming entertainment is Macau brand image in the international tourism marketplace. To the extent that casino gambling activities obscures other activities including the city’s cultural heritage attractions (consisting of Portuguese and Chinese cultures). Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that many international visitors seek out Macau as a stopover from Hong Kong (just an hour away by 24-hour ferry). Under such circumstances the number of activities pursued and intensity of consumption of the city’s product offerings is very limited. Consequently, the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) initiated a three-month public consultation on a 15-year Tourism Industry Development Master Plan. Among other things, the plan seeks to position the city as world centre of tourism and leisure by diversifying its tourism products, boost its major generating markets and enhance service quality and visitor experience.
The literature on collaborative and cooperative planning suggest that involving not only local residents but also industry practitioners, profit and non-profit organizations helps in effective plan implementation and evaluation (Brand and Gaffikin 2007). By the same token, scholars (see e.g. Morgan et al. 2003) emphasis the vital role of public and private sector stakeholders in the political process involved in destination brand management. The literature suggests that providing local residents and industry practitioners the opportunity to express their opinions, feelings and emotions in the branding process ensures successful marketing campaign. As advocates for the destination, both public and private sector stakeholders play a critical role in the destination brand management and product development (Anderson and Ekman, 2009; Eshuis and Edwards, 2012; Konecnik Ruzzier and Petek, 2012) and their support is guaranteed if the destination brand and product reflects their pride, identity and esteem (Moilanen and Rainistor 2009, Eshuis and Edwards 2012, Wheeler at al. 2011, Zenker 2011).

While there is considerable work on stakeholder involvement in the planning and destination branding planning process and whether stakeholder involvement works, not much research exist on stakeholder opinions can drive innovative ideas in destination branding and product development efforts (Hall and Williams 2008). This study represents an attempt to that void.

**METHODOLOGY**

Data for the study were obtained from written comments sent to the MGTO during the public consultation period from 23 May to 22 July 2016. The public consultation exercise which commenced the year earlier was the first phase of a three-pronged process in developing the Macao Tourism Industry Master Plan Project. This phase aimed to collect opinions and suggestions from the general public on how to sustainably develop tourism. The second phase involved the development of the detailed master and launch of public consultations whilst the third phase was the completion of the final master plan. Members of the public were requested to send comments and suggestions on the overall master plan, the four stated goals of the plan and its guiding principles. A compilation of the comments received is publicly available. In all, 43 comments were received on how the city should be branded or positioned. The comments were in three different languages namely Chinese, English and Portuguese. The current study analyses only comments written in English.

Content analysis was used to analyze the data (Finn, Elliott-White and Walton, 2000). The process involved categorization of the comments to fit the framework of the current study. Following from that, the comments were systematically analyzed and coded. Both manifest and latent content analysis were employed in an attempt to capture the meaning of informants’ descriptions. This facilitated a better understanding of informants’ brand attitudes. The coding procedure described by Miles and Hubermann (1994) was employed to identify words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that conveyed informants’ perceptions and understandings. Finally, a narrative approach, using direct quotations is adopted in the presentation of the study results.
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As expected, the comments demonstrated the challenges involved in destination brand management. One informant suggested that gaining local residents’ support was the first hurdle for the MGTO:

*A more questionable point is the fact that the document defines as a challenge, getting Macau residents to support the city’s branding. This would hardly be a tough obstacle to overcome* (Jose I. Duarte, 8/6/2016).

For others, diversifying the city’s core product presents challenges for all stakeholders. It required a two-way communication process where vested interested are known and addressed.

*For promotion, in addition to an international generic branding, local targeted promotional themes or key message should be engaged e.g. one cannot tell Portuguese audience how attractive are the “old” churches in Macao. Likewise, one cannot tell the Mainland Chinese how historical are the temples in Macao. As for Hong Kong, people normally care for new facilities, attractions and value for money* (Market representative, Hong Kong Tourism Bureau, 19/7/2016).

*We do need to have a proper branding for Macau, and this is a very key element for the development of Macau in the future. It’s not only a work for the government to resolve, it’s something for the whole Macau* (Institute of European Studies of Macao, 11/6/2016).

The comments buttress Morgan et al. (2003) assertion that destination managers need to ensure that brand image sought by commercial trade bodies and industry operators is differentiate them for marketing and promotion, but do not conflict destination managers own positioning for the country. In this case industry operators showed concern about how an effective brand campaign could not only maintain the city’s competitive advantage but also rake in direct economic benefits in terms of tourism receipts. It also ties into what Hjalager (2010) pointed out about using innovative ways in reinforcing the city’s brand in the customer minds:

*Focused, strong branding with a clear identity: in a world where the consumer is becoming more technologically-savvy, easily distracted and more demanding, a strong identity and brand for Macau is more important than ever.*

*It’s not long before a destination somewhere announces a new logo, tagline or advertising message. To be successful in today’s competitive global marketplace, destinations need to have a strong brand image to stand out from the crowd.*

*Asian destinations have created many catchy brands. It must be true to who we are, and not try to be everything to everyone. Such a brand story will have deeper roots, allowing us to genuinely reach more and capture their interest* (MGM, 22/7/2016)
When taken together, these findings from the public consultation provided a real breakthrough in destination brand planning process. First, it provided the database for MGTO to support its management and communication activities. Second, it underscores the necessity for delivering an integrated branding campaign which provide symbolic experiences for local residents, industry operators and tourists. The common thread in the comments revolve around the issues of the magnitude of different product types and attributes involved in the destination brand. Lastly, the study findings perhaps provide empirical support for Hjalager’s (2002) recommendation of using Abernaty and Clark’s (1998) transilence map for tourism innovation.

REFERENCES


ICT AS A FORCE FOR TOURISM COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Alisha Ali
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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: Tourism, community-based tourism, sustainable development, information and communication technologies, ICT, community informatics

TOPIC AND AIM

Tourism is invaluable as an instrument for development but like most economic activities, it has led to detrimental environmental and socio-cultural impacts, some of which are irreversible. Sustainable development of tourism is promoted by the tourism industry to strike the balance between economic growth and environmental protection. One mechanism used to achieve this is community-based tourism (CBT). CBT initiatives are integral in delivering social changes in real world socio-ecological settings, however there are difficulties with the viability of CBT projects in tackling poverty and addressing environmental issues. The purpose of this research is to develop effective and equitable solutions for enabling CBT to deliver tangible socio-economic transformations through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). Despite the symbiotic relationship, which exists between ICT and sustainable tourism, there has been little research into how such technologies can be used from a community-based perspective. Host communities are one of the key stakeholders in the delivery of the tourism product and with technology becoming ubiquitous, such communities can engage with ICT to achieve real changes.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

CBT is an approach to tourism development which supports capacity building and empowerment of local communities in helping them to achieve their development objectives and realise the benefits from tourism (Tolkach and King, 2015). It is community-managed and offers recognised rewards such as offering local communities a voice and creating a sense of ownership (Lapeyre, 2010; Shikida et al., 2010), poverty alleviation by supporting stressed economies (Tasci, Croes and Villanueva, 2014; Su, 2011; Lopez-Guzman, Sánchez-Cañizares and Pavón, 2011; Lapeyre, 2010), diversification of livelihoods (Shikida et al., 2010), boosting stakeholder cooperation and protecting the natural environment (Su, 2011; Lopez-Guzman, Sánchez-Cañizares and Pavón, 2011). CBT is about ensuring local communities have empowerment over tourism development activities in their localities and that they reap a portion of the benefits to improve their development opportunities. According to Stone (1989) these initiatives should be designed to ensure the communities are at the core and they participate in making decisions about the mobilisation of their resources, their needs.
and how these can be met. Ruiz-Ballesteros (2011) argues that some of these communities live in areas of environmental and strategic importance and these areas are critical in sustaining and balancing the world’s ecosystems therefore their significance for sustainable development is undeniable.

CBT exists in high-volume in the developing work in regions such as Asia, Africa and Latin America (Dodds, Ali and Galaski, 2016). Despite the aforementioned benefits, the failings of CBT have been well documented (see for example Dixey, 2005). Gascón (2013) identified four main challenges which are limited economic viability, conflict with various interest groups and social exclusion, commodification of natural resources and limitations placed on the local community. CBT projects are however critical in driving real-world social transformations in some of the world’s less privileged communities and these challenges should not prevent the development of such projects (Dodds, Ali and Galaski, 2016). Additionally, there have been examples of where CBT has been successful (see for example Nielson and Spencely, 2010; Dodds, Ali and Galaski, 2016).

Communities alone cannot achieve their capabilities but rather various stakeholders have an impact on this. Understanding different stakeholders and their roles is critical to achieving the sustainable development of tourism (Dodds and Butler, 2009; Graci, 2013). Therefore a participatory, multi-stakeholder approach is also crucial in delivering real changes from CBT. This approach has gained widespread traction since the publication of Freeman’s (1984) text where stakeholders were seen to be critical constituents of an organisation’s environment. This discussion has penetrated the tourism sphere where numerous researchers have argued that a stakeholder perspective must be considered in achieving sustainability (see for example Murphy, 1985; Bramwell and Lane, 2000). Here is where ICT can be of real value.

The use of ICT enables stakeholders to become more efficient in their communication strategies and support greater cooperation in the delivery of the tourism products and services (Buhalis and O’Connor 2006). One such ICT tool is community informatics. Gurstein (2000) describes this as a set of principles and practices that are focused on designing and delivering ICT for enhancing community development (through personal, social, cultural or economic development) and the lives of the residents. Communities have untapped potential and through the use of ICT they can become enlightened on what they possess and what they are capable of thereby developing local commitment, resources and skills (Taylor 2004). ICT is seen as having an important facilitating role in the community processes and transformation through bridging the digital divide and dealing with community fragmentation and inclusion of previously excluded communities (Gretzel at al. 2009). Milne et al. (2005) identified five areas where ICT can enhance the quality of life of a community. These are the promotion of democratic participation, development of social capital, empowerment of individuals (especially marginalised groups), strengthening of community and its identity and creation of sustainable community economic development.

This research proposes that CBT can become more effective and equitable in delivering real world socio-economic transformation through the application of community informatics. It will be underpinned by the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA). This school of thought is fundamental in approaches to alleviating poverty, resource management and development of rural areas (Scoones, 1998; 2009), in essence, transformative social change. It is focused
on people and their capabilities, knowledge, skills, resources and delivering actions at the community based level (Tao and Wall 2009; Lapeyre, 2010, Wu and Pearce, 2014). It is practical in its applications in helping to boost and grow the livelihoods of communities (Ashley, 2000). This abstract has set out the rationale for seeking to address CBT from an innovative perspective i.e. the use of ICTs. The research design proposed below identifies how the data can be gathered to support such an approach. Thailand would be an ideal location to further develop this research. Therefore participation as this workshop is opportune.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research approach is based on the notion that small changes can lead to revolutionary transformations. The steps in the research designed are outlined below:

1. **Global literature review and examination of current CBT and community informatics operations**

A global literature review of CBT, SLA, community informatics and community development will be undertaken. This will be coupled with an examination of current CBT operations through the delivery of a worldwide survey to CBT tour operators. The tour operators are integral in the selling of the CBT experiences and will provide practical, hands-on knowledge to complement the academic and trade literature bringing in a trans-disciplinary perspective.

2. **Multi-site case study**

The areas selected for the case study will be derived from the literature review and the survey. It will involve a mixed methods approach comprising of observations and interviews with stakeholders engaged in these projects such as the local community, policy makers and funding agencies. It will also consist of a document analysis that involves scrutinising any documents relevant to the CBT initiatives such as newspapers, government documents, project archives and any other materials. This will result in criteria for success using community informatics.

3. **Knowledge mobilisation**

The world cafe methodology will be used to stimulate and engage dialogue with key informants on CBT on the developed criteria for success. This approach allows us to deploy expertise from a broad group of stakeholders bringing a multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary perspective to ensure our criteria developed are fit for purpose.

4. **Application and Evaluation**

The criteria for success will be applied to failing CBT projects at selected sites. The aim here is capacity building. Success will be measured by if these projects can be revived.

5. **Knowledge sharing**

A toolkit will be designed for use by any CBT initiative to produce a marketable CBT.
CONTRIBUTION

Critical mass and deep change are not being reaped for many communities engaging in CBT practices. It is now necessary to stop compartmentalising and adopt a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach to achieve greater benefits for all. Engaging local communities with community informatics through an SLA approach will address the complex processes involved to bring about the social transformations pinned on the hopes of CBT. This proposed research will be able to identify and disseminate effective and justifiable solutions to bring benefits to the local communities. This approach is innovative as it seeks to understand the historical, contextual and cultural intricacies involved in different CBT initiatives and consider this from the perspectives of the stakeholders involved. Through this approach, this research would build expert and knowledge networks for dissemination and implementation of innovative best practices. It will stimulate and grow dialogue across competing stakeholders involved in CBT to ensure such initiatives leave long-lasting positive impacts on the communities it was designed to help and create a framework for joint action.

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COULD AIR POLLUTION KEEP INTERNATIONAL VISITORS FROM CHINA?--AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF PM 2.5 ON TOURISM DEMAND

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: Tourism Demand, Smog, Air Pollution, Mixed Frequency Data Sampling, Aerosol Optical Depth Retrieval

TOPIC AND AIM

People travel for enjoyment (Heung, Qu and Chu, 2001) and one of the most important factor is to enjoy good weather (Kozak, 2002). As the impact of tourism development on economic growth has been recognized by more and more destinations, tourism scholars are keen on investigating the influencing factors of tourism demand. In spite of the traditional economic factors, more light has been shed on non-economic factors such as climate (Goh, 2002), peace (Pratt and Liu, 2016) and terrorism (Liu and Pratt, 2017).

Although increasing studies have investigated the influence of climate on tourism demand using different methods (Goh, 2002; Li, Song and Li, 2017; Li, Goh, Hung and Chen, 2017), most of them focus on the positive aspects. In such studies, climate is considered as a push factor to attract tourists to destination. However, the negative impacts such as air pollution which keeps tourists away from destinations are overlooked. Compared with positive factors, negative impact such as air pollution of destinations not only influences the sustainable development of tourism industry, more importantly, it seriously harm the local experience and the health of both residents and tourists. Thus, the investigation of air pollution on tourism demand is valuable and timely for both academia and the development of tourism industry.

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of air pollution on international tourism demand using the sustained and serious smog happened in China as an example. The objectives are as follows:

Examining the long-run relationship between air pollution and tourism demand
Comparing the tolerance of visitors from different source markets to smog
Examining the moderating effect of public attention on the influence of air pollution on tourism demand
LITERATURE REVIEW

Koenig and Abegg (1997) is an early study to investigate the impact of climate change on tourism demand. Only one climate indicator, the temperature of destination, was used. They revealed that the increase of temperature in Switzerland had a negative impact on the winter tourism. Temperature has been continuously used as a climate measurement by scholars such as Lise and Tol (2002) and Falk and Lin (2018). The limitation of above studies is although temperature is an important measurement of climate, it cannot reflect the impact of climate comprehensively.

A tourist climate index (TCI) developed by Mieczkowski (1985) is widely used in the last decade to complement the limitation of single indicator studies. TCI is a positive index, weighted by seven variables covering temperature, humidity, precipitation, hours of sunshine and wind speed and ranged from 0 to 100. Basically, TCI measures the destination climate relative to an ideal climate for tourists. Moore (2010) used TCI to capture the climate impact on Caribbean tourism demand and found a positive influence by a dynamic panel data model. Goh (2012) revealed a long-run relationship between Hong Kong tourists and TCI of Japan, the UK and the USA, ranging from 0.06 to 0.114. In a recent study, Li, Song and Li (2017) not only considered the destination climate but also the climate in the source market. They introduced the climate gap concept to study the climate impact under the “Push and Pull” framework. Zhang and Kulendran (2017) and Li, Goh, Hung and Chen (2017) also investigated the relationship between climate and tourism demand with the consideration of seasonality.

The above literature assumes tourists go for travel to enjoy the climate in the destination. Climate is a push factor to tourism demand, no matter it is measured by a single indicator or a comprehensive index. When visitors choose destinations, on one hand, nice climate could attract them to visit. On the other hand, climate could also play as a pull factor to keep them away from the destination, for example, extreme weather and air pollution. But the negative impact of climate on tourism demand is overlooked until recent years.

China has suffered serious air pollution, particularly smog pollution, in the last decade. This also attracted the attention of tourism scholars. Becken et al. (2017) developed a structural equation model with the data collected from Australian and American residents. They found that the air quality has a positive impact on visiting intention to China. Xu and Reed (2017) used Google search query data to measure the perceived air pollution and revealed that air pollution could lower international tourism demand to China. Deng, Li and Ma (2017) employed industrial waste gas emission to measure air pollution and developed a spatial econometric model. Their findings are consistent with Xu and Reed (2017) that air pollution could keep international visitors away from China. The limitation of the above studies is the selection of air pollution indicator. An objective indicator which measures the concentration of main pollution source in the air, such as PM2.5, would be more precise to investigate the influence of air pollution on tourism demand. To fill in this gap, a mixed frequency data sampling (MIDAS) model is developed based on demand theory in economics and the satellite remote sensing data is used to estimate PM2.5 concentrations in China.
METHODOLOGY

An autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) MIDAS model is introduced to estimate the impact of air pollution on tourism demand as follows

\[
\ln(y_{jt}) = \beta_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{k} \beta_i \ln(x_{i,t-1}) + \sum_{i=1}^{m} \sum_{j=1}^{n} \alpha_{ij} \ln(x_{i,j,t-1}) + \sum_{i=1}^{n} \gamma_i \ln(z_{i,t-1}) + \epsilon_t
\]

Where \( y_{jt} \) is the number of visitor arrivals from the \( j \)th source market to China in period \( t \).
\( x_{i,t} \) is the concentration of PM 2.5 in China, which is measured by the aerosol optical depth retrieval data from satellite remote sensing in the \( l \)th month of the \( i \)th quarter. \( z_{i,t} \) represents other determinants of tourism demand such as the income level of the source market, the relative price between destination and country of origin, the price and air pollution of other competitive destinations. \( \ln \) is the natural logarithm and \( \epsilon_t \) is the residual which follows a normal distribution \( N(0,1) \).

The model is estimated by a general-to-specific method and the lag orders are determined by Akaike information criterion. The estimation result are finalized if the residual of the model can pass a series of diagnostic tests including serial correlation, heteroscedasticity and normality. Elasticities, which measures the responsiveness of tourism demand to a 1% change of independent variables, are calculated based on the estimation results.

The top ten source markets of China are selected to investigate the influence of air pollution on tourism demand. Compared with quarterly data, the introduction of monthly air pollution data could enrich the information used for model estimation and hence, obtain a more reliable estimation results. Since China only started to release PM 2.5 data in recent years, it is not enough for the model estimation. Thus, the aerosol optical depth retrieval data is used to estimate the concentration of PM 2.5 on the ground (Long, Wang, Wu and Zhang, 2014). Similar to Xu and Reed (2017), Google trend data is employed to measure the public attention on the air pollution of China. The cross term of PM 2.5 concentration and Google trend is thus introduced into the model and examine the moderating effect of public attention. The data of visitor arrivals are from China Tourism Administration and economic determinants are from International Monetary Fund.

EXPECTED FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTION

It is expected the income of source market has a positive impact on tourism demand whereas price lowers the demand. More importantly, air pollution should have a negative impact on the number of visitor arrivals to China. The public attention could strengthen such influence. Long-haul markets are expected to have more tolerance of air pollution than short-haul markets.
The originalities of this research are as follows: First, it is the first study to explore the pull effect of climate under tourism demand theory. Second, it is the first attempt to introduce MIDAS into the studies focusing on the relationship between tourism demand and air pollution. Third, it innovatively uses the aerosol optical depth retrieval data to measure the concentration of PM2.5 in tourism domain, which solves the data availability problem of air pollution indicators when the data is missing.

Air pollution does not only obstruct the sustainable development of destinations, but also affect the experience of tourists and the health of tourists and hosts. Meanwhile, air pollution is a global topic. Thus, the method and finding of this research could be expanded to other destinations and provide scientific evidence for the decision-makers.

REFERENCES


Traditionally, scholars have felt obliged to make a methodological decision between using single quantitative or single qualitative methods. However, methodological norms are increasingly challenged as innovative research shifts scholarship toward the use of dynamic and multifaceted positions by adopting multi-method and mixed-method approaches. This has led to rapid epistemological and ontological advancements in hospitality and tourism studies over the last 20 years (Hewlett and Brown, 2018). While qualitative and quantitative approaches provide inherently different viewpoints on phenomena, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.5) highlight the importance of using multi-method and mixed-method design, as the “central premise that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone”. Here, it is important to differentiate mixed-method from multi-method in social science studies. Researchers combine quantitative and qualitative methods when conducting mixed-method research, whereas a multi-method approach synthesises multiple types of quantitative or qualitative methods. For example, there are six main types of mixed-method design including:

(1) convergent parallel; (2) explanatory sequential; (3) exploratory sequential; (4) advanced transformative; (5) advanced embedded; (6) multiphase design (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Researchers select either of these philosophical and design underpinnings based on their main research question.

To this end, innovative data collection and analysis methods are employed to investigate phenomena across the social sciences, with hospitality and tourism research proving no different. For example, Assaf et al. (2018) applied the Bayesian method to model and forecast regional tourism demand. Olya et al. (2018) used fuzzy-set qualitative analysis, which is a bridge between qualitative and quantitative, as a pragmatic way of solving complex phenomena (such as the behaviour of disabled tourists for the use of peer-to-peer accommodation providers). Alaei et al. (2018) claimed that sentiment analysis could improve tourism research methods by drawing upon ‘big data’ in order to increase theoretical understanding throughout the field. Olya and Alipour (2015) devised an index for tourism climate by upgrading the conventional tourism climate index using fuzzy logic and validating it using a quantitative approach.

Further, Yadegaridehkordi et al. (2018) employed a combination of conventional symmetrical analysis (i.e., SEM) with Adaptive Neuro-Fuzzy Inference Systems (ANFIS) to
predict the determinants of hotel success. This trend is coupled with an upturn in interest in approaches centred on eliciting data from traditionally under-investigated perspectives, such as the characteristically biographical Oral History analysis (Huber et al., 2017) or through indigenous methodological design (Whitney-Squire et al., 2018). Further, as contemporary tourism increasingly finds innovative ways of using (and indeed sometimes being beholden to) the internet (Ryan, 2017), so too has emerged an increased awareness of how researchers can reliably incorporate netnographic data into existing methodological frameworks in order to support or stimulate nascent findings (Mkono and Tribe, 2017; Thanh and Kirova, 2018). Further, the adoption of techniques limiting the inherent drawback of qualitative research subjectivity has also gained traction in recent years, with studies underpinned by Q Method emerging as a more robust and reliable reflective method in an attempt to avoid the obfuscation of unanticipated findings (Huang et al., 2016; Wijngaarden, 2017).

However, there are several difficulties in applying innovative multi-method, mixed-method and multi-source approaches, including: building a conceptual model from multi-source data; the high cost; require researchers to work in multiple teams or projects; the danger of personal bias; the possibility of generating different answers for the same phenomenon which could lead to the interpretation of different results at the qualitative and quantitative level; use of rigorous quantitative and qualitative research to assess the magnitude and meaning of concepts; and the need for systematic and robust reliability and validity assessment techniques. Nonetheless, recent studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2017; Li et al., 2017; tom Dieck et al., 2017; Xue and Krestetter, 2017; Wells et al., 2015; Xie et al., 2017) demonstrate that hospitality and tourism research continues to advance through the application of multi-method, mixed-method and multi-source approaches. Taken together, this innovative workshop aims to provide a better understanding of the potential benefits and strengths of multi-method, mixed-method and multi-source approaches within the field. It offers a collection of pragmatic methods that have the potential to advance the future of innovative hospitality and tourism research. While not limited to the below, we wish to draw particular attention to the following issues, innovative research approaches, and under-researched themes:

- Mixed-methods in raising socio-pragmatic awareness;
- Authentic vs. Elicited data;
- The breadth and depth of philosophical assumptions underpinning varied methodological positions;
- Appropriate use of reliability and validity in qualitative and quantitative assessment techniques;
- Assessment of the challenges in conducting empirical research that combines qualitative and quantitative methods;
- Innovative quantitative and qualitative approaches to scale development; New techniques for analysing Big Data;
- Modelling using neural network, fuzzy logic, and/or ANFIS;
- Modelling using Bayesian network and Qualitative Comparative Analysis;
- Q Method;
Hierarchical Linear and Multilevel Modelling;
Dialogic ways of mixing methods and the benefits thereof;
Underexploited data sources for multi-method qualitative and quantitative research in hospitality and tourism;
Ethical and legal issues involved in conducting mixed-method and multi-method research;
Analysis of narratives emerging from under-represented or overlooked perspectives;
The innovative use of netnographic data sources;
New qualitative research methods or techniques and new approaches to applying traditional quantitative methods in hospitality and tourism research;

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Films are ubiquitous in modern culture, being consumed globally by all levels of society. Therefore, it is unsurprising that there is a specific niche tourism market, film tourism, which involves the visitation of sites or sets made popular through various types of visual media: film, television, video, and DVD (Beeton, 2016; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). Many authors highlight how the inclusion of a destination within a film is far-reaching type of product placement (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Su et al., 2011; Tooke & Baker, 1996). This type of destination marketing can be problematic, however, particularly in regards to depictions of heritage. Busby and Klug (2001: 321) highlighted that films can function as ‘a medium through which a range of cultural meanings and values may be communicated.’ However, this needs to be carefully controlled as films can have a strong influence on the expectations of visitors in regards to historical and cultural elements (Frost, 2006). Bolan et al. (2011) note that tourists may expect films to realistically portray a destination, which can cause a sense of ‘displacement’ when they are confronted with actual reality. How then does this system function when applied to intangible cultural heritage?
DAY OF THE DEAD AND SPECTRE

Day of the Dead is an important cultural celebration in Mexico, and, while celebrations often vary from region to region, certain characteristics are shared amongst all the different groups who celebrate it (Villavicencio Garcia, 2016, p. 84). It is also important to note that, while it is often referred as a day, in truth, the length of ritual varies from two days to a full week, with the most important days being November 1st and November 2nd, often referred as day of the dead and day of all saints. Furthermore, while these dates are known as “días festivos” or festive days in English, the meaning is closer to that of a bank holiday than a festival or party. According to Cortés (2005: 132), Day of the Dead can best be described as a cultural manifestation that is Catholic in form but indigenous in content. However, what is most important to keep in mind when discussing Day of the Dead is that festivities are private, intimate affairs, where respect is shown to ancestors and revered figures through ritual. It is not, as is commonly depicted in popular culture, a party or festivity where death is embraced and celebrated.

On the 29th of October 2016, Mexico City held its first, annual Day of the Dead parade. This event was developed as a result of the James Bond film, Spectre (Gobierno de la República, 2016). In fact, the Mexican Ministry of Tourism (Secretaría de Turismo, 2016: 76) highlighted how important the film was for touristic visibility as it was released in more than 100 countries. According to The Telegraph (Associated Press, 2016), representatives of Mexico City promised that there would be Spectre props incorporated into the parade, solidifying its connection to the film. Additionally, many of the film’s parade aesthetics were incorporated into the Mexico City even, notably the broad use of the Catrina imagery, Frida Khalo-esque dress, and even almost direct copies of floats from the film. This is unsurprising as Mexico has a history of cultural touristification (Gonzales, 2008). However, this process is underpinned by a societal power structure wherein the elite ‘sell’ indigeneity, often without the input of this marginalized group of people (Ely, 2013). The use of an artificially constructed ‘indigenous’ event can be seen as the final tourism product that was being marketed to an international audience, regardless of its basis in actual tradition.

CONTRIBUTION

This is the first work that presents a cultural event as a part of a film tourism experience. Given the overall private nature of traditional Day of the Dead festivities, this may be the only means by which an outsider may interact, or even learn about this important intangible cultural heritage. However, this is problematic as the film medium can often portray a ‘fake’ reality. This is particularly evident in the case of the Day of the Dead parade in Mexico City. According to the Mexican government (Gobierno de la República, 2016: 10), the parade attracted 250,000 spectators with 164,000 tourists in Mexico City that weekend who had an economic impact of 963 million pesos. However, Spectre presented an artificial, cultural event that had not previously existed, and, indeed, is often contrary to the origins and practices of traditional Day of the Dead celebrations. Mexico City’s decision to make real this event is an example of government-driven touristification of indigenous cultural practices. This paper is only a presentation of a new aspect of film tourism and the complications arising from its utilization. Future research needs to analyse the local reactions to the parade, specifically
focusing on whether or not indigenous Mexicans are open to the use of an artificial, cultural construct as a representation of their familial practices. Additionally, this discussion could benefit from a presentation of similar cases in other geographic areas.

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INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and travel industry has been the leading industry to support economic growth in many countries around the world, including United States (Liu & Pennington-Gray, 2015). Thailand is well-known around the world regarding its hospitality and its ability to entertain the tourists with variety of destination from mountains to beach. In addition, there are many different types of tourism activities, such as cultural tourism, creative tourism, and adventurous tourism. Tourism and travel industry has become one of the most important industries to the world economy. Thai Tourism industry contributed to gross domestic product approximately 10 percent in year 2016 (Wikipedia, 2017), indicating the importance of tourism industry for the Thai economy. Clearly, the higher number of international tourists visiting the country, the greater the revenue from international tourists for Thailand. This research is aimed to explore many issues, including the importance of hospitality and the level of satisfaction of international tourists visiting Thailand.

Tourism and hospitality in Thailand is highly important to support the economic growth. Moreover, tourism industry contributed around 10% of Thai economy and there are growing numbers of tourists from many continents (e.g. Asian and European) visiting Thailand (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2017).

The aim of the current study is to understand different perspectives on hospitality in the context of Thailand, between Thai and international tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Ottenbacher, Harrington, & Parsa (2009), there is no clear definition of hospitality, and a reasonable starting point in the “search for hospitality” would be one of a back to basics nature, i.e. the dictionary definition/s of hospitality. Based on the study of Brotherton and Wood, (2008), hospitality is defined as consisting of ‘offering food, beverage and lodging, or, in other words, of offering the basic needs for the person away from home’. Braithwaite (2004) explained about hospitality that hospitality should be related to providing
the guests with personal, memorable and valuable experiences and hospitality providers should focus on generosity and memories so that they can eventually create the high level of hospitality services. Based on O’Connor (2005), hospitality should be considered “behavior and experience” as the focal points for hospitality businesses because the guests can use their senses (e.g. seeing, hearing and smelling) to absorb the overall hospitality experiences.

CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES IN HOSPITALITY RESEARCH

It is important to identify the differences in cross-cultural characteristics of the tourists (Schütte & Ciarlante, 2016; Zhou et al., 2014; Ngai et al., 2007; King et al., 2003; Barron, 2002; Li et al., 2011 and Mey et al., 2006), explored the different perspectives of Asian and non-Asian tourists and further suggested that there is implication for the hospitality and tourism service providers to consider on how to better provide the hospitality for different groups of tourists. Furthermore, Mey et al., (2006) highlighted that customer satisfactions and service quality perceptions for Asian and Non-Asian tourists in hotel industry.

METHODOLOGY

The author used the self-administered survey questionnaires for data collection. 400 usable questionnaires were provided by domestic tourists in Bangkok and vicinities as well as the major destinations, such as Bangkok, Phuket and Chiang Rai to make sure that the data were not collected from the single source. This provided the benefits to avoid the bias in data collection.

CONTRIBUTION

THE RESULTS OF STUDY

The following section provided the descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test. All tourists stayed at least one night in Thailand. There are 200 Thais and 200 foreigners. For the types of accommodation, 97.5% of all the tourists staying in hotels, while 2.5% selected the youth hostels, flats, B&B or camping as the accommodation. 52% were female tourists and 46.5 % were male tourists. Additionally, 1.5% or 6 tourists preferred not to identify their gender with either male or female. The research design was intended to obtain half of the respondents as Thai and the other half as international tourists. From the data collection, for the international tourists, the major groups of the respondents came from Germany, USA, UK, Canada and China. For the educational level, 75.3% earned university degree, followed by 9.8% with post-secondary non-tertiary education.

From t-test, the differences in the level of agreements between Thai and international tourists were found in many aspects. With the level of significance of 95% confidence interval, two groups of results can be identified.

Firstly, the group of hospitality that Thai tourists had higher level of agreements than the foreign tourists in only three dimensions as follows;
• The importance of the employees’ service and professional expertise
• The satisfaction of the service level and professional expertise of the employees
• The importance of the authenticity of employee interactions with you

Secondly, the t-test results showed that the international tourists indicated higher level of agreements in the followings. For the dimension of satisfaction, the difference can be found in the followings.

• Satisfaction of the friendliness of the employees
• Satisfaction of the employees’ openness towards other cultures
• Satisfaction of the authenticity of employee interactions with you
• Satisfaction of the communication skills of the employees
• Satisfaction of the employees’ level of attention
• Satisfaction of the generosity of the employees

Regarding the level of importance of hospitality dimensions, foreigners are more concerned about the following aspects more than Thai tourists.

• The importance of the employees’ openness towards other cultures
• The importance of employee reliability shown towards you
• The importance of employee generosity shown towards you

The rest of the questions showed no significant differences between Thai and international tourists.

DISCUSSIONS

From the above results, the data collection for Thailand to measure hospitality levels in the aspects of importance and satisfaction can be used to explain the current phenomena. For variety of international tourists, Thailand is known as one of the top tourism destinations in Asia. Therefore, tourists from around the world, ranging from other Asian countries to the African continents, participated in the research. This is to proved that cross-cultural study is highly important for hospitality businesses because the hospitality services are adopted by the tourists from various social and cultural backgrounds (Schütte & Ciarlante, 2016; Zhou et al., 2014). For the differences in the perception between Thai and foreigners, the way they perceived the Thai hospitality was different, this is supported by the findings of Ngai et al. (2007). It is found in many other past research that international tourists have different perceptions on hospitality different from the local tourists (King et al., 2003; Barron, 2002)
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The level of hospitality is important for tourism in Thailand. Behind the services and interaction with the service providers, tourists will have real experiences and the engagement with community within those tourist attractions. The differences in the level of importance and level of satisfaction between two groups of tourists were clearly identified. With the clearer understanding from the study, managers of hospitality businesses can create the better guidelines and standard procedures for their organizations. It is the fact that each hospitality firms may have various degree of the customers from different social and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is expected that the findings can be used as the evidence to support further decision making for the top managers to better deal with their customers in their hospitality services.

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WAY-TALES: ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOPOPHONICS FOR EMERGING TOURIST SPACES

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: RESEARCH PAPER

Keywords: Topophonics; place branding; travel writing; ethnopôle; urban walks

TOPIC AND AIM

Describes an innovative methodology for data collection in local urban spaces using walking and audio recording with local citizens. Develops an analytical process from the data which can be reused in travel writing for place branding and for building resources for ethnographic museums and archives, ethnopôles. Draws on theories of writing and identity creation from Foucault and from Deleuze & Guattari.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research presented here develops a working practice for writing about urban space in the context of cultural tourism knowledge. The work is situated in the field of place branding (Zakarevičius & Lionikaitė 2013) and place making which identifies the positive value that citizens derive from their locality (Scribano 2016) and the changes in identity that citizens embody and display through their emotions (Costalat-Founeau 2008), (Vermot 2017). The paper sets out an experimental methodology, which will be called archaeological topophonics, which develops data collection from the innovative audio-recording work on Cardiff by Saunders & Moles (2016). The writing practices examined will be that of the researcher preparing place writing which will have impact on the destination image for the DMO and on visitors. In this aspect, the study considers the identity of the local citizens and the researcher and how identity is created though the narrating of the experience of movement through urban space (Mansfield 2017). Theoretical approaches drawn from Foucault (1983) will be used for this. Foucault (1983) explains the practices of keeping a notebook, the hypomnema, drawing on Seneca’s advice (Seneca c.65) so that anxiety of the future can be replaced with ‘the possession of a past that one can enjoy to the full and without disturbance’ (Foucault 1983, c.418). The hypomnema becomes a space in which the writer forms their own identity as a collection of the mediated voices of all the best that has been read and heard on their travels (Seneca 65, Epistle LXXXIV) but not so that the writer becomes the same as those read or heard in the sense that Ricoeur calls idem, ‘identity as sameness’ (Ricoeur 1991, 73).
METHODOLOGY

The design of the data collection process to examine the interface between the local inhabitant and the place deploys a group of locals equipped with audio recorders to pursue a new, not-yet-established tourist route through an urban space. The voice recording and walking process is introduced to the respondents using the term waytales, or in French récits de voie, to encourage narration as they explore the urban space. They are prompted to notice the marvellous and the that elicit memories. Ideally, local inhabitants who have a strong familiarity with the streets should be recruited. The recordings are listened to repeatedly by the researcher to build ‘an accumulation of familiarity’ (Wight 2016, 62); Wight, treats interpretive practices concerned with heritage as enunciations using Foucault’s (2002) sense of the term. Foucault’s notion of the archaeology of the enunciation suggests that levels exist within each enunciation that give it a density (Foucault 2002, 189) which is further enriched by accent, expressive performance and emotion (Bourdieu 1980). This analysis attempts to uncover these levels to reveal how a practice has been introduced to this area of the city and which, if any, practices have been forbidden. Guiding analytical questions were applied to the recorded spoken data, for example, what do locals talk about when they walk in their own city? What do they notice and tell listeners? A critical hermeneutics is applied to the spoken recordings and their transcriptions (Kinsella 2006).

In addition, archive work was needed to provide a starting point for a new walking route that would have a link to the life or work of a literary figure who had spent time in the town, Breton. Olier (2016) provides transcriptions of military hospital letters which reveal that Jacques Vaché, who was to become Breton’s close friend, was transferred to a temporary hospital on 22 November 1915 at ‘2 rue du Bocage, dans les locaux du lycée de jeunes filles Gabriel Guist’hau’ (Olier 2016). This address still exists as 2 rue Marie Anne du Boccage and so was used as the starting point for the exploration of a new walking route in Nantes.

CONTRIBUTION

The themes drawn out from the testimony of the participants and then synthesised using archive material provide the basis for a guided walk along the same streets as the original fieldwork. The stories developed using history and theory could be delivered by a written, an audio or a tour guide as ‘plateaus’, drawing the term from Deleuze & Guattari (1987). The next step in this research is to develop written resources using these three themes for use by potential visitors and to evaluate their impact.

Beck writes of the how the town becomes an object of all the senses of the walker and diarist and this tests the bonds the citizen feels for the town. Social catastrophes and collective joy are felt in equal measure, the ups and the downs. The sense of gravity felt when walking on a rising street turns imperceptibly to relief, even joy, when the ground levels.

For Deleuze & Guattari, a plateau is a writing practice to deliver a short, meaningful text which may be connected to other texts by the narrative effort of their readers; it is a small flat place to pause with pleasure after a climb to catch breath before the route slopes away again, to look around and say a few words about the buildings that share the relief of this flatness with
the guide. In March 1848, the prefect in Nantes, Guépin ordered 130 of the town's unemployed to make the ground level where the old Bouffay palace had stood so that the land would be more saleable (Haudebourg 1980). Levelling the ground was one of the key activities of the National Workshops. They were established on 25 February 1848 to provide work after the February Revolution; it was the failure of the workshops that contributed to the June Days Uprising that same year.

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STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE TOURISM BEFORE AND AFTER INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS IN THE LANNA AREA

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: strategy, tourism, international convention, Lanna

TOPIC AND AIM

This research paper aims to find innovative and practical strategies in order to create a strong brand positioning as tourist spots for provinces in the Lanna area; including, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Uttaradit, Phrae, Nan, Phayao, Chiang Rai, and Mae Hong Son, to enhance opportunities to become tourist attractions before and after international conventions held in the area.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

METHODOLOGY

This research paper will use interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The targets samples can be divided into 3 groups: convention organizers, convention participants, and tourist attractions in the Lanna area.

CONTRIBUTION

Although there are many international conventions held resulting in flow of both domestic and international MICE tourists in the Lanna area, yet the number of tourist activities right before and after the conventions held is still considerably low. There has not yet been a paper
nor research focusing on this specific group of tourists for this specific group of provinces. Thus, this research is going to find an innovative and practical strategies to attract MICE tourists to travel through the Lanna area before and after their participation in international conventions.

REFERENCES


SCENARIO PLANNING OF THE FUTURE OF TOURISM IN PHUKET

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PRESENTATION / WORKSHOP ACTIVITY

The contribution will include a brief presentation followed by a collaborative workshop activity. The Presentation will introduce key themes, conceptual frameworks and researcher aims. Here the researcher will present their own future ideas relevant to the case study. The aim of the activity is to then explore and gather knowledge and ideas from the participants / representatives. This will assist the researcher in developing their own idea for the future scenarios. The activity is likely to be conducted individually and then in small groups (depending on numbers). Taking a collaborative group approach, the aim is to encourage people to discuss and share ideas, and to explore ideas that may not be considered when working independently, similar to the benefits gained from focus group.

Keywords: Tourism, Futures, Scenario, Community, Innovation

TOPIC AND AIM

The focus of discussion is to explore the potential future for Phuket (the case study location). Applying a scenario planning approach, the aim it to explore its future development, progression and growth. The scenario planning approach will allow for a stimulating exploration and consideration of different / alternative futures for the destination. A holistic examination will be central, here exploring past and current trends on subject matters such as social-cultural realities, environment opportunities and challenges, and economic realities and technological developments.

The workshop will provide invaluable knowledge surrounding consumer culture and destination identity. From this, a key aspect will be to establish future scenarios for the destination. Whilst the future can be explored from a range of different viewpoints, this research will focus on applying a stakeholders perspective – with the intention of making the findings more appealing to different groups. The exploration of tourism development opportunities will be considered and a range of themes will be examined through the stakeholder approach. A stakeholder approach to tourism development will encourage a diverse exploration of key development ideas, challenges and opportunities, many of which are key topics relevant to the workshop and tourism and hospitality sectors, such as local experience tourism; innovation, product and service development; emerging markets in tourism and hospitality; marketing, promotion and destination identity; negative and positive tourism impacts; and sustainable tourism policy and planning.

The scenarios will address the future based on current trends, in doing so, aiming to identify current practices and establish debate surrounding them. This in turn should encourage
reflective practice and positive change. As future scenarios have the ability to increase our awareness of current practices and their short to long-term impacts and influences.

Current issues of tourism development and growth in Phuket vary and topics alongside stakeholder focus could include:

- Managing growing number of tourists and new consumer markets (The Thaiger, 2017)
- The development of illegal hotels (The Phuket Times, 2017a)
- Cultural tourism management (Na Sakolnakorn, Naipinit & Kroeksakul, 2013)
- Conservation of natural resources and the environment (Na Sakolnakorn, Naipinit & Kroeksakul, 2013)
- Supporting local communities (The Phuket Times, 2018b)
- Over-tourism and sustainable development (Joshi, 2018; Smith, 2018; The Phuket Times, 2018c)
- Disaster Management and prevention, human suffering and economic damage (Nakasu, 2017)

**METHODOLOGY AND SCENARIO PLANNING**

The academic underpinning is imbedded within the tourism futures discipline, with a case study approach applied as a method of conceptualizing and contextualizing the research. Often the aim of futures research is to establish creative and innovative approaches that establish new ideas (Emerald Insight, 2018). The eventual findings of the workshop, via a trend analysis approach are to be written as future scenarios, ones with narratives.

Bartunek, Rynes, and Ireland (2006) stress that authors should aim to produce research and articles that are interesting, useful and go beyond the focal audience, impacting and engaging a wider audience, beyond the academic sphere. And authors such as Ramirez et al (2015) and Alversson and Sandberg (2011) argue that scenario planning as a research methodology can attract a wider audience having moved on from a ‘object of research’ to a research methodology that scholars now use to produce interesting that stimulates and challenges new ideas.

For destinations such as Phuket (the case study this research would consider), it is necessary to consider stakeholders and potential future tourism development opportunities and challenges. And through the futures research approach, as noted by Lee (2012: 2), “foresight could be our most effective evolutionary tool for long-term survival and mastery of our environment.” Additionally, stating that humans “have amassed sufficient understanding of how the world to produce real foreknowledge which anticipate future social conditions”, in our case exploring the future role of tourism in a destination such as Phuket.

Scenario planning is a methodology that is often applied in the futures field of study, and researchers can withhold different definitions, interpretations and applications in line with the different methods to their research (Yeoman, 2008 & 2021; Postma, 2015). Heijden, Brandfield, Burt, Cairns and Wright (2002) note that scenario planning can be used as a process of predicting multiple, plausible futures. Similarly, Ramirez, Mukerjee, Vezzoli and Kramer (2015: 71) suggest that scenarios can be a “small bespoke set of structured conceptual systems of equally plausible future context, often presented as narrative descriptions”.

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Significantly, scenarios should present plausible evidence that indicates that any projected narrative could take place (i.e. is it possible) and should demonstrate how it could take place (i.e. is it credible) and offer implication for potential stakeholders (i.e. is it relevant and to whom?), (Fahey and Randall, 1998). The benefits of narrative writing is the ability to create a more concrete image through story-telling, thus, assisting ones understanding and interpretation (Lidngren and Bandhold, 2009).

By exploring current trends, the research will focus on particular trend(s) or driver(s) of change focusing on how they could impact on or influence the future of tourism in the case study location. Here the research is taking a more exploratory approach to scenario planning, initially, exploring the present conditions and how the present can manifest itself into future opportunities and or consequences (Jungermann, 1985); where past and present trends are seen as more parallel throughout time. Here the conceptual framework and research methods support scholars when applying a trend analysis approach when exploring and presenting future scenarios.

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION**

The aim of the session is to encourage the audience to consider and explore potential scenarios for the future of Phuket as a tourism destination. Delegates will, individually, and in groups be asked to explore past and current trends, relevant both locally to the case study location and beyond. As futures studies are often cross / multi-disciplinary, it is important to establish external factors that could impact on tourism in the destination and how this can impact on its future development as a resort.

In order to do this, delegates will be briefed initially on some central themes and future ideas, and with this knowledge, they will take the role of different stakeholders relevant to the case study location. They will be asked to explore what they perceive to be key motivators and drivers for tourism development (individually) and they will then be pulled together to consider their ideas alongside other (different) stakeholders. The aim of this is to generate ideas and knowledge regarding delegates positions on past, current and potential future trends that could drive and influence the future of tourism in the destination. All of which will assist the eventual creation of future scenarios for the destination.

The timing and structure of the activity and its different approaches will be shaped dependent on the allocation of time provided at the workshop.

**CONTRIBUTION**

As a new editorial board member for the Journal of Tourism Futures, two outputs as a member are to one, submit one article for publication in the journal during my term, and second, champion the cause of the future. This workshop would provide me with an excellent opportunity to put this into practice.

Thus, at present there are two main written contributing options. The findings and ideas of the workshop will then be written up and published, taking a tourism futures scenario approach. The two options at present are either, firstly to write an academic peer reviewed paper targeting a journal such as the Journal of Tourism Futures, or to write a book chapter for a book that the author is currently working towards.
The future scenarios presented would offer original value to the tourism futures literature and scenario planning approach. Additionally, the paper would present original ideas and findings relevant to the case study destination in reference to its potential future. As for the potential impact level on policy and planning, whilst this could be a potential, it is difficult to suggest so at this stage. Ideally, the aim would be to create scenarios that would influence stakeholder’s ideas and present actions concerned with current and future development and growth strategies. The future research approach here is championing the notion that societies today will aim to develop more sustainably if they are more aware of the impacts left for future generations. And through scenario narratives aimed at specific stakeholders, the contribution would target real world impact.

REFERENCES


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CREATIVE INTERPRETATION IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE
TOURISM: INSIGHTS FROM ALENTEJO, PORTUGAL

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: archaeological heritage; creative tourism; heritage interpretation; co-creation; heritage tourism.

TOPIC AND AIM

Creative tourism comprises activities that enable tourists a greater role in participating in the experience, offering them a venue to express their creativity. Furthermore, tourism providers also employ their creative ability whilst facilitating the experience. When interpreting archaeological heritage, providers resort to their creative skills to (re)create site specific meanings and involve tourists in creating memorable experiences. However, while tourists’ creative expression has been documented in creative tourism research, current literature is lacking an understanding of providers’ role in terms of the creative skills applied to co-create the experience.

This paper discusses issues concerning tourism providers’ creative interpretation of archaeological heritage, and is included in the workshop topic Innovation and product development in tourism and hospitality. The aim is to establish the significance of theorising providers’ creative ingenuity in sustaining the appeal of archaeological heritage and hence creating more memorable experiences. The study offers practical insights to cultural and creative tourism providers on how to develop new and engaging experiences, and how to accommodate creative interpretation within their current business model. Furthermore, it adds to current literature by crossing new theoretical insights from creativity literature into tourism research.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Creative tourism foregrounds actors’ creative expression in producing memorable experiences (Richards and Wilson, 2006). Creativity is conventionally distinguished between little-c (applied in everyday chores, such as playing a musical instrument) and Big-c (used to describe breakthrough ideas that significantly change a domain) (Richards, 2010). Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) suggest an intermediate level of creative ability named Pro-c. This type of creativity sits between little and Big creativity and explains cases where creativity is used at a professional level. For example, creative tourism providers are likely to have perfected their creative skills in the course of their profession. Even though they may not create products that significant change the cultural tourism industry, working on creative tourism experiences may help providers develop their creative skills in greater capacity.
Another key aspect of creative tourism is co-creation. In dealing with cultural heritage, a significant strategy employed for co-creation is interpretation. A literature review highlights two main approaches to heritage interpretation: positivist and constructivist. The positivist approach assumes an objective view of the past and foregrounds the role of experts’ interpretation whilst simultaneously muting the voices of non-specialists, i.e. visitors (Carman, 2002). Tourists are expected to visit an archaeological site to consume the narrative produced by experts, and thus have fewer opportunities to interact and engage the narrative in ways that adapt to their personal interests and values (Copeland, 2006).

In contrast, constructivist heritage interpretation accentuates the process of making sense of the past through a participatory process, underlining a co-creative approach whereby both tourism provider and tourist come together to create and perform the tourism experience (Copeland, 1998). This approach adopts a relativist perspective implying that meanings of the past are subjectively constructed as each individual engages with historical elements (Shanks and Hodder, 1995). Heritage interpretation becomes an iterative and creative process of assimilating new information and interpreting the past in a participative and imaginative fashion (Moscardo, 1996). The key emphasis is on promoting a holistic engagement with the archaeological site, encouraging interaction with primary evidence and importantly, tapping into visitors’ prior knowledge with a view to stimulating critical thinking and reflective discourse (Copeland, 2006; Hein, 1998).

**METHODOLOGY**

The Alentejo is a rural region in southern Portugal and an important cultural tourism destination rich in archaeological heritage. The region holds thousands of prehistoric megalithic monuments, such as cromlechs, dolmens and menhirs, many of which unique in the Iberian Peninsula. Alentejo is also famous for its Roman heritage, with the Roman temple, baths and aqueduct, being considered local ex-libris.

Data were collected from three sources: 1) interviews with private tourism providers of Alentejo; 2) observation conducted during field trips to Alentejo; 3) promotional cultural tourism materials of Alentejo. Of the seventeen known cultural tourism businesses operating in Alentejo, the study was able to conduct in-depth interviews with twelve participants of local cultural tourism companies.

The interview comprised several open-ended questions aimed at probing participants’ thoughts on how they engage creatively with archaeological heritage, and the co-creative interpretation strategies they apply. Interviews were enhanced by using show-cards. Show cards are paper cards that include multiple items, and can be employed in order to prompt discussion by creating a direct channel between the participant and the literature on the topic (Lynn, 2004; Morgan et al., 2009). Five show-cards were made, each containing two sentences representative of positivist and constructivist strategies of cultural heritage interpretation. The cards were intended to encourage participants to self-reflect on their role in the interpretation of archaeological heritage and comment on their experience and views in accordance to established cultural heritage interpretation.
Data collected in the interviews were analysed by employing a thematic analysis approach. Data were coded into themes informed by different interpretation strategies. Analysis of the interview data was then complemented and triangulated with observation and examination of local tourism promotional materials by actors. This was done to ensure a rich picture of the case study. Analysis of the data resulted in five main themes (related to specific interpretation strategies), each of which is discussed in the following section.

**FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTION**

**Theme 1. Adapting to tourists’ interests**

The role of providers is key in tailoring the experience. When a tour guide adapts the script to tourists’ interests, highlighting elements of interest to each individual, the tourist is able to connect to the visited monument (Prebensen et al., 2014). In Alentejo, many tour guides spoke about creating bridges to connect tourists to heritage and adapting the narrative to tourists’ knowledge and beliefs, for example, by highlighting historical references of local heritage that resonate with tourists’ cultural background. In this way, providers are able to cultivate an affective link between tourist and heritage, which in turn increases the chances of providing a memorable experience (Poria et al., 2003).

**Theme 2. Highlighting greater context vs details**

Tour guides in Alentejo underlined the significance of conveying both historical context and site-specific details in an archaeological tourism experience. Many tour guides explained that focusing on greater historical context rather than details provides an enjoyable experience in spite of tourists’ lack of knowledge about archaeology and the past (Grima, 2017). In practice, tour guides do this by offering a simplified narrative of historical content and weaving archaeological elements with other cultural features of Alentejo, such as wine production and rural lifestyle.

**Theme 3. Enabling tourist interaction with primary evidence**

Many participants admitted to leaving tourists to explore details on their own, for example by encouraging tourists to freely examine archaeological sites on their own terms. Such exploration is seen as an opportunity to let tourists interact with primary evidence which can help assimilate the information provided by the tour guide while finding details that best relate to the meaning each individual ascribes to the site visited (MacLeod, 2016).

**Theme 4. Encouraging tourist interpretation and discourse**

Participants mentioned the value of encouraging tourists’ discourse and own interpretation in making the experience more memorable. For example, tour guides often resort to storytelling and problem-solving situations using landmarks in the surrounding landscape to depict episodes of ancient human occupation. This kind of experience calls for the guide’s imagination and creativity in interpreting heritage with the aim of providing a meaningful experience (van der Linde and van der Dries, 2015). By creatively approaching archaeological
heritage, tour guides are surpassing common product development in archaeological tourism, even though they may not be creating absolute breakthroughs, in line with Kaufman and Beghetto (2009). However, despite stimulating tourists to creatively discuss and engage with the past, many argued that tourists’ general ignorance about history and archaeology hampers such initiatives.

Theme 5. Managing alternative heritage interpretations

Despite adopting a constructivist approach in their tour guiding activity, many participants admitted to being uncomfortable when faced with tourists’ interpretations that are not aligned with the official heritage discourse. Participants revealed some difficulties to overlook their duty to convey the official interpretation of an archaeological site in cases where tourists come up with individual interpretations that counter the official interpretation. Still, the lack of absolute certainty about the nature and purpose of prehistoric monuments such as cromlechs or dolmens, due to lack of written record, can leverage some degree of liberty and creativity when discussing alternative interpretations. What is more, some recent cases such as the growth of neo-pagan movements have started to raise awareness of some tourism actors which are beginning to develop new experiences that target adherents of alternative archaeologies (Holtorf, 2005).

In conclusion, this study provides new insights into the workings of creativity inherent in archaeological heritage tourism interpretation. Such findings can be useful to cultural tourism companies in order to enhance their products and offer new and more memorable experiences. Furthermore, the study contributes to current research in cultural and creative tourism, strengthening the theoretical understanding of provider’s role specifically when his or her creative skills are applied.

REFERENCES


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INSTITUTIONAL THICKNESS, INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AND TOURISM- LED LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: tourism planning, institutional thickness, inclusive innovation, governance, local economic development, Ghana

TOPIC AND AIM

Tourism destinations are shaped by dynamic interactions between people, places and institutions across multiple levels. Understanding these dynamics is an important first step in developing inclusive innovations and new business models in tourism that can enhance local experiences. The concept of institutional thickness offers a framework through which to explore the challenges of developing inclusive innovation in tourism in an era of global competition. This paper presents the core elements of institutional thickness using the case of a tourism-led local economic development strategy developed in Elmina, Ghana. The aim is to highlight the explanatory usefulness of the concept of institutional thickness in describing the key features of the governance of tourism-led local economic development that enhances inclusive innovations in tourism.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

It has been noted that much of the research on tourism’s role in economic development do not always consider the historical and political processes that shape overall development in a given destination. Consequently, recent attention has focused on the dynamic relationship between tourism and the development process more generally (Telfer and Sharpley, 2008; Mowforth and Munt, 2009; Scheyvens, 2011; Sharpley and Telfer, 2015) with an emphasis on local historical context and the role of state institutions and governance. To effectively connect tourism to development agendas that extend beyond economic considerations the larger institutional and governance context need to be understood (Spenceley and Meyer, 2012).

Institutions are seen as ‘rules of the game’ (North, 1990) that shape socio-economic and political outcomes. The ability of tourism to deliver pro-poor benefits and engender inclusive innovation depend on state policy directives that span a multitude of institutions(Scheyvens, 2007; Slocum and Backman, 2011; Spenceley and Meyer, 2012; Rogerson, 2014). The state plays a key role in integrating tourism policy into local economic development (LED) planning processes such that local people can assume direct responsibility for tourism development and the benefits accruing from it.
Successful tourism-led LED planning initiatives require the establishment of new local institutions that might include a craft market or a visitor reception centre. This calls for inclusive governance of local economic development processes in which the state and local communities play a key role. The provision of the right mix of local public goods and services by local government is also important in enabling other stakeholders to make their most innovative and productive contribution. Institutional thickness refers to this mix of institutions and arrangements. The four elements of institutional thickness are; 1) strong institutional presence; 2) high levels of mutual interaction; 3) structures of domination and/or patterns of coalition and; 4) mutual awareness of being involved in a common enterprise (Amin and Thrift, 1994). Institutional thickness therefore influences the capacity of a destination to grow, develop and innovate (MacLeod, 1997; Raco, 1998; Coulson and Ferrario, 2007).

Strong institutional presence relates to the existence of multiple and varied institutions and organisations that perform a diverse range of social, political and economic functions (MacLeod, 1997). This provide the infrastructure for local coalition building and represents the building blocks of institutional thickness (Raco, 1998). The second element of institutional thickness concerns the level of mutual interaction between local institutions and organisations. This revolves around the nature and regularity of contacts between local institutions at various levels. The extent of mutual interaction shapes the level of information flows that facilitate reflexive networking, cooperation and emergence of innovative new business models that can enhance local development experiences.

The structures of domination, control and power within which institutions interact represent the third element. Since institutions draw on different resources and have different power bases, the structure of institutional relationships will reflect these differentials. Good use of power differentials contribute to coalition-building and collective representation in ways that minimize divisions (MacLeod, 1997). The final element of institutional thickness is the development of a mutual awareness of being involved in a common local enterprise – i.e. the coming into existence of a shared vision of inclusive innovation and development (Amin, 1995; Coulson and Ferrario, 2007).

Institutional thickness provide a lens to understand how the institutions involved in tourism and local economic development mesh together to create depth for embedding initiatives that lead to inclusive innovation and new business models in tourism. Institutional thickness raises questions about the set of new institutions that emerge, the extent of their embeddedness within existing power structures, their durability over time and the ways in which they shape outcomes of tourism-led LED planning processes. Specifically, institutional thickness raises questions about leadership, collective representation and inter-organisational communication – elements that are fundamental to developing inclusive innovation in tourism (Hall and Williams, 2008; Hjalager, 2010; Halkier, 2013).
METHODOLOGY

The historic city of Elmina is the capital of the Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abrem (KEEA) Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. Elmina is endowed with a number of cultural heritage tourism resources with the star attraction being the St. George’s Castle – Elmina Castle. This is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with an annual average of about 75,000 domestic and international tourist visits. Prior to its conversion into a slave dungeon and auction site at the start of the infamous slave trade era in the early 16th century, St. George’s Castle was a centre for trading in goods (Bruner, 1996; Essah, 2001; Yankholmes and McKercher, 2015). This paper analyses the Elmina 2015 Strategy developed in 2001 by the KEEA to leverage tourism as a catalyst for wider LED and poverty reduction within a 15-year period.

A qualitative case study approach underlined this study involving interviews, documentary analysis and observations with a focus on the planning, implementation and outcomes of the Elmina 2015 Strategy. This study was part of a 3-year research project examining tourism governance and the role of tourism in local economic development and poverty reduction (Adu-Ampong, 2016). The framework approach for qualitative analysis as developed by Ritchie and Spencer (1994) helped in analysing both the primary and secondary data. The five-step process of the approach consisted of familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, and mapping and interpretation. Through an iterative process, the data was scrutinised for meaning, salience and connections between what interviewees’ perception of their governing interactions and the reality of their day-to-day activities. Data analysis focused on building up broad sub-themes of commonalities and differences between actors and the processes of developing institutional thickness.

CONTRIBUTION

The findings of this research highlight the myriad dynamic interactions that shape tourism destinations such as Elmina in a quest for developing inclusive innovation and tourism-led LED. The planning, implementation and ultimately outcome of the Elmina 2015 Strategy faced a number of challenges in achieving its main objective of using tourism as a catalyst for LED and poverty reduction. Primarily, these were a weak institutional presence and low levels of interactions between stakeholders in the public, private and community sectors. Over the course of the implementation, stakeholders lost sight of their shared vision of leveraging tourism for LED and poverty reduction. In the end the Elmina 2015 Strategy did not get fully embedded within wider place-based LED planning due to the low density of available institutional structures.

The start of the Elmina 2015 Strategy was characterised by a strong institutional presence and set up of new organisational structures such as a Tourism Information Office and an Arts and Crafts Market. A revenue sharing arrangement enabled existing institutions to take on additional governance responsibilities. Changes in the national political context however precipitated a gradual weakening of newly formed institutional networks and the erosion of shared norms and practices among local stakeholders (Coulson and Ferrario, 2007). This eroded “the establishment of trust relations and mutual cooperation” (Raco, 1998:978 emphasis in original) that would have contributed to the development of institutional thickness. The findings support the assertion by Amin and Thrift (1994) that a strong
institutional presence while being a necessary condition is not sufficient by itself to lead to the development of institutional thickness.

This paper contributes to extending the concept of institutional thickness into tourism studies from its traditional home in the regional and local economic development studies literature (Helmsing, 2003; Pike et al., 2006; Rodriguez-Pose and Tijmstra, 2007). Institutional thickness as a concept provides an avenue to explore how the many institutions in tourism planning and local economic development planning mesh together to create a durable institutional ecosystem for inclusive innovation and new business models in tourism.

In policy terms, this research shows that successful tourism-led LED planning initiatives require the establishment of new local institutions and new forms of local governance of LED processes in which the state and local governments play a key role. Policy makers need to focus on building structures that enable communication, collaboration and coordination between local, regional and national governing institutions across time and space.

The long-term impact of this paper lies in calling for further empirical and conceptual engagement with institutional thickness by tourism scholars starting with this Researcher Links Workshop.

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BUILDING CONSUMER INSIGHTS THROUGH INCLUSIVE ANALYTICS AND AUDIENCE RESEARCH INNOVATION IN NATURE AND CULTURE/HERITAGE TOURISM

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PROPOSAL OUTLINE AND DEMO

Keywords: consumer research; market research; nature tourism; evidence-based practice; culture and heritage tourism

TOPIC AND AIM

This extended abstract describes an outline plan for a possible inclusive innovation for tourism research/practice project, with a demo of the underpinning technology included. This proposal outline and demo contributes to a number of the themes identified for this workshop.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical work underpinning this outline proposal and demo comes from a book and journal article developing an interdisciplinary theoretical model of social change processes. Subsequently, we have developed numerous studies of the introduction of inclusive innovative technology and practices designed to test their relative value for enhancing practice and experiences for consumers.

This proposal would build on prior research grant-funding projects held by Dr Eric Jensen, including:


▪ Co-Investigator (November 2016 to October 2018). FAPESP (Sao Paulo state research funding, Brazil) application with lead partner at Sao Paulo University. ‘Conservação da Biodiversidade em exposições de zoológicos e aquários: da informação ao engajamento’. 125,000 Brazilian Reals (Approx. $40,000 US dollars).


Principal Investigator (2013), ‘Qualia: Automated impact evaluation’, funded by *Digital R & D Fund for the Arts, National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts / Arts and Humanities Research Council / Arts Council* (£125,000 awarded).

METHODOLOGY

This session will be delivered in the form of a paper presentation, with a good amount of time includes for collaborative identification of how others in the workshop might suggest different approaches or directions, extensions, etc., and how they might be able to participate in shaping the final version of this initial outline proposal.

CONTRIBUTION

This proposed session delivers long-term benefits by providing a practical launching pad into the development of collaborative grant applications and clarifying possible areas for collaborative academic outputs.

PROPOSAL OUTLINE

The proposed research project supports tourism providers by enabling them to better evaluate and identify areas for improvement in the inclusive and accessible delivery of services, quality of experience and positive outcomes, initially focusing on nature tourism and culture/heritage tourism sub-sectors. The project explores the value of gaining ongoing, accurate insights into tourism consumers, with benchmarking analysis to identify where improvements are most needed at the provider and sector levels. Such insights have long been needed in inclusive tourism sectors (Dawson & Jensen 2011), where the quality of market and consumer research can be fairly poor (Jensen 2014). The process of developing the pool of metrics for individual tourism providers to draw from will be driven by a participatory, ground-up consultation to understand what professionals think they need to know to better inform their ongoing work. This participatory metrics development will be underpinned by the best available social survey methodological knowledge, ensuring that the metrics that are developed are comparable and accurate.

The proposed project is designed to raise standards of evaluation for visitor experiences, by giving every tourism provider interested in inclusive practice access to world-class research expertise and analysis. Continuous and collective evaluation is enabled by automated data collection and real-time analysis, which gives participating inclusive tourism providers a clear daily view of their visitors and their needs.
The research project establishes high quality, standard measures that support best practice in the inclusive tourism community of practice. For the first time, inclusive tourism organisations will have an ongoing, long-term understanding of the audience profile, experiences, retention patterns etc for their visitors, with real-time comparisons to sector benchmarks. The project would build on prior initiatives seeking to implement coordinated, sector wide customer experience and outcome evaluation in zoos and aquariums (see zoowise.org).

The research project promotes and facilitates the effective use of benchmarking standards to share useful comparisons in support of best practice. Information provided by visitors will be analysed automatically in dashboards provided to each institution participating in this research project. Each inclusive tourism provider will be provided with benchmark scores within their comparison groups.

Later stages of the research project will include disseminating sector–level trend analyses and recommendations for the benefit of the inclusive tourism community of practice, as well as offering a community space that allows tourism professionals to help each other learn and share best practices. In short, the project provides an effective and sustainable visitor research and evaluation solution to inform practice within inclusive tourism providers drawing on the best available methods and expertise. This will both enhance local experiences by enabling evidence-based tourism practice, but also feed into international research in this field.

The research outputs from the project will focus on aggregate level patterns, benefitting from the buy-in of participating organisations who will drive the data collections primarily to gain their own insights, even as they feed the larger pool of aggregate data. This approach will yield large-scale studies, potentially including hundreds of inclusive tourism organisations across multiple countries (starting with Thailand and the UK). This will enable the study of macro-level trends that would otherwise not be possible to identify. It will also create a new, high quality dataset that will be made available as ‘open data’ for others to interrogate with their own inclusive tourism consumer questions.

DEMO

The Demo will show participants the kind of automated audience research technology that is essential to the proposal outline, with practical examples of how it has been used in practice by tourism providers to develop innovative and inclusive approaches. The examples are from the fields of nature tourism and culture/heritage tourism, especially demonstrating how this kind of sector-wide collaborative research approach has been useful in the zoo and aquarium (broadly defined) sector (a key segment of the nature tourism sector), via this project: zoowise.org
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THE DETERMINANTS OF (IN)AUTHENTIC HERITAGE EXPERIENCES

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: RESEARCH PAPER

Keywords: heritage tourist, heritage tourism, authenticity, tourist experience

TOPIC AND AIM

This research paper presents some essential findings of a PhD research project on tourists’ perceptions of authenticity in heritage tourism. The paper reveals the important determinants of (in)authentic heritage experiences from tourist perspective, using the case of heritage tourists in Hong Kong.

This topic is within the areas of heritage tourism and destination management which are highly relevance to the workshop. This paper aims at introducing a list of enhancers and dimishers of authentic heritage experiences which contributes to our understanding of authenticity as well as provides valuable practical implications to heritage curators. The presentation of this research paper allows attendees to further understand the heritage experiences and the concept of authenticity and hence apply to the research in their contexts. Thailand and other developing countries in the regions are under the quick transformation due to urban development as well as the rapid development of tourism industries, their heritage sites are thus facing challenges of commodification and reconstruction. Further research in the areas of authenticity and heritage tourism is essential for the sustainable tourism development of the country and the region. It is hoped that through the presentation of the research and discussion of the concepts, new research ideas are put forward. And through intercultural exchange, future research collaborations are encouraged.

THE MAIN CONCEPT: TOURIST PERCEPTION OF AUTHENTICITY

The concept of authenticity has been long discussed in sociology and cultural studies (Erickson, 1995). The term has been widely used in relation with the self, culture, society and business (Vannini & Williams, 2009). In leisure and tourism, authenticity is claimed to be originating in the context of museums (Trilling, 1972 as cited in Wang, 1999). In a tourism context, Sharpley (1994) states that authenticity refers to traditional culture and origins, a sense of realness, genuineness and uniqueness. On a more general basis, Timothy and Boyd (2003) define authenticity as associated with presenting the past in an accurate manner. In heritage tourism, the concept of authenticity has been widely used and long discussed in studies on tourism experience and heritage tourism.
The topic of tourists and their search for authentic places and experiences have been discussed since 1960s (Timothy, 2011). Previous research has focused on identifying different perceptions of authenticity, with few investigations into how tourists assess authenticity, or the criteria of authenticity. Studies of souvenirs and crafts are exceptions to this, such as those of Littrell, Anderson, and Brown (1993), and Revilla and Dodd (2003). In the research conducted by Littrell et al. (1993), eight categories emerged from tourists’ descriptions of authenticity: uniqueness or originality, workmanship, aesthetics, function and use, cultural and historic integrity, craftspeople and materials, shopping experience, and genuineness. Revilla and Dodd (2003) identified five main factors of authenticity in local crafts: appearance/utility, traditional characteristics and certification, difficulty to obtain, locally produced, and low cost. These studies recognize different characteristics of authenticity, but only for tangible objects, i.e., souvenirs and crafts. Intangible concepts, such as tourist experience, are more complex. A significant feature of a tourist experience is that it is highly subjective. It is multifaceted, as individuals experience similar things in different ways, and construct meanings from their own intellects and imaginations (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010; Gouthro, 2011). The above characteristics cannot be applied in the context of heritage experiences, therefore our understanding of how tourists assess authenticity or perceive heritage experiences is incomplete. Perceived authenticity is contended to be understood as an intermediate in the tourist’s behavioral pattern, linking tourist’s motivation to future behaviors (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Perceived authenticity has also been indicated to be an important factor that leads to tourist satisfaction, enjoyment and loyalty (Chhabra, 2010; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Pearce & Moscardo, 1986; Waller & Lea, 1998). Accordingly, understanding how tourists perceive authentic heritage experiences is essential from management and marketing viewpoint. This study therefore aims at discovering the determinants of (in)authentic heritage experiences from tourist perspective.

METHODOLOGY

The study applied a qualitative approach, aiming at exploring a set of criteria for assessing the authenticity of heritage experiences. Primary data was mainly collected through semi-structured interviews. The key questions concerned tourists’ perceived authenticity of their heritage experiences, and how they assess authenticity. Follow-up issues were also discussed during the interviews, on a case-by-case basis, and the order of the questions was flexible.

Tourists visiting various Hong Kong heritage sites were approached and asked for interviews. Participant recruitment stopped when information saturation was reached, i.e., the information gathered became repetitive. A total of 21 interviews were carried out in April and May 2013. Among these, 7 were short-haul tourists from Asian countries and 14 were long-haul tourists from non-Asian countries. Each interview lasted from 15 to 40 minutes. All were audio recorded and then transcribed into data scripts. The transcripts were then coded and analyzed using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10.
FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In the interviews, heritage tourists were asked to assess the authenticity of their heritage experiences at the surveyed sites as well as explain the underlying reasons for their assessment. Tourists’ explanations in regard were analyzed and classified into enhancers and diminishers of perceived authenticity. Enhancers of authenticity are understood as elements that increase the level of perceived authenticity of heritage experiences, whereas diminishers are factors that lessen it.

Table 1. Enhancers and diminishers of perceived authentic heritage experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhancers</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Diminishers</th>
<th>Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>Age (i.e. old)</td>
<td>Commodification/ Tourist facilities</td>
<td>Construction for tourism purpose, Overcrowding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ruin/ Desolation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visitor facilities, such as shops, restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original/ no modification</td>
<td></td>
<td>Attraction park/ Disneyfication, Commercialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local culture/ custom</td>
<td>Presence of monks/religious practitioners</td>
<td>Physical setting</td>
<td>Artificial elements, Modern elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence of local people</td>
<td></td>
<td>New/ freshly built appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using by locals for original purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presence of certain building material (i.e. concrete)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interactions with locals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge about the site</td>
<td>Over-management</td>
<td>Over-maintenance (i.e. too well-maintained), Over-cleanliness (i.e. too clean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different culture, custom</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senses</td>
<td>Smell of incense</td>
<td>Previous experiences</td>
<td>Comparison with previous experiences/knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sound of praying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Local residential surroundings</td>
<td>Surroundings</td>
<td>Modern surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historic/original location</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unrelated surroundings (i.e. non-religious)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Necessity of efforts to access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Government involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 1, identified enhancers of perceived authenticity include (1) old appearance of the sites, (2) the presence of local culture, (3) the lack of information, (4) the presence of certain senses, (5) the original location, (6) the necessity of efforts to access, (7) a spiritual atmosphere, and (8) government involvement. Common diminishers were found to be (1) commodification or the existence of tourist facilities, (2) modern/new elements in the physical settings, (3) over-management, (4) previous experience and (5) modern surroundings. Among these factors, appearance or physical settings of the attractions were found to be the most important when assessing authenticity. Accordingly, the first sight of an attraction is vital for the final evaluation. The involvement of local residents and religious practitioners tends to have positive impacts on tourists’ authentic experiences as well. Excessive involvement of the authorities in terms of modifying and maintaining attractions was found to potentially damage authenticity. Knowing that tourists need a certain level of
facilities and comfort, development has to be taken with care as too much of it can destroy the authentic image of heritage assets.

This study shows issues related to several managerial activities. Excessive involvement of the authorities or curators in terms of modifying and maintaining heritage attractions was found to potentially damage authenticity. The procedure of turning a heritage site into a tourist attraction with visitor facilities is in itself a commodification process, potentially decreasing a site’s authenticity. Visitor amenities and services are undeniably vital for tourist attractions. However, the construction and location of these facilities should be completed “with minimal visual impact and not take away from or disturb the historic character and fabric of the site” (ICOMOS & WTO, 1993, p.13). ICOMOS and WTO (1993, p.43) recommend “a sense of appropriateness to whatever is introduced”. A careful commodification practice with minimal artificial and commercial elements and suitable visitor facilities is easier accepted by tourists and hence, diminishes the negative impacts of commodification.

Findings of this study contribute to our limited knowledge towards tourists’ perceived authenticity of heritage experiences, especially the determinants of (in)authentic heritage experiences. These findings however were emerged in the context of the metropolitan city of Hong Kong where heritage tourism is not a primary attraction. Similar studies could be carried out in destinations which are known for their cultural heritage tourism, such as Thailand, for a more comprehensive picture of authentic heritage experiences. The above list can also be adopted from a quantitative approach as a measurement scale for perceived authenticity of heritage experiences.

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GAME-BASE LEARNING FOR A TOURIST TO LEARN THAI ETIQUETTES AND CUSTOMS.

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PAPER

Games are playing a role in our lives, not just as a way to entertain the players in their spare time. The game can also be used to promote learning in science and non-science. The gamification concept set a player’s mind free and let him wander around. The focuses on enhancing local experience in terms of tourism. The new technology may help tourist to learn about the local etiquettes and customs in Thailand. The player is allowed to interact with objects and game-characters he encounters in order to learn social rules and procedures in each location. More specifically, it is aimed to support foreigners who visit Thailand and go to the attraction places. Our game is created and used to support a player to learn Thai culture. The player is allowed to interact with objects and game-characters he encounters in order to learn social rules and procedures in each location. We presents a game, entitled “Mores Thai”.

Keywords: Game-base learning; Thai culture; Etiquettes and customs; Tourism; Interactive;

TOPIC AND AIM

My research goal is to design a game-based learning for a tourist to learn Thai culture including the etiquettes and customs. Aime to support foreigners who visit Thailand and go to attraction places. Basically, the visiting the attraction places are ruled by Thai history and believes. In particular, the game allocated the location of Wat Pra Kaew and Royal Palace which are the very important place in Thailand. The rules and instructions for visiting the place are disciplined in the game. There are officers patrolling to monitor the situations. Learning through computer games can produce a powerfully engaging attitude, satisfying emotions and positive feelings among the players more than the traditional learning especially to the youth of today prefer going to the cinema and surfing the Internet to engaging in certain cultural activities.

METHODOLOGY

The study aims is to determine and develop a game-base learning for a tourist to learn Thai etiquettes and customs which the learners in order to achieve better learning outcome engaging and satisfactory tasks the traditional way of learning. To achieve this, different gamification techniques will be implemented games.
CONTRIBUTION

My research may contribute to Thai tourism industry in term of Thai culture. They are seeking meaningful and more stimulating experiences from tourism providers that the tourism can access sufficient information about Thai etiquette and practices. Preventing problems between the tourist and local people. Game can brings people together and is a good tools for the entire the social to bond. It diverts people’s attention from their demanding lives and amuses them in their leisure time. Usually, entertainment is fun, enjoyable and pleasurable. Entertainment can take various forms including Games.

The “Mores Thai” will encourage the players to learn Thai culture including the etiquettes and customs Thai will help them to amuses in their leisure time. Usually, entertainment is fun, enjoyable and pleasurable. Entertainment can take various forms including Games.

REFERENCES


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RESIDENTS’ INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM AND COASTAL
CONSERVATION: A CASE OF BANG TA BOON VILLAGE, PHETCHABURI,
THAILAND

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RESEARCH REPORT

Keywords: community participation, village tourism, coastal conservation

THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Within a wide body of literature, it has been debated, and demonstrated that community participation in tourism planning and development is advantageous in terms of the sustainability and effectiveness of the conservation policies adopted. Tourism around the globe, and particularly in developing countries, suffers from deviated development that often produces a disproportionate distribution of return. Communities, particularly rural ones, are often at the front line in service provision but last to receive benefits from the effort. In order to have a comprehensive view of the issues regarding public participation in tourism and coastal conservation in a fishing community destination in the Bang Ta Boon Village, a key aim of this research was to identify current level of community participation and constraints of local residents in tourism and coastal conservation process.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Current community participation concepts are based on a rich legacy of ideas and practical agendas which have helped to facilitate the formulation of present-day proposals for the involvement of local residents in social development (Midgley, 1986). Most participation literature suggests that community participation may possess a potential to help develop better village-based tourism planning and conservation which are more responsive to local needs and have a better chance of community acceptance. Tourism in the developing world has frequently been a double-edge sword; while it may provide an income for communities and local residents to augment their venue or livelihood, the majority of benefits is likely to flow out of them. In addition, tourism development renders various economic, socio-cultural and coastal changes on the host community’s life, some more beneficial than others (Lee, 2013). Hence, the participation and support of local residents is essential for the sustainability of the tourism industry at any destination (Gursoy, Chi, and Dyer, 2010). Therefore, it is practical and challenging to examine the Thai approach of public participation in tourism and coastal conservation in the case of the Bang Ta Boon Village, Phetchaburi.
As tourism is a social, economic, and environmental activity, the data collection instruments employed in this study combined both primary data (interview transcripts and observation data) and secondary data, which allowed for data triangulation. There were 30 interviews in this study. Field notes were made during the fieldwork. The researcher also took photographs of the tourism operation and activities in order to comprehend the current atmosphere and the recent developments. These field notes and photographs were combined together with the interview transcripts and other data sources for the analysis. The interviews in the fieldwork were conducted during 2012-2014. A series of questions was designed for the interviews and these questions sought to understand the residents’ involvement in tourism and coastal conservation including the local constraints in participation in tourism and coastal conservation.

FORMS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM AND COASTAL CONSERVATION

The key people in the village’s tourism and coastal conservation activities are the Village Headman and the Mayor of the Bang Ta Boon Municipality. There are also some households directly affiliated with tourism activities. However, the rest have no specific participation in tourism, instead they are asked by the Village Headman to be the village’s tourism supporters. Some of them function as local guides for tourists during the whale-watching season. The villagers spend national holidays cleaning village land and the waterfront areas, prepare information boards for tourists to read, and improve the village landscape. The riverbank and coastal zone are well-preserved so that tourists can sit comfortably to see the view of the Phetchaburi River estuary and the Gulf of Thailand. Meanwhile, the villagers provide assistance and arrange patrolmen to increase safety and security for tourists. Villagers with involvement in whale-watching emphasize the rules and laws concerning wildlife protection. Thus, before the tourists arrive, and during the tourist season, the residents’ participation level is quite visible. Tourism in the Bang Ta Boon Village creates more participation by villagers in tourism planning and coastal conservation according to their responsibilities assigned by their local government agency. This enables them to see not only the importance of their tourism industry, the importance of environment of the village’s shoreline but also the added income which is generated. The village’s tourism stimulates its local economy, improves the cohesion of the community and the villagers’ collaboration among themselves and with other sectors.

LIMITATIONS IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND COASTAL CONSERVATION

The factors affecting community participation in tourism and coastal conservation in the Bang Ta Boon Village are related to the change of the village’s demographic structure, the residents’ fishing careers, the villagers’ perceptions and motivations in their tourism and coastal conservation. It is clear that a working generation does not exist in the village and it has become the village’s drawback for ideal community participation. The majority of the village members are elderly who are at home taking care of their children’s children. Regarding this issue, when the villagers need brainstorming about their tourism and coastal
conservation process or other village activities, the senior citizens have become more passive in it than actively sharing opinions. The young who are supposed to help develop the community in any aspect have left the community for schooling or employment in the manufacturing industry in other larger cities and some are busy with their fishing at sea. So, the younger ones and the elderly are not able to take part in tourism and coastal conservation often enough. Moreover, the gathering of the villagers is confined to a small group which has not much potential to drive community participation and it causes slow development and other activities in the village. However, the young village members who are working outside the community will return to the village and take part in the village’s tourism during the Thai New Year and Buddhist Lent when the factories are closed and during the fish spawning season. The community participation in tourism and coastal conservation should have been carried out continuously and not only during those festivals or during specific events. Likewise, other villagers who are not working outside the community have to go fishing at sea for almost nine months of the year so they cannot engage in public activities to the full extent.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

At its most fundamental, the main actors in this process are the Village Headman, the Sub-District as local government and the Municipality. The residents have inputs, expressions, discussions, rights to voice their views and opinions towards the government developmental projects together with involvement in tourism and coastal conservation plans. In the village, the Headman and the Municipality Mayor announce to local residents the subjects to be spoken on and mutually discussed through the public address speakers installed in the village area. The next pattern of community involvement, takes place when villagers are given the opportunity to raise their views and opinions during community meetings. The flow of information being one way from the notifying process will be two-way in the expression process and it is slightly interactive. This situation was portrayed when the residents were discussing coastal issues (e.g. sea and river pollution caused by sea food factories). However, according to the higher step of the degrees of involvement of ‘degree of tokenism’ Arnstein (1969), describes degree of tokenism as that which allows the public to hear and to have a voice but the public lack the power to ensure that their views will be heeded and if participation is to be restricted. In consequence, popular participatory initiatives developed in this case study have frequently established this pattern of participation by only asking and persuading the villagers to become involved in a narrow band of inquiry and issues that are closely connected with the decision that an outside government sector wants to follow. From the study case, most public hearings/forums occurring in the village would fall somewhere in the one-to-four range, which is low-to-middle on the participation scale.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Community involvement can heighten the possibility for achievement of the projects and to provide opportunities for local residents to anticipate and acknowledge whatever potential there might be to promote the community involvement level. According to the author’s views, the challenge for the Thai tourism industry and coastal conservation policy-makers of today
is to make effective use of the range of tools available for obtaining input from the local residents into their decisions while ensuring that they are both responsive to the range of public interests, and that these decisions also achieve effective tourism and coastal conservation policy. This involves obtaining advice from other public, private sectors and academic experts, feedback from the residents, the views of other actors might also improve the participatory and collaborative approach in tourism and the coastal conservation process, and the opinions of other ordinary citizens. Meanwhile, the community needs to ensure that during the planning and coastal conservation process and decision-making the input received from these different groups is balanced against the broader public interest, which may call for a different allocation of resources within both the public/private sectors and the community. Public hearings and the voting process had a positive impact on this Thai community in increasing the availability of clear information on other sectors, particularly for their tourism and coastal conservation agencies. Nevertheless, the use of these techniques as interactive instruments for greater consultation remains an area for further development.

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FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OF WETLANDS: TOURISM DESTINATION & HOME OF WELL-LOVED RECIPES

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER (case study)

Keywords: Constructed Wetland, Water Pathogens, clams, crabs, food source

TOPIC AND AIM

This research is multidisciplinary, integrating bio-chemistry, environmental conservation with F&B. Wetlands are the home of important ingredients of much loved dishes such as fish clams and crabs. Thus the research aims to provide policy and managerial implications for the proper management of wetlands, in order to promote sustainability and minimize contamination of the food source (cultural food security), which are not only local cultural resource but also irreplaceable tourism resource.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Changes in technology, marketing, industrial structure, consumption patterns and evolution of consumer demands are the cause of growing economic, environmental and social concerns (Yakovleva et al., 2009), particularly in the food supply system. Various conceptual approaches to food systems have been developed, being one of them food supply chain (Barrett et al., 1999; Marsden et al., 1999). Concepts to food systems are considered, and tested using the unique case of Taiwan’s wetlands as the local cultural food source.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a case study of one of the most well-known wetland tourism destination in Taiwan– the Chouchai wetland near the Lotus lake of Kaohsiung city. This research conducted environmental investigations of water quality, pathogens, and structural changes in wetlands of Taiwan. It was found that human intervention resulted in increased coliforms, Salmonella spp., Enterococcus spp. and Escherichia coli in the wetland water, all of which have implications for the supply of local cultural food ingredients from wetlands. Implications for the management of other wetlands in Taiwan and all over the world are provided as a result of this case study.
CONTRIBUTION

The research provides policy and managerial implications for the proper management of wetlands, in order to promote sustainability and minimize contamination of the food source (cultural food security), which are not only local cultural resource but also irreplaceable tourism resource. At the same time, discussions and comments from the workshop may help to provide technical innovation and innovative management methods for this wetlands management case.

REFERENCES


ABSTRACT

Tourism is transforming many societies, economies and cities globally. As tourism increases globally, to hitherto unprecedented numbers, there are corresponding transformations in the urban environments catering for tourist practices. However, there is a divergence between the factors driving tourism, sustainability and health. Climate change and human health are two of biggest challenges facing society and both are affected by tourism. The environmental impacts linked to tourism are well known and these impacts tend to be unsustainable for the planet; such that the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) now sets targets to promote sustainable tourist development. Simultaneously, tourism also tends towards unhealthy lifestyles and practices, which the UN is actively trying to promote via their ‘Healthy City’ (UNHC) programme. However there is a gap in knowledge between the policies of sustainable tourism and those of healthy cities. This research examines how to integrate ‘health’ into sustainable tourist development. The health paradigm is moving away from a medical model towards one that unites healthy lifestyles and environments. This is more than just the reduction of pollutants or hazardous materials, but towards the design, construction and inhabitation of settlements that enable and promote healthy sustainable tourism.

Keywords: tourism, healthy cities, sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This (extended abstract) article sets out some of the key issues and challenges in the framework for sustainable tourism and health. It begins by covering some of the key literature and establishing the theoretical framework for the research. It concludes by providing a critical summary of the next stages for the article.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Contemporary Tourist Practices

Tourist practices are radically changing many urban areas; transforming many historic and heritage based areas whilst generating new cities based entirely on tourism. The ‘kinetic elite’ are now roaming the planet looking for new experiences, new cultures and new environments to savour. Cheap package flights have enabled mass tourism on a global scale and even cheaper car, train and bus travel have enabled local tourism to boom. Local
populations have been decimated in cities such as Ven-ice, and have been largely replaced by temporary, tourist populations. Conversely, tourism cities such as Las Vegas, Benidorm and Dubai have been created explicitly for a tourist population; with a minority local population created to service the majority tourist population. Even in cities, towns and rural areas where tourism is a minor part of the economy and culture, the majority of the world’s inhabited environments are now affected to some extent by tourism.

Unfortunately for the tourist industry, it is often related to unsustainable development and unhealthy lifestyle. Given that climate change and public ill-health are two of the greatest challenges faced by society, tourism needs to become part of the solution to healthier, more sustainable lifestyles. Fortunately, there are many overlaps between the strategies for sustainable development and policies to improve public health; however there are significant gaps in knowledge in how these relate or might be integrated with tourist practices. This research critically examines those gaps to establish a conceptual framework for healthier, sustainable place-based tourism.

2.2 Climate change: drivers, issues and solutions

Climate change is the most significant environmental danger to the planet. Human activities, particularly contemporary lifestyles, are identified as primary factors contributing to global warming. Fossil fuels usage leads to the increase of CO2 (and NOx) levels in the atmosphere; this use of fossil fuels is generated by activities such as driving cars and vehicles, power generation and consumption, all of which are implicated in contemporary tourism. The drivers of climate change are also correlated to unhealthy human lifestyles and behaviours. In order to tackle the combined issues of ill-health and climate change, the UN has developed their Sustainable Development Goals. The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (which replaced their Millennium Development Goals) have more of a focus on health; “health has a central place as a major contributor to and beneficiary of sustainable development policies”.

This centering on health is particularly relevant to tourism as so many tourist practices are implicated as drivers for ill-health. Sustainable development is defined as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development comprises of three pillars: economic, environmental and social. There is a growing consensus that tourism must become healthier and more sustainable.

2.3 Health: drivers, issues and solutions

Globally there is growing ill-health. The majority of world’s population now suffers from some form of ill-health. These health issues are not isolated in a few nations, but are now common across all countries globally. The causes of most illnesses are related to the lifestyles we lead; lack of exercise, sedentary activities, eating junk food, overeating, smoking etc. Tourist practices are imbricated in many of these lifestyle choices in complex and inter-dependent mechanisms. Tourism particularly is part of the “globalization of unhealthy lifestyles”. As tourism is predicted to grow steadily over the next few decades, the costs attributed to lifestyle disease are also predicted to grow. The financial impact of ill health is predicted to be thirty trillion dollars over the next decades, (ibid). Health needs to be considered as part of any sustainable industry, including tourism.
The World Health Organisation defines health as the “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being”. Health comprises three areas: physical, mental and social and each need to be met for positive human health. Tourist practices are relat-ed to each of these three health spheres; however rather than address each one sepa-rately it is better to examine them in an integrated approach. Accordingly the World Health Organisation use their ‘Healthy City’ strategy to address health issues holisti-cally. (Note: The term ‘healthy cities’ also refers to smaller towns, villages and rural settlements). Using place-based strategies for improving health is particularly relevant to tourism as it predominantly concerns the movement of people to new physical environments. By integrating health into ‘places’ it is possible to address all three aspects of health: physical, mental and social. An important part of the definition of health is: ‘complete well-being’ (WHO, ibid). Complete wellbeing encompasses the promotion of positive health improvements to a human’s life. Healthy City strategies aim to improve not just basic health, but also improve levels of wellbeing. It is a fun-damental aspect of health and wellbeing that any town or city must be sustainable.

2.4 Tourism, urbanization and shifting cities

The world is rapidly urbanizing, in fifty years ago two-thirds of the world lived in rural areas, in fifty years hence two-thirds of the population will inhabit urban are-as. This urbanization is accompanied by a radical transformation by tourism. With over one billion tourists journeys annually, the scale and extent of global tourism is staggering. This figure is greater than the combined population of North and South America. Contemporaneously, there has also been a radical shift in cultural behav-iours, living and working practices. Tourism is a significant driver for this societal and urban change, with greater homogeneity in the modes in which society lives. Tourism can be part of the solution for a healthier and more sustainable planet.

3. NEXT STEPS FOR THIS ARTICLE

The rest of the article addresses how healthy city strategies, sustainable develop-ment goals and contemporary tourism practices might be integrated into a conceptu-al framework. There is a gap in knowledge at this intersection, and this article aims to provide knowledge in this area. As tourism is set to grow in parallel with sustainable development goals and health promotion policies, this area is likely to be a growth area in academia. This article can provide a roadmap for future research in this area.

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VISUALISING THE ‘FESTIVAL CITY’: TOWARDS A STAKEHOLDER SEMIOTIC FRAMEWORK

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER PRESENTATION

Keywords: Festival city, stakeholders, semiotics, Edinburgh

TOPIC AND AIM

My paper aims to develop an understanding of how key stakeholders engage with and experience a ‘festival city’ in visual terms. Informed by a theoretical consideration of the festival city construct, I will present an evolving framework, which contemplates the visual culture of Edinburgh (in Scotland, UK) in its role as a festival city and tourism destination. This draws from a semiotic study of digital images produced by festival city stakeholders and shared via ‘Instagram’ the social media platform. The festival city paradigm has become a topic of theoretical debate within tourism and events research, alongside urban and cultural studies. In strategic destination management practice a festival city presents a significant and sustained portfolio of planned festivals and events as a means of contributing to its economic and cultural viability as a tourism destination (Getz & Page, 2016). The festival city designation has thus become associated with contemporary destination branding approaches (Todd & Logan-McFarlane, 2017); and strategic event portfolio management in tourism destinations (Getz & Page, 2016). As “digital media are part of how events are conceptualised, made and experienced by participants, viewers and users” (Pink et al., 2015: 165), my paper explores stakeholders’ visual portrayals of Edinburgh as the festival city through a digital visual semiotic approach. I aim to gain an understanding of the contribution of Edinburgh’s festivals to the city’s image; and to develop a sense of how a festival city is perceived by stakeholders visually through shared images. My study intends to contribute a new perspective to the term festival city beyond that currently attributed by the literature. Through studying Edinburgh, I will also reflect upon implications for stakeholders in current and potential festival city settings.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to the literature, festival cities share a common topography. This includes the staging of a substantial or continuous programme of city-based festivals and events. These may be designed to build sustainable economic advantage and aid urban development. Such festivals and events can serve additional roles of facilitating the cultural and creative place-making process within cities; and in doing so, contributing to differentiated destination
brands (Dooghe, 2015; Getz & Page, 2016; Richards & Palmer, 2010). A related and somewhat contested idea of ‘festivalisation’ has arisen. This top-down, urban and cultural-policy focused approach is concerned with a destination’s capacity of planned festivals and events for branding purposes; alongside the means of staging, commodifying, and consuming urban spaces (Jamieson, 2004; 2013; Smith, 2014; 2016). Further discussion revolves around the creative city and festivalisation (Florida, 2002; Landry, 2012; Quinn, 2005; Therkildsen et al., 2009) with suggestions that festivalisation strategies may provide competitive advantage in the contexts of creative practices and industries, alongside experience-based consumption within cities. The festival city is therefore the outward tangible manifestation of the festivalised city (Morgan et al., 2009). In strategic destination management practice, there is evidence of the festival city paradigm adopted as a strategic approach to event tourism and cultural commodification. This is particularly in the contexts of the festivalisation of cities as tourism destinations (Richards & Palmer, 2010); and the eventification of selected places and urban spaces (Smith, 2013). A number of cities around the globe now include the term festival city, or similar phrasing, within their marketing promotional efforts. In some cases festival city has become an official strand of cities’ destination brands (Richards & Palmer, 2010), suggesting that considerable tangible and symbolic value is attached to the festivalised urban destination in terms of event tourism and cultural tourism management. Nevertheless, despite this conceptual and tourism industry interest in the festival city, there remains limited understanding of this phenomenon beyond its perceived value to destination branding, event tourism, and cultural tourism; together with its contested role within urban spaces; and the associated creative synergy of residents, visitors and other festival city stakeholders.

The setting of my study is Scotland’s capital city, Edinburgh, which has recently become officially branded by its destination management stakeholders as “the world’s leading ‘festival city’” (BOP Consulting & Festivals Edinburgh International, 2015: 10). Edinburgh has earned its festival city title by relatively organic means rather than directed strategic effort (Ind & Todd, 2011) and has more than 70 years’ history of festival provision. In the early 1940s, civic and cultural stakeholders’ intention of creating Edinburgh’s first international arts festival was to present the city as the post-World War II “cultural resort of Europe” (Bartie, 2013: 23). Since the 1947 origination of the International, Fringe, and Film Festivals, present-day Edinburgh hosts eleven internationally recognised festivals and numerous events that span arts, sporting and cultural activities. These contribute more than 4.5 million attendances to the city annually (BOP Consulting & Festivals Edinburgh International, 2016). A recent industry-led survey of 29 thousand festival attendees revealed that 89% of local festivalgoers agreed that the Festivals increased people’s pride in Edinburgh as a city; with 94% of respondents agreeing the festivals position Edinburgh as an attractive, creative, international destination (Ibid). Edinburgh therefore claims its position as the world’s foremost festival city, despite global competition from emerging destinations and being one of numerous worldwide cities adopting this title. Nevertheless, Edinburgh’s evolution as the festival city has become of strategic concern over the past ten years, with destination management stakeholders focusing upon leveraging the festivals for competitiveness. Following key industry reports in 2006 and 2011, an Edinburgh festivals ten-year strategy was published in 2015. This recommends sustaining and strengthening Edinburgh’s festival city status as a
major theme: by exploring how infrastructure and operations can deliver unrivalled experiences for the city and its festivals’ audiences, artists, influencers and citizens. Action points outline stakeholder ownership and strategic promotion of the festival city brand worldwide and joint marketing strategy development. Recommendations include alignment of marketing activities, with formal adoption of the festival city brand (BOP Consulting & Festivals Edinburgh International, 2015). As noted, my study aims to develop a visual understanding of Edinburgh as the festival city, and to investigate how this construct is perceived and experienced by stakeholders, both as a brand, and also as a phenomenon.

METHODOLOGY

My research is underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm. It thus applies a relativist ontological perspective, and a transactional, subjective approach to the creation of knowledge (Pernecky, 2007). The methodology is qualitative and involves a hermeneutical method in the semiotic study of digital images. In doing this, my research approach is informed by and developed from an existing primary and secondary event tourism stakeholder framework in the setting of Edinburgh as a festival city (Todd, Leask & Ensor, 2017). A semiotic method (Echtner, 1999; Pennington & Thomsen, 2010; Rose, 2016) is being developed to study the layers of meaning inherent within identified stakeholders’ digital visual portrayals as ‘signs’ of Edinburgh. This uses the Instagram social media platform: both as a festivalised space and festival city. Although in its early stages, an original digital visual stakeholder semiotic framework is therefore evolving. My paper will present initial examples of these images and reflect upon and discuss the semiotic study of them alongside potential contributions and implications.

CONTRIBUTION

My study offers theoretical and conceptual contributions alongside future implications for strategic management practice and policy in destination management and festival city contexts. Theoretical contributions are anticipated to include a renewed understanding of the festival city paradigm, which extends beyond the current literature, through the study of Edinburgh as the festival city archetype. The development of an original and innovative digital visual stakeholder semiotic methodology will provide conceptual contributions in terms of developing digital visual methods in tourism studies, thus furthering academic study in this and related areas. There will be implications for practice, as my study will contribute an understanding of how destination stakeholders, including managers, residents and visitors, experience and engage with the festival city on a visual basis. Through the exemplar of Edinburgh, there will be potential contributions to strategic management, marketing, and policy practice in existing and potential festival cities and other destinations with event tourism strategies in place. This impact will have the capacity be long term in focus. It will provide opportunities for dissemination within the destination management stakeholders’ context, firstly in Edinburgh and on a further international basis.
REFERENCES


SHARING ECONOMY: A COMPREHENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

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Keywords: Sharing economy; Collaborative consumption; Collaborative economy; Business model; Impacts

INTRODUCTION

Sharing economy (SE) has received significant attention from scholars, practitioners, and policymakers along with individuals. SE emphasizes the sharing of underutilized assets in ways to improve efficiency and sustainability. Sharing is an old phenomenon, while the SE driven by the Internet along with supporting tools and features leveraging the Web 2.0 technologies is a recently emerged phenomenon (Belk, 2014). SE is labeled with different names or has high overlap with other concepts such as the collaborative economy, collaborative consumption, access economy, platform economy, community-based economy, etc. SE phenomenon brings opportunities to new businesses. Companies such as Airbnb and Uber have become household names for urban travelers across the world. However, SE literature consists of internal diversity, complexity, and contradiction (Acquier et al., 2017). Studies on sharing economy are growing exponentially. Reviewing these studies is essential to understand the current stage of SE. Applying a systematic literature review approach this study thematically synthesizes sharing economy (SE) literature consists of 119 articles. It provides comprehensive insights on SE. This study has explored the definitional dilemma, sharing economy phenomenon, and theoretical perspectives. It analyses stakeholders and their motivation to participate in SE. SE phenomenon is mainly dominant in accommodation and transportation sectors. Hence, we discuss various aspects of these two sectors. SE operates with novel business model and revenue model as such we discuss various issues related to these two themes. SE faces different types of challenges across world and we discuss major challenges SE faces. SE has massive economic, social and environmental impacts which have been discussed in the final part of the analysis. This study has explored the definitional dilemma, sharing economy phenomenon, and theoretical perspectives. It analyses stakeholders and their motivation to participate in SE. SE phenomenon is mainly dominant in accommodation and transportation sectors. Hence, we discuss various facets of these two sectors. SE operates with novel business model and revenue model as such we discuss various issues related to these two themes. We synthesize the challenges SE faces. SE has significant economic, social and environmental impacts as pointed out in this study. We provide implications and future research avenues.
METHODOLOGY

A systematic approach has been applied in the study to search articles on SE. We used Web of Science and Scopus databases to find relevant articles. On both databases, “sharing economy”, “collaborative consumption” and “collaborative economy” are used as keywords to search articles. We collected 219 articles altogether for this study. To code data we started with several preselected themes such as policy, regulation, sustainability because we feel that these kinds themes are important and appropriate to explore. As we proceed with our coding we added new themes. We had initial coding in 72 themes; some of the themes have very high number of codes, for example, 72 for the regulation theme and 66 for the motivation theme. Around half of the themes have less than five codes. We started writing on themes that have relatively high number of codes. With various combinations we brought down the number of themes below 10. We merged various themes to a broad theme in this process. Coding 219 articles is a challenging task, but valuable for a comprehensive review.

CONTRIBUTION

This review study has several implications. As several studies eluded we see that sharing economy as a concept has no clear boundary which is important for any research field to gain its own identity. SE initiatives are very diverse and it is difficult to claim what is SE initiative or not. There are numerous theories that can be used to explore sharing economy. Many studies have point out various theories. Moreover, SE falls under a large of number of research fields as such this field will grow exponentially over time. SE includes various stakeholders and individual consumers are a key stakeholder. Each stakeholder group has its own motivation to engage in sharing economy. Financial motivation is the main attraction of consumers, SE firms and service providers to engage in SE. However, it is crucial to have sustainability as an important issue to consider from the main stakeholders of SE even though due to nature of the business models many SE firms have significant contribution in SE. Major SE firms have business models that are easily scalable worldwide. Moreover, they work with minimum fixed assets and transfer many fixed cost into variable costs. Despite the simplicity of the business models and revenue models of SE firms they are difficult to copy by others and become successful. The early mover firms and major players are dominant in the sectors and secure a major portion of revenue share in their sectors. Studies on SE mainly focus on accommodation and transportation sectors because of dominant firms Airbnb and Uber platforms. Understanding the application of sharing economy in sectors that have high impact on sustainability is important.

SE firms face challenges in some parts of the world and get support in the other parts. Universal agreement about SE initiatives are important to have SE as a well-established industry. Due to a multiplicity of SE firms, it is challenging to clearly defined what is SE and what is not. Consequently, how SE is different from the mainstream economy is not very clear (Täuscher and Kietzmann, 2017). SE is booming as individuals shifting from ownership to sharing (Belk, 2014). SE activities are more concentrated in developed countries and big cities. However, developing countries are increasingly adopting SE due to their own problems such
as poor public transport (Tolkach et al., 2015). A challenge for policymakers is how they develop a policy for the growth of SE (Cheng, 2016b). It is urgent to develop relevant policies for regulation (Fang et al., 2016). Many SE firms claim that they have a significant contribution to economic, social and environmental aspects by for example reducing waste generation and reducing the number of cars in the street (Fremstad, 2017). Regulations need to come together regionally or worldwide to have standard regulations so that SE flourishes for the benefits of all stakeholders. SE has impacted multiple sectors and enables small firms to compete with large firms globally (Parente et al., 2018). Many SE firms ignore pro-social objectives to accomplish their profit-oriented businesses as such regulating them is essential for social benefits (Tan, 2017). Due to lower price, consumers may use SE cars (e.g., Uber) more frequently and stay a longer time in an SE accommodation (Airbnb), which may boost local business (Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016), but money is spent not for productive economic purposes.

SE is forcing many large companies such as car manufacturing companies and hoteliers to reframe their business models and partnership relations. This rapidly changing environment needs close attention from the policy perspectives. SE platforms may provide more comprehensive contents in their services. For example, Airbnb does not have an option to include videos on its platform (Mauri et al., 2018). Studies have mainly explored successful cases of SE whereas unsuccessful cases may provide new insight to enrich our understanding of SE. SE firms have weak relationships with their customers. Due to rapid scalability, early entrants and market leaders become strong and make other firms’ market entry difficult. SE players may help regulators to establish guidelines to mitigate risks (Marchi and Parekh, 2015). Some scholars argue crowdfunding as part of the SE (Hernando, 2016). Blockchain technology is becoming increasing relevant for sharing economy even though only several articles include discussion on it (Acquier et al., 2017; Pazaitis et al., 2017; Szetela and Mentel, 2016). Overall argument is that blockchain technology has high potential to better support the dynamics of social sharing. There are many implications of this study and future studies can enrich our knowledge of these implications. The following section provides future research avenues on SE.

This can include a display and critical discussion of your findings, discussion, conclusions, and implications for research, original value, implications for policy, and implications for practice, limitations, and directions for future research. You can use this session to address how your proposed contribution will address the last two Selection Criteria on the long term impact and dissemination.

**REFERENCES**

References have been removed intentionally, available upon request
BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS OF USING ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCIES: A STUDY OF SMALL, INDEPENDENT HOTELS IN THAILAND

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The development of world wide web (www) as well as online marketing have impacted and changed the hotel and hospitality sales drastically. Due to the growth of computer and mobile phone usage, more and more consumers prefer to access information online and turn to online purchasing (Verma, Stock, & McCarthy, 2012). This is not only limited to commodity products but also tourism and hospitality. Verma, et.al. (2012) found that travelers turn more to brand websites, OTAs, and TripAdvisor. However, later in the decision process, the respondents tended to land on the brand websites or go to an OTA to book their rooms.

Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) have been important for overseas transient segment, particularly for small hotels. In 2009 hotels worldwide sell their room online for 40% (National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, 2009). In the first quarter of 2015 the results of individual leisure and business bookings showed year-on-year growth in bookings made via OTAs 15.1%, brand.com (7.1%), and GDS (1.1%), whereas direct and CRS bookings deceased by 8.4% and 6.1% respectively (Travelclick, 2015 in Barthel & Perret, 2015). Barthel & Perret (2015) stated that the OTA segment is becoming a strong competitor to the individual booking sector and distribution channels; it has already taken substantial share from traditional contracted booking channels, mainly wholesalers and tour operators. Chubchuwong (2018)'s study found that bookings from online travel agencies (OTAs) have strong impact on hotel sales revenues. The research indicated that apart from leisure travelers, individual business travelers from corporations and officials from government segments have recently and slowly leaned towards OTAs because room rates are more competitive (Chubchuwong, 2018).

Small and independent hotels which have been established in the past 2 decades and have no marketing experience turn to work with OTAs due to their bookings and strong market exposure. Even though OTAs generate a lot of revenues for hotels, their high commission rates constitute a major concern to most hoteliers (Barthel & Perret, 2015; Gazzoli et.al.,2008; Lee, Guillet & Law, 2012). With commission ranging from 15% to 30%, OTAs are a heavy burden to hotel profit margins (Barthel & Perret, 2015). Several researchers have observed some troubled relationships between hotels and OTAs (Barthel & Perret, 2015; Gazzoli et al.,2008; Lee, Guillet & Law, 2012).
The existing literature on hotel online distribution often focused on pricing strategies and room availability issues for different segments of hotels (Gazzoli et al., 2008); effectiveness of OTAs’ websites (Park, Gretzel & Sirakaya, 2007); and effectiveness of online bookings (Ye et al., 2011). It has not seemed to be research on the supply side, particularly on the problems of small, independent hotels working with OTAs. This author assumes that there may be several problematic issues in working with OTAs by small and independent hotels. Thus, the author is interested to study this topic.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the benefits and problems of using OTAs by small, independent hotels
2. To explore how the small, independent hotels react and solve the problems

ASSUMPTION

Some literature revealed that small, independent hotels have gradually depended more and more on OTAs (Barthel & Perret, 2015). However, research also found that hotels have been complaining about the high commission rate that they have paid to OTAs and the impact on their revenues (Barthel & Perret, 2015; Gazzoli et al., 2008). Even though OTAs provide a lot of benefits to hotels such as online bookings and market exposure, the market share of bookings from this channel should be appropriated and hotels should be able to manage their own brand.com or direct online booking channels creatively and effectively in order to be less dependent on OTAs. However, most literature do not seem to study on the supply side nor in the Thai context. The author assumes that small, independent hotels in Thailand have benefits from OTAs, however, they might have encountered several problems, and some might have tried to find solutions, others may not. The author also assume that some owners or managers of small and independent hotels may not have marketing knowledge and experience to manage their own online marketing strategies. Therefore, it is challenging to explore these issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nowadays hotel distribution channels for transient bookings can be grouped into five major categories which are 1. Online travel agencies (OTAs), 2. Central reservation system (CRS), 3. Direct (such as walk-in and telephone), 4. Global reservation system (GDS) and 5. Brand.com (Hotel’s website) (Barthel & Perret, 2015). Based on Travelclick (2015) the results of individual leisure and business bookings for the first quarter of 2015 showed year-on-year growth in booking made via OTAs (15.1%), brand.com (7.1) and GDS (1.1%), whereas direct and CSR bookings deceased by 8.4% and 6.1% respectively. It can be seen that OTAs reports the highest growth among all channels.

One of the main reasons for OTAs’ success was their ability to sell cheaper rates than the ones offered by hotels and their reservation offices (Gazzoli et al., 2008). The KPMG (2005, in Gazzoli et al., 2008) Global hotel distribution survey revealed that online intermediaries presented the cheapest room prices in 36% of all cases. However, with regard to room
availability across all channels, the hotels’ websites were the most reliable online resources for finding a room.

In 1990s online travel intermediaries were established (Barthel & Perret, 2015; Gazzoli et.al.,2008) and have later become the major global e-intermediaries. With Microsoft launching Expedia Travel Service in 1996 in the USA, followed by it European counterpart, Priceline, in 1997 (Barthel & Perret,2015; Gazzoli et.al.,2008). Both platforms allowed customers to book their holidays online. Based on Barthel & Perrett (2015), the two important OTA players are Expedia and Priceline. Expedia gained first position in terms of worldwide gross bookings, whereas Priceline was the largest OTA by revenue. Below figure shows the two major OTA players and their brands.

![Two major OTA companies and their brands](image)

**Figure 1. Two major OTA companies and their brands**


In Thailand, the brands that are well-known are such as Agoda.com and Booking.com. Booking.com B.V. is part of Price Line group. It was established in 1996 and was translated into 40 languages including 913,667 hotels in their network. Agoda Company Pte. Ltd. was established in 2005 and in 2007 it was acquired by Price Line. It has offices in more than 20 countries including Thailand. Agoda.com has more than 100,000 hotels in their network and the website was translated into 38 languages.
Based on the research of Tsang, Lai & Law (2010), the satisfaction of OTAs customers are based on website functionality, information quality and content, fulfillment and responsiveness, safety and security, appearance and presentation, and customer relationship. However, only four dimensions are found to significantly influence online customers' overall satisfaction and their repurchase intention. They are website functionality, information quality and content, safety and security, and customer relationship.

In 2013, travel sales revenue by OTAs accounted for around 45% of total European travel sales revenue (Euromonitor, 2013 in Barthel & Perret, 2015). However, research indicated that this development took place at the expense of direct bookings and traditional agency bookings. OTAs work with hotels with the ‘agent model’ i.e. they get a commission for each booking generated. This model guaranteees a fixed commission per booking on a per room per night basis and the client has an option of paying either upfront at the time of booking or at time of checking-in or checking-out at the hotel.

Barthel & Perret (2015) stated that the benefits of OTAs are market exposure especially for unbranded properties which might have limited visibility, and OTAs have much more power to invest in marketing campaigns and thus reach much more audience with multi-language settings. This level of exposure is rather difficult by an individual hotel company. Another advantage is the possibility to sell opaque rates and bundle rates. While OTAs offer a range of benefits, their high commission rates are a major concern to most hoteliers. They recommended hotels to react to the high commission rate given to OTAs by developing their hotel’s brand.com to be more competitive. Some of the recommended criteria for hotel website are accuracy of the property description; extensiveness of property related topics; time require to complete booking; user-friendly of booking channel; feeling of payment security; simplicity of altering or cancelling a booking; availability of brand.com-specific promotions.

Barthel & Perret (2015) also proposed another way for hotels to increase their hotel webpage conversion rates and thus gain more profitable return on investment from search engine optimization (SEO), which is a process of improving the visibility of a website on search results. One of the most popular is Google Ads.

**METHODOLOGY**

The author will a mixed methods i.e. in-depth interview and a survey. Apart from the literature review, for the topic that has not seemed to be sufficiently studied, in-depth interview can be a method to provide better understanding of the thoughts of the subjects on an issue. Then the conceptual model can be designed. After that a survey will be employed.

Data collection

For in-depth interviews data will be collected by conducting casual in-depth interviews with approximately 8-10 hotels in Bangkok with the hotel owners or managers whose hotels
have been using the service of online travel agencies (OTAs) for not less than 2 years. Each interview is expected to take about 45 minutes to 1 hour. The purpose of the interview will be explained to the prospected respondents in order to make sure the interviewees are agreed and opened.

The researcher prepared 3 simple generic questions to guide the interviews. They were:

1. What are the benefits of using online travel agencies?
2. What are the problems of using online travel agencies?
3. What have you done to solve the problems?

However, there will be the screening questions to obtain the profile of the hotel such as year of establishment, no. of years that they have worked with OTAs, how many brands of OTAs that they work with, and whether the hotels have their own online booking engine to accept direct online reservation.

The author will analyze the result and will apply the constant comparative method (Creswell, 2007). The author hopes that this research will provide some concepts that can be used to create a conceptual model for further empirical research on this topic.

The second phase will be a survey with small and independent hotels in Thailand. Questions will be developed based on the literature review and results of the in-depth interview. Data will be collected from the small, independent hotels in Thailand.

Operations definition

The small hotel in this study will be defined as a hotel that has less than 150 rooms and independently owned (National Statistical Office, 2014).

**EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION**

It is hoped that the results will provide the insights into the benefits and problems faced by small and independent hotels in working with OTAs, as well as some good practices and recommendations on how to solve the problems.

**REFERENCES**


AGRITOURISM: AN APPROACH TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THAILAND

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RESEARCH PAPER

Keywords: Agritourism, rural development.

TOPIC AND AIM

A key aim of this research was to develop a conceptual framework to understand agritourism as an approach to rural development in the developing world context, in this case, Thailand. In order to achieve this broad research aim, four more specific research objectives were set. They were: 1. To examine the economic and social changes from restructuring in rural areas, 2. To identify how farmers re-evaluate agricultural resources as tourism products and to identify the motivation for diversifying into agritourism, 3. To evaluate how farmers utilize their agricultural resources for tourism purposes, and 4. To assess livelihood opportunities of farmers who diversify into tourism and of villagers.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The framework that is developed uses the concept of the socio-political economy of rural development, which comprises of three themes; arenas of production and consumption, agricultural diversification into agritourism, and agritourism as a form of reproduction and rural restructuring with these having interactive relationships between them. The framework starts from the socio-political economy of rural development as the broad overall context for this research. In this conceptual framework, the socio-political economy of rural development helps to identify key themes related to the dynamics of rural change. The first theme, which is the main focus of the research, is arenas of production and consumption. The second theme is agricultural diversification into agritourism and third is agritourism an approach to rural development.
METHODOLOGY

The researcher examined Nakhonnayok located in the central Thailand as case study area. It was selected on the basis of the variety of their agritourism types, the varied length of the establishment of agritourism, the combination of types of tourists, and the practical feasibility of studying and accessing the case study area. One key type of data collection used was in-depth interviews, with these being used to understand the views of respondents related to agritourism initiatives in Thailand. The interviews were conducted from January 2012 until March 2012. Many of the results were drawn from fourteen interviews. The respondents included agritourism operators, local villagers, representatives of government, and trade.

CONTRIBUTION

The results are mainly drawn from interviews with agritourism operators (7 respondents), communities (2 respondents), government (3 respondents), and trade (2 respondents). The government reports also provide relevant information about the topic.

A first finding involves the transition from formerly dominant production goals towards a more variable mix of production and consumption. The difficulties in relation to agriculture led farmers to move away from agriculture alone to alternative choices to sustain their livelihoods. In study area the revenue from non-farm activity changed, and there was a tendency for it to increase, and farm households in Nakhonnayok were increasingly dependent on non-farm income. Among non-farm activities, many farmers and villagers considered tourism as an option, and tourism was also recognised by government as a potential tool to improve the well-being of farmers and villagers. However, the impetus to diversify into tourism among farmers varied considerably. While most farmers entered tourism to gain better prices for farm products, some focused more on gaining additional income or having something to do after their retirement.

A second finding concerns a trend to consumption by external interests. The rural area in Nakhonnayok was increasingly being consumed by market-driven outsider interests. Since the development of tourism twenty years ago, its rural areas have become attractive for residential and other investment opportunities, and notably for tourism. Outside investors have come here in search of building tourism facilities. Nakhonnayok, with a location adjacent to Bangkok and a reputation from tourism, is also a target for urban people wanting to leave
the city. This counter-urbanisation is increasingly exposing rural areas as potential sites for economic innovation and new forms of exchange and transaction (Marsden, 1998). Rural areas are now not only viewed as sites of production, but they are also increasingly viewed as spaces of consumption and of multi-purposes activities which capture outsiders’ interests.

A third finding was that former agricultural resources and other resources in rural areas are now seen as having a new value, notably as tourism products. Holmes (2006) states that rural space is increasingly being consumed by market-driven urban interests, with these outside actors being attracted by residential, lifestyle or investment opportunities, and tourism. At first, local people were unaware of their tourism potential, and often they were uncertain whether tourists would be interested in their resources. They were surprised that their mundane environment and activities could capture tourists’ interests. Thus, tourism has altered the way farmers look at or use their resources, viewing their agricultural lands and holdings not only as productive assets, but also as multifaceted assets. They have now re-evaluated those assets as tourism products. In Nakhonnayok, agritourism operators have often tried to more fully utilize their farm land as destinations, their farm activities as tourist activities, and their traditional ways of life and local resources as tourism products. Thus, farmers’ interests have shifted from focusing only on the production side to combining this with the leisure and recreation side.

A forth finding concerns changes related to the growth in the service sector and tourism in the rural area in Nakhonnayok. Tourism had gradually developed in Nakhonnayok since over twenty years ago. The growth of tourism was brought changes to the study area, with some valued by local people, but with some having a negative impact on their life. The economic consequences of tourism were valued by most respondents, including the promotion of occupational diversity, and improved infrastructure, such as roads and electricity to their villages.

A final finding relates to the practical outcomes of agritourism for agritourism operators and for wider rural development. Most agritourism operators saw the main opportunity from agritourism as it bringing a market to their farm or site of production. Thus, they could get a better price for their products rather than sell to a middleman. Apart from the direct benefits to farmers from diversifying into tourism, most respondents thought that agritourism was greatly advantageous for wider rural communities. First, agritourism is a catalyst for the rural
economy as it generates more employment and helps to boost incomes in rural areas. Agritourism provides local people with a secondary occupation in addition to their main occupation, and it provides self-employment in small and micro-enterprises. In study area, agritourism allowed villagers to develop small and micro-enterprises, which included craft production and petty trade. These small and micro-enterprises run by local people can lead to a real benefit to villagers and the community. Second, agritourism provided farmers and villagers with improved livelihoods. In this case, they used income, houses, assets, and public infrastructure to secure better livelihoods.

REFERENCES


DEVELOPING ONLINE MARKETING ABILITIES OF THE LOCAL FABRIC’S ENTREPRENEURS TO SUPPORT CREATIVE ECONOMY AND TOURISM IN NORTHERN THAILAND

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TOPIC AND AIM

The project of developing online marketing abilities of the local fabric’s entrepreneurs to support creative economy and tourism in Northern Thailand aimed to expand public relations and marketing channels of the fabric’s entrepreneurs using information technology to get involved in online and overseas markets. Also, to develop an online sales and marketing model by using social medias and provided E-commerce platforms, and to provide online marketing knowledge for the fabrics’ entrepreneurs and their staff, so that they are able to conduct trading in the online markets manually, more effectively. Moreover, to support using creative economy to enhance tourism and community’s economy.

Lamphun’s brocade Thai silk in Lamphun Province and Mae Chaem’s Tin Jok weaving cloth in Mae Chaem district, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand are well known as famous souvenirs from the Northern Thailand those can support local people’s economy. However, although the fabrics were famous, but still trapped in only groups of Thai customers. The project then had to lead new ideas and methods to help in developing the local fabric’s entrepreneurs and their staff to enlarge the fabrics’ markets and reputations to the world. And that’s what project had been started.
LIVED EXPERIENCE: DEMONSTRATING PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS IN TOURISM

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: DEMONSTRATION OF RESEARCH METHOD

Keywords: phenomenology; method; experience; tourism;

TOPIC AND AIM

This demonstration of phenomenology as a research method for tourism studies aims at enhanced understanding and application of these tools among the attendees and wider academia. As such, data collected by the researcher will be used to demonstrate (1) the asking of phenomenological research questions, (2) phenomenological data collection and (3) phenomenological data analysis in the tourism field. This will largely follow a demonstration of the data analysis employed by the researcher in his recent publication in “Tourism Management” (Wassler & Schuckert, 2017).

In terms of the workshop theme, phenomenology is commonly referred to as the “study of experiences” (Moustakas, 1994; Pernecky, 2006). To aim at enhancing the local experience – or any experience related to tourism – the provided demonstration of the phenomenological research method can open doors for experience-related research within the field.

The selection criteria are furthermore met as follows:

Relevance of the applicant’s research area and topic to the workshop;
The topic is of utmost importance for understanding experiences related to the tourism field.

Motivation and contribution to the aims of the workshop;
The discussion of phenomenology as a research tool allows other attendees to critically apprehend the method for their own research, and the presenter to evaluate, refine and improve his experience studies.

Description of the long-term impact expected through participation in the workshop;
It is hoped that the methodological focus of the participation can have a long-term impact on how experiences are researched in the tourism field.
Ability to disseminate workshop’s outcomes.

Through intercultural exchange, the issues and suggestions raised in the workshop can be disseminated through future collaborations.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND PRIOR APPLICATIONS

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) is commonly known as the founding father of phenomenology, although the term has appeared earlier (Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013). Essentially, transcendental phenomenologists believe phenomena to be grounded within the realities of people experiencing them (Pernecky, 2006). Phenomenology as a science is thus mainly concerned with uncovering the essences, or invariant parts, of these experiences (Stewart, 1990).

Although phenomenology should not be confused with a directly applicable research method, its philosophical guidelines have been widely used in research (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010; van Manen, 2002). As such, phenomenology enables to consider individual voices of people (Moustakas, 1994), enables to let phenomena emerge naturally (Schmidt, 2005), gives a strong account of subjectivity and can enforce empathy and trust through uncovering world views (Moran, 2000).

Phenomenological studies can be situated in different research paradigms (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010), ranging from the strictly positivist (such as Brentano) to the deconstructivist (such as Derrida). Langdrige (2007) states that most phenomenological studies are descriptive or interpretive, corresponding to the principles of transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenology, respectively. Within the tourism field, transcendental phenomenology has dominated the recent research. Curtin (2006) seeks to understand the experience of swimming with dolphins, drawing on Moustakas (1994) and van Manen (2010). Husserlian phenomenology was followed as the methodological guideline in Li (2000), Ingram (2002), and Pernecky (2006), in studies investigating geographical consciousness, motivations of farm hosts and guests, and “New Age” tourism respectively. In a more recent study, Kirillova, Lehto, and Cai (2016) follow Giorgi’s (2009) steps to phenomenological data analysis to investigate the essence of a transformative tourist experience. Nine experiential themes were identified and chronologically ordered into a phenomenological essence, with existential concerns found to be prevailing. Kirillova et al. (2016) adopt and follow Giorgi’s (2009) method in a tourism-related study and confirm its applicability to the field. Related contributions have shown success in applying phenomenological principles to gain some degree of insight into the lived travel experience (Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013).

However, when looking at tourists’ experiences in general, one must recognize the limitations of a particular chosen paradigmatic, ontological and epistemological lens to investigate them (Ryan, 2010).

Reviewing the extensive body of knowledge on tourist experiences, Chris (Ryan 2010) envisages the constructs of experience as “antecedents” (e.g. personality, motivation, and marketing), “holidays” (e.g. travel experience, interaction with fellow tourists, comparison between expectation and reality) and “evaluation” (e.g. original expectations fulfilled,
satisfaction, or dissatisfaction). However, transcendental phenomenology aims at describing the essence of a phenomenon focusing on a lived experience. Giorgi (2009, p. 90) highlights that transcendental phenomenology is interested in a perceived phenomenon from a perspective of “generalized, pure consciousness”, rather than in who is perceiving it. On the same line, Dahlberg (2006) states that through phenomenological attitude we can aim to distinguish a phenomenon from its context, but also to distinguish ourselves from the phenomenon.

As such, it is apparent that in the tourism field phenomenology has been widely used as a key-word, but epistemological, ontological, and finally methodological understanding is widely lacking (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010; Wassler & Schuckert, 2017). This presentation aims at overcoming this persisting confusion.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

A useful practical guide for researchers basing their method on the philosophical assumptions of transcendental phenomenology is offered by Giorgi (2009). It comprises four steps, namely (1)

reading for the sense of the whole, (2) determination of meaning units, (3) transforming a participant’s everyday expressions into phenomenologically sensitive expressions, and (4) transforming meaning units into a consistent statement which is descriptive of the structure of a certain phenomenon. The research method demonstrated will largely follow this framework, although phenomenological studies should always allow space for flexibility (van Manen, 1990).

In particular, in-class demonstration will recapture the data analysis employed in an article published by the researcher (Wassler & Schuckert, 2017) through guiding the participants step-by-step through phenomenological data analysis. This will be executed in form of a presentation, where attendees have the possibility to interact with the presenter.

CONTRIBUTION

This presentation will contribute to theory and practice in various ways. First and foremost, it is hoped to overcome part of the persisting confusion related to the application of phenomenological research methods in the tourism field. Taking the case of a successful study, which has been published in a high-ranked tourism journal, the presenter will guide the attendees through his own data analysis and discuss possible applications of descriptive, transcendental, but also hermeneutic phenomenology to various contexts within the tourism field. In practice, this will allow researchers to approach tourist experiences form a more realistic, emic viewpoint. In other words, the research method offered can aid scholars and practitioners to better understand tourism-related experiences, be it of tourists, locals, or tourist work-force. It is hoped that this has a long-standing impact on tourism academia and create a substantial dissemination of knowledge about the phenomenological approach to experiences.
REFERENCES


SMART MOBILITY SYSTEMS PLANNING: INCORPORATING CUSTOMER INSIGHTS TO ENHANCE LOCAL EXPERIENCE

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PAPER

Keywords: Local experience tourism; smart mobility; Sustainable tourism planning; tourism destinations; big data analytics

TOPIC AND AIM

The aim of this research is to propose a framework of smart mobility requirements as part of tourism destinations management to enhance local tourist experience by using tourist behaviors insights from big data analytics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, big data analytics has gained interest from researchers and business owners because of its capability to obtain customer insights. To be less reliance on gut feeling, these acquired insights was used by planners and managers to optimize supply chain in various industries such as retails, automotive, logistics, tourism, hospitality and so on. M. Fuchs, et al. (2014) used big data to generate knowledge to help decision maker make strategic planning in tourism destinations (TDs) in Sweden. Destination Management Information System Åre (DMIS-Åre) was created as real-time Business Intelligence to gain real-time knowledge on tourists’ on-site behavior at TDs, and as decision support for local hospitalities. S.J. Miah, et al. (2017) explains “A TD is a geographical area that offers tourists the opportunity of participating in a variety of attractions and activities and an area that is supported by all the hospitality and other services that the visitor might require.” They also review analytics solutions for TD managements. Many solutions use Geotagged and GPS based data. J.H. Park, et al. (2016) investigated the utilization of Facebook by local Korean governments for the purposes of tourism development. This creates smart tourism ecosystem in Korea. The study suggests that the use of Social Network Websites by local governments not only benefits local residents but also to potential tourists. U. Gretzel, et al. (2015) described the idea of a smart tourism ecosystem (STE) covering digital ecosystem and smart business network as conceptual building blocks.

Data analytics and data mining (DM) help organizations to analyze data sets and draw conclusions about them to make knowledgeable business decisions. DM comprises of
Statistical and machine learning techniques for identifying trends and patterns in huge data sources. These popular techniques are classification, estimation, prediction, and association rules. Example of classification techniques are artificial neural networks, decision tree analysis, rule induction, and K-Nearest Neighbor techniques. One of the association rules that frequently used in businesses is market basket analyses.

D. Wang, et al. (2013) suggests taking service-dominant logic to understand rationale and implications of smart tourism development in China. Tourist experience, communication strategy and destination competitiveness were discussed. G. Cledou, et al. (2018) research on smart mobility focuses on the use of integrated ICT infrastructures, sustainable transport systems and logistics to support better urban traffic and mobility. They gave examples of smart mobility services include real time and multi-modal public transport information, and traffic light optimization to attend to real-time traffic demand. Their work could serve as a tool for guiding policy makers by identifying a spectrum of mobility services and common functionality.

This research aims to build a model to help understand and predict local cultural tourist behavior and preference. Additionally, framework for smart mobility system to match with their tastes is then proposed since ease of mobility is one of key factors of pleasurable local tourism experience.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research focuses on cultural tourism in Bangkok metropolitan area. To gain insights of cultural tourist behaviors in the area, and then use these data to propose a framework model for smart mobility system to support both tourists, authorities, suppliers, transporter providers. The research framework is shown in Figure 1.
Relevant cultural experience tourism, cultural tourist attractions, and travel mobility factors would be used as keywords and geo-tagged in extracting information from social media websites. The acquired data would be pre-processed so that it is ready for further analysis. The analyzing process is as follows:

Using classification techniques such as K-Nearest Neighbor techniques to group similar characteristic tourists. Then,

Using association rules to gain insights of each group’s behavior and preference.

Using clustering techniques to identify groups of frequent problems and struggles tourist facing.

Data from 1a is then being analyzed using data mining techniques, associating rules to predict tourist behavior and preference. After verifying and validating, cultural tourism insights extracting model is presented.

Data from 1a, 1b, and including existing logistics and relevant IT systems are inputs of proposed framework of smart mobility system for cultural tourism in Bangkok metropolitan area.
CONTRIBUTION

Outcomes from this research are cultural tourism insights extraction model and sustainable smart mobility framework. The model is to extract cultural tourism preference insights and, more importantly, their ease of mobility in Bangkok metropolitan area. What problems and struggles these tourists face that would reduce their pleasure in travel in the area. Then, a framework for smart mobility system focusing on local experience would be proposed. As a result, this research would provide value customer behavior and preference information for local tourism suppliers such as hotels, restaurants, and tourist attractions. So that they could use this information to support their service enhancement decisions to ensure customer satisfaction. Moreover, smart mobility system framework focusing on pain points would be useful for authorities, system designers, and logistics service providers to create suitable service solutions or new business model to accommodate arriving cultural experience tourists.

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PROMOTING AGRITOURISM THROUGH CONNECTING YOUNG FARMERS USING MOBILE TECHNOLOGY IN THAILAND

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER (PROSPECTIVE PROPOSAL)

ABSTRACT

Thailand is known as a kingdom of farmers and its food products are recognised all over the world. However, the number of young farmers leaving their farms is increasing gradually due to reasons such as attitude (boredom), poverty (debt), economics (low income) and hardworking. On the other hand, tourism industry is one of Thailand’s main economic sectors (6-7% of its GDP) (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2016). Agritourism as pathway of farm business development, is a promising area for young farmers to include a working farm environment and a commercial tourism component. This study proposal investigates using mobile network technology to share and exchange knowledge and experience between young farmers in Thailand to promote agritourism. The study methodology is mixed method, including online survey and one-to-one interview with young farmers. The expected outcomes of this network are creating knowledge exchange community between young farmers through engagement, collaboration and partnerships to promote and enhance their current and future career plans. Concurrently, promoting agritourism will reflect positively on both farming and tourism industries.

Keywords: agritourism, mobile technology, network, young farmers

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To explore young farmers’ opportunities and challenges to improve their living from agritourism

To explore young farmers’ implementation of innovative technology in managing, maintaining agricultural and in promoting agritourism.

To investigate the affordance of mobile technology to enhance capacity of young farmers

To investigate the obstacles of implementing mobile technology to promote agritourism
To enhance capacity of young farmer to generate income from agritourism

To initiate global network among young farmers in Thailand to promote and sustain agritourism

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

What current challenges do young farmers confront in their current career as farmers?

What are the available opportunities for young farmers to increase their income?

What are young farmers’ future career plans?

What is young farmer’s understanding about agritourism?

What is the young farmers’ current utilisation of mobile technology?

How can mobile technology help in networking young farmers to share their knowledge?

How can mobile technology enhance the young farmer capacity to promote agritourism?

**STUDY BACKGROUND**

*Young Farmers in Thailand*

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension, 40% (14.7 million) of Thai employment is in farming. Their age demographic distribution, 75% (10 million) of Thai farmers are over 46 years old, 3 million are between 20 and 45 and 1,700 people are under 20 years (Kamsow, 2018). This imbalanced-number across ages between Thai farmers is partly due to a massive career shift. The number of farmers leaving their farms increasing gradually due to reasons such as attitude (boredom), poverty (debt) economics (low income) and hardworking (Tapanapunnitikul and Prasunpangsri, 2014). Consequently, this ageing society is highly likely to pose a serious threat to rural agricultural society.

In 2008, the Department of Agricultural Extension launched an initiative to build the capacities of young people in terms of farm production, business management, and information technology. In 2014, the program title was changed from “Young Farmers” to “Young Smart Farmers” and focused more on sharing farm experiences and building networks to farm visits and seminars (Department of Agricultural Extension, 2016).

However, According to Kamsow, (2018) young farmers consider themselves to be only a supplier. In contrast, farmers should think more creatively to be producers. Therefore, the revolution in agricultural technology such as internet and information technology has unlocked new opportunities for the improvement of farmers’ livelihood and to embrace those technologies to become “Young Smart Farmers”.

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Agritourism in Thailand

Agritourism can be characterized as businesses conducted by farmers within their working agricultural operations for the enjoyment and education of visitors (Srikatanyoo & Campiranon, 2010). Typical attractions at farm destinations include farm tours, pick your own farm produce, educational demonstrations, farm shops, picnic areas, and farm stays (Srisomyong & Meyer 2015). The traditional agritourism concerns just vacationers staying in farms where farmers offer the farms’ natural tourism resources for tourists. Therefore, traditional agritourism is offering additional but modest income for the farmers. Sznajder et al., (2009) addressed the need to experience agriculture and rurality that develops creative innovation technology to enhance agritourism provider.

The context of agritourism in Thailand showed that in 2015 the number of domestic agritourists were 95.2% and international agritourists were 4.8%. Agritourism revenues were 55,3025 GBP including 20,4889 GBP from tourist services and 34,8135 GBP from sales of agricultural goods and products (Prayukvong et al., 2015). According to Esichaikul & Chansawang (2015), most of the small attractions of private owners or communities are lacking the interesting presentation and integrated promotion of agricultural product.

Most research on agritourism concerns developed countries with relatively little research on agritourism in developing countries (Weaver and Fennell, 1997 and Flanigan et al., 2014). However, there are some evidences of farmers’ motivations in diversifying into tourism in Thailand in a study by Srikatanyoo and Campiranon (2010). The call in this study is the need to invest in using mobile technology to communicate between farmers and encourage sharing knowledge within agritourism activities. For this paper, agritourism is considered to be a kind of farm diversification which can be developed as a supplementary activity to agriculture. Worth to mention, in terms of tourists’ use of mobile technology, it has become a standard accessory for all travellers who rely on mobile technology for instant information and connections to their social network. Mobile technology is playing an increasing role in transforming tourist experience and shaping a growing focus of tourism research on using mobile technology in promoting tourism (Dickinson, et al., 2016).

Mobile Technology for Networking

Thailand represents an impressive case of mobile connectivity in South East Asia with mobile internet subscriptions higher than the regional average hedging similar rates than developed markets. Smartphone adoption is reflective of this growth representing over 60% of the total mobile connections. In 2014, the government of Thailand launched the ‘Digital Economy Plan’, a strategy striving for a digitally inclusive society and economy ‘Consumer Barriers to Mobile Internet Adoption in Asia’ (GSMA, 2016).

This technology has provided new opportunities for rural farmers to obtain knowledge and information about agricultural issues, problems and its usage for the development of agriculture. Similarly, use of ICTs in agricultural extension services, especially mobile phone services in the agricultural sector, has provided information on market, weather, transport
and agricultural techniques to contact with concern agencies and department (Aker, 2011). Therefore, the opportunity to rely on mobile technology to promote agritourism, is promising.

STUDY BENEFICIARIES

This research is underpinning different beneficiaries; promoting tourism and agriculture could bring economic national benefits for wider rural communities. For young farmers, agritourism helps young farmers to sustain their livelihoods, generates new sources of income and supports a community approach to development. Moreover, technology competence opens new employment opportunities for young farmers.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to enhance our understanding of activities of local actors who are young farmers in this study, an approach and a theory will be the base of this study. Actor-oriented will be the applied approach that is interpreting observable phenomena, such as human activities, rather than a means of providing causal explanation. This approach is used for the understanding of farmers’ lives and practices in many studies (Wiseman (1998) and Macken-Walsh and McDonalds (2016). Each of these actors tends to have different knowledge and past experience, so, they draw upon and use differing discourses in their interactions. Therefore, the use of an actor-oriented perspective in this study will help to explain; intra and inter links between the local actors and visitors, responses and processes of change of these interactions. According to Macken-Walsh and McDonalds (2016), it will be appropriate to base our actor-oriented perspective on a theory. The theory of social interfaces is a helpful analytical tool when exploring the interactions between young farmers and various actors in the agriculture business with a view to identifying the actors who have most influence on the young farmers ‘decisions and how this influence occurs (Long, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is mixed method involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (one-to-one interview) data. Expected number of participants in the survey is 200 and number of interviewees is 20 participants of young farmers. Recruitment of participants will depend on “Thailand Young Farmers”, which is a Facebook page, has more than 12,000 members. The page forms an online community of a group of young farmers gathered together across.

CONTRIBUTION

This study proposal provides an innovative empirical contribution towards networking and knowledge exchange community between young farmers for the development of agritourism. The study focuses on leveraging mobile technology to make a truly lasting impact on the lives of young farmers and promote their awareness and perception of agritourism. Long term vision, the study approach taken is broad and flexible, so that it can be applied to other areas
in Thailand and also to other developing countries where there are different cultures, society and economy.

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SERVING TOURISM EDUCATION WITH SERVICE QUALITY

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: PAPER

Keywords: Tourism Education, Service Quality, Expectation, Satisfaction

TOPIC AND AIM

The growth of tourism and service industry corresponds to the rise of tourism-related degree offered from various educational institutions worldwide. With many options are available for students to select, universities as higher education institutions keep searching for strategies to continuously attract prospective students. Given the current situation of higher education marketplace, students can be viewed as customers whose views must be heard and demand must be responded upon (William, 2002). Similar to business entity, universities must meet the expectations (Argan & Sever, 2010) and able to provide satisfactory experiences to our students. In this vein, tourism educators can bring into the light the core foundation or our greatest strength in being a service industry. This paper therefore revisits the classical concept called service quality by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1996). This concept has been emphasized in the hospitality field as a mean to enhance customers’ satisfaction. In education sector, particularly in higher education, various studies have used SERVQUAL to measure students’ satisfaction (Hasan, Ilia, Rahman, & Razak, 2009). Studies show that satisfaction derived from service quality will make a difference in the competitive education setting. With the need to deeply understand students’ views, this study therefore aims to assess students’ expectations on services of their tourism-education providers versus the actual services they receive from the program. Also, this research will examine the relationship between actual the service quality and overall satisfaction.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

![Conceptual Framework Diagram]
METHODOLOGY

This study is a quantitative research with data collected through questionnaire. The sample of this study is 400 undergraduate students currently enrolled in School of Tourism and Services at University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. Questions to measure students’ expectation and actual service received are based on the well-known five dimensions of SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1990), which includes tangibles, empathy, assurance, reliability, and responsiveness. Question items are also adapted from Hasan et al (2009) to suit the context of tourism education. Data analysis is through descriptive statistics to assess students’ opinions on expectation and actual service received. In addition, inferential statistics is also used: T-test is to compare the difference between expectation versus actual service, and multiple regression is to test the effect of actual service on students’ satisfaction.

CONTRIBUTION

The research shows that three most critical factors contributing to satisfactions are assurance, empathy and tangibles. Also, there is a significant difference between students’ expectation and satisfaction in their tourism-related programs. This thus offers important implications that we as tourism educators need to continuously improve our service as to meet the expectations of our students. We need to view students as our customers and use service quality to respond to students’ expectation and maintain their satisfaction which will also further enhance the institution’s good images and reputations.

REFERENCES


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SMART TOURISM TECHNOLOGY CONTINUANCE, PERCEIVED VALUE AND RESIDENT WELLBEING

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: DEVELOPMENT PAPER

Keywords: smart tourism, app continuance, resident wellbeing, technology acceptance,

TOPIC AND AIM

This study contributes to the ‘inclusive innovation for enhanced local experience in tourism’ agenda by studying the impact of smart tourism technology continuance on resident wellbeing in host cities. Specifically, the study builds on recent work on tourism and resident wellbeing (Lin, Chen & Filieri, 2017; Lin, Cottam & Filieri, working paper) and investigates the role smart tourist apps in facilitating this relationship. Smart tourism technology is defined as “all forms of online tourism applications and information sources such as online travel agents, personal blogs, public websites, company websites, social media, smartphone apps, and so on” (Huang et al., 2017 p. 758). Contemporary research suggests host cities and their residents derive more than economic and socio-cultural benefits from tourism (Paraskevaidis & Andriotis, 2017). Tourism, and offering tips and advice to tourists in particular, has been linked to enhanced resident wellbeing and life satisfaction (Lin, Cottam & Filieri, working paper; Lin, Chen & Filieri, 2017). Drawing on Davis’ (1985) Technology Acceptable Model and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Frederick, 1997) this new study investigates the antecedents of smart tourist app use, including general support for tourism activity, and how these technologies enhance residents’ wellbeing in popular travel destinations.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This paper defines continuance as long-term use (Bhattacherjee 2001; Davis et al. 1989). Users’ decisions to adopt and continue to use specific technologies for a task can be explained by Davis’ (1989) Technology Acceptance Model which draws upon the principles of the Theory of Reason Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). TAM has been adapted and applied to many different technologies, e.g. spreadsheets, voice mail, object-oriented technologies, online banking and e-learning systems (Straub, Limayem & Karahanna-Evaristo, 1995; Mathiassen, 1991; Hardgrave & Johnson, 2003; Martins, Oliveira & Popovič, 2014; Persico, Manca & Pozzi, 2014). TAM argues technology adoption is based on its perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is “the prospective user’s subjective probability that using a specific application system will increase his or her job performance within an organizational context” (Davis, Bagozzi & Barsaw, 1989, p.985). In other words, it is the degree a person believes using a technology will enhance their job performance. Perceived ease of use is “the
degree to which the prospective user expects the target system to be free of effort” (Davis et al., 1989, p.985). When a person believes a technology can enhance their performance without significantly increasing effort the system will be more likely adopted. In essence, technologies considered useful and easy to use have higher adoption rates. Davis’s (1989) arguments have been validated in numerous studies (Hendrickson, Massey & Cronan, 1993; Doll, Hendrickson & Deng, 1998; Adams, Nelson & Todd, 1992). Given these arguments, the following is proposed:

H1: Perceived ease of use is positively related to smart tourist technology continuance

H2: Perceived usefulness is positively related to smart tourist technology continuance

Many studies demonstrate the positive impact of helping others on wellbeing (Stukas et al., 2016; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010; Pressman, 2015). Even small acts of kindness have a measurable positive impact on the wellbeing of ‘givers’ (Nelson et al., 2016; Pressman et al., 2015). Giving induced happiness has even been identified in the inhabitants of a rural village disconnected from western culture (Aknin et al., 2015). Stukas et al. (2016) findings support these results, noting enhanced wellbeing levels in volunteers. The studies support the notion that acts of kindness, big or small, enhance well-being. Moreover, in the tourism context, Lin, Cottam & Filieri (working paper) also found residents’ advice-giving and welcoming behavior was identified as positively related to, and a manifestation of, their support for tourism development. As residents that support tourism development are more likely to help travelers it is postulated this support will manifest via engagement with smart tourism apps.

H3: Support for tourism development is positively related to smart tourist technology continuance

Self-determination theory stipulates that freely-exercised prosocial behaviours increase wellbeing by satisfying fundamental psychological needs, e.g. independence, relatedness and competence (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). Significant work has established how helping people enhances one’s wellbeing (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010; Pressman et al., 2015; Stukas et al. 2016. In one example, Stukas et al. (2016) discovered volunteers often experience greater wellbeing, trust, social connectedness and self-efficacy levels. Zhibin, Cottam & Filieri (working paper) found that residents experienced enhanced wellbeing when they engaged in pro-social behaviours to aid tourists, e.g. offering directions, making travelers feel welcome. Moreover, being helpful and welcoming enhanced tourists’ perceived value of their trips as these are intimately tied to the travel experience (Stylidis, Biran, Sit, & Szivas, 2014; Bimonte & Punzo, 2016). Given smart tourism allows for tourists and hosts to interact through ubiquitous, all-encompassing technology (Li et al., 2017) it stands to reason continued usage of smart tourism apps would generate similar effects on resident wellbeing. Thus, it is proposed:

H4: Smart tourist technology continuance is positively related to resident wellbeing
METHODOLOGY

Data will be collected in Phuket with local residents completing structured surveys regarding their support for tourism activity and smart tourism app use. Constructs will be measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale where participants note their agreement to pre-developed statements (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The survey will use three items measuring resident wellbeing adapted from Yolal et al. (2016) and resident’s support for tourism development will be assessed following Nunkoo & So (2015). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) will applied to estimate the theoretical model, using SmartPLS 2.0 software (Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005). PLS-SEM assesses the measurement model by testing construct validity and reliability, and evaluates the structural model by testing the relationships between dependent and independent constructs as outlined in the prior conceptual model (Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics, 2009). PLS-SEM is suitable for complex models and prediction oriented research, is capable of handling minimal sample sizes and avoids parameter estimation biases during regression analysis (Henseler et al., 2015).

CONTRIBUTION

This paper will contribute to theory by using self-determination theory to explain how residents use smart tourism apps to gain ‘warm glow’ effects which enhances their wellbeing. Furthermore, the TAM model is applied to explain how perceive ease of use and perceived usefulness determines smart tourist technology adoption and continuance. Finally, this paper links support for tourism development with smart tourism app continuance and extends recent findings into the smart tourism context. In practice, these findings will allow both local and national governments to better understand, and generate policy which considers, the mental health benefits and life-satisfaction smart tourist activity can contribute to local communities. Thus, tourism can have a greater impact than simply economic and socio-cultural development.

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@Copyright: Ed Cottam & Zhibin Lin
THE NEW TECHNOLOGY SERVICES THE AGING SOCIETY IN THAILAND

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PAPER

The gamification concept has a broad scope and encompasses various contexts such as education and training. Technology now allows people to measure things like how many steps they take, which can help them to become healthier and improve their performance. In terms of engagement, hospitality and tourism, local business may create a strong presence in a virtual, interactive environment. The new technology can provide tourism to find the place, product and time. The useful information such as surrounding entertainment venues; medical facilities; and similar services will encourage customers to take the services.

Keywords: Gamification; Medical facilities; Engagement; interactive environment; Aging Society

TOPIC AND AIM

My research aims to design the business strategies in gamification and a game-based learning for Thai people. During the increasing of the aging city in Thailand, how to prepare and how to live up the society are challenged. The conception of the game focuses on enhancing local experience in terms of hospitality and tourism. The new technology may help people to learn about the way to service the aging society in Thailand. This study focuses on the technology that customer experience can only happen online and through devices, check-ins and online comments. All of these experiences need to be part of an integrated, dynamic system so that the guests’ experiences are at the forefront of the marketing and operational team’s mind.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gamification is defined as the use of game elements and mechanics in non-game contexts (Seaborn, 2015). Gaming as a highly pervasive activity can be seen as the intense training of several skills. Digital games are a medium of entertainment. The essential aspects of gamification, which make the game (flu) experiences, are that they are immersed, engaging and fun (Seaborn, 2015). Video game training could be used to counteract known risk factors for mental disease such as a smaller hippocampus and prefrontal cortex volume (Kühn, 2014). In terms of health, a game that supports arm-hand training for stroke survivors aiming to render rehabilitation training can be enjoyable and sustainable, the games are based on a combination of well-known game-design principles and principles of task-oriented training and involve the manipulation of everyday physical objects were difficult tasks can influence
the patient’s performance (Jacobs, 2013). Knowledge and skills can be improved by using game-based learning. A learning game is a self-contained unit with start, game play and ending activities. Games can provide different types of learning content in different settings. The gamification framework focuses on the game design elements that include how to inspire, make people proud and let them scared. The new technology services may encourage the aging people to travel for health and care.

This framework will design the activity that uses the newest technology for sharing health status, health care such as exercise and relax travel.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to examine the gamification process for aging people with motivation to invoke memorable experiences and to bring about behavioral outcomes.

![Fig. 1. The process of Behavioral Outcome Adapted from (Hamari, 2014)](image)

Target behavior is embodied in a point or reward system. The reward systems involve intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This paper aims to collect information on how to address the problems of aging users. The main objective of this research is how gamification can be used in physical and cognitive therapy focus.

**CONTRIBUTION**

This study examines the therapeutic strategy game by establishing a technology-driven trust relationship with players, and then determining the best way to motivate the players to care for their health such as travel, recreation and Therapeutic to encourage the players to set goals. The business for hospitality and tourism for aging society are increasing. The research may contribute to the industry.

**REFERENCES**


ONLINE SOCIAL CONTACT AND TOURISTS’ VALUE CO-CREATION

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: RESEARCH PAPER IN NETWORKING AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Keywords: online social contact, value co-creation, contact channel, travel experience

TOPIC AND AIM

The current study aims to explore tourists’ online social contact and its value co-creation process. The study is guided by the following research objectives: 1) to explore the various online social contact channels and the way tourists use them; 2) to identify different contact groups of tourists during their travel; and 3) to examine the contact activities and the corresponding values co-created with different contact groups.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Information and communications technology (ICT) has been integrated into our daily lives, and tourism is not an exception (Wang, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2016). The rapid development of online communication platforms enables people to contact with each other constantly regardless the distance and time. People are getting closer with each other in the online world and having the need to be connected no matter where and when. In that case, what contributes to tourists’ experience and their own leisure welfare seem to change gradually.

Social Contact in Tourism

Tourism encounter is not a particularly typical service encounter, and interactions can vary depending on the occasions and participating groups of contacts. Facing the dramatical change of the modern travel as well as the tourists per se, a systematic investigation of online social contact is still underdeveloped. The urgency has been intensified by the emergence of social media platforms worldwide. In a liminal space and time span, tourists not only explore the destination and interact with the locals, they also remotely contact the rest of the world via different online channels and co-create various values for their overall travel experience (Wang et al., 2016). Online social contact hence plays an important role in value co-creation during tourists’ travel experience.
Value Co-Creation

Consumption of experience is often shared and collective, rather than purely subjective formatted by the consumers (Brown, Chalmers, & MacColl, 2002). Indeed, social constructionists argued that knowledge and meaning are created, realized and reproduced by social actors in an inter-subjective manner (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). In that case, values generated through co-creation can be understood by interpreting shared functions, activities and goals.

Service industry becomes more collaborative in nature due to the rapidly developed ICT and the ever-growing alternatives. Customer engagement in co-creation process is reported to enhance their overall experience and lead to a higher level of their willingness to pay (Tu, Neuhofer & Viglia, 2018). Value co-creation also reflects the features of collaborative consumption, in which customers and other communication parties can freely exchange their needs and supplies to maximize their benefits. Consumers nowadays are desirous of more personalized, tailor-made and unique experience rather than to select from a few standardized products. This need also emerges the formation of a highly intensive co-creation paradigm in general service industry.

METHODOLOGY

The current study followed an interpretivism paradigm, which seeks to explore reality by interpreting the truth from individuals (Veal, 2011). Methodologically, given the absence of substantial literature of tourist online social contact, a qualitative research approach was adopted to examine the rich content of tourists’ online social contacts during their travel. Semi-structured in-depth interview was applied. Regarding the sampling method, purposive sampling was firstly used to determine eligible respondents according to the expertise and professional judgment of researchers. In the current study, qualified informants should be the tourists who travelled overseas during last year and used online platforms to contact with the others during their trips. Second, by following snowball sampling, respondents were asked to invite people in their social connection who were qualified for this research. The interviewers will stop inviting new informants when information saturation is reached.

The interview protocol includes three parts. First, respondents were asked about their recent travel experiences during which online platforms were used to contact with people. Second, after the warm up, informants were asked to recall their experiences about their contacts with the others, including contact channels, contact groups, contact activities and values co-created during contacts. Finally, informants were asked to provide their demographic information. Chinese tourists are the target for the current study, not only because China is the largest outbound tourist market (UNWTO, 2017), but also due to the salient usage coverage of internet, e-commerce, and the social media (China Internet Network Information Center, 2017). Diversity in demographics were considered when selecting the informants.
CONTRIBUTION

As this is an on-going research project, 16 in-depth interviews have been conducted and we are in the progress of conducting more in the coming two months. In this session, initial findings from the completed interviews are presented. We expect that the final results of this study will be presented at the workshop.

From the results, three major types of online social contact channels were identified, namely online booking platform, social media and online travel community. Contacts via online booking platform are mainly service oriented, whereas contacts through social media are mainly social oriented. Online travel community provides a hybrid function for tourists, which offers both sufficient destination information and communication opportunities.

Regarding the contact groups, results indicate that tourists mainly interact with the following groups of people during their travel: service providers, colleagues/clients, family, friends, non-existing contacts (strangers) and residents (as shown in Figure 1). Each contact group holds different contact activities and co-create different values with the tourists. For instance, contacts with service providers happen both before and during the trip. Tourists tend to contact with them to seek for travel information, book personalized travel service, ask for any discount and to instantly solve problems during their travel. Through the above contacts, tourists are able to get professional travel information and suitable service with less hassle and in a timely manner. The instant response service during the travel also builds up a sense of trust and attachment between the tourists and the service providers, especially in a culturally and socially different destinations and with language barriers.

Another example is the online social contact with friends in tourists’ social network. Contacts with this group span before, during and after trip period. Their contacts include asking for travel information and recommendations, daily communication, safety check, experience and emotion sharing etc.. Contacts with friends can co-create functional, social, existential and authentic values. Functionally, tourists can obtain the first hand and trustful travel information. Interactions with friends may also reinforce the close friendship and fulfill tourists’ social needs. By posting pictures and blogs online within their social network, tourists express their real self and get feedback from their friends in return. Self-realization is achieved via such contact by finding a true self in the travel. Last, their contact regarding the instant experience and personal evaluation of their trips may provide useful information to the others, and such kind of consequences leads to a self-fulfillment and self-actualization.

To conclude, the current study explored the online social contact and the values co-created through this journey. By applying a qualitative approach, six contact groups were identified, namely service providers, colleagues/clients, family, friends, non-existing contacts (strangers) and residents. Each contact group holds particular contact channels, contact activities and the values co-created. It is noticed that some of the values can only be co-created through online social contact, rather than the face to face social contact, such as self-expression, safe check and authentic value via sharing and communication.
Theoretically, this study is the first attempt to systematically explore the online social contact of tourists and their value co-creation process. It extends the existing literature by nuancing the online contact groups and their corresponding values generated. It provides rich theoretical insights to facilitate the understanding of social contact and value co-creation in an online world. Practically, the findings provide innovative and technology-advanced ways to enhance tourists’ local experience by online value co-creation. Since technology enhanced travel experience is among the urgent agenda of our industry, solutions provided in this research will with no doubt contribute to the continuous development and evolvement of this dynamic industry.

**Figure 1.** Major Online Social Contact Groups

**REFERENCES**


I have studied about creating the spiritual experience of modern theatre audience in Mahachat sung sermon, the storytelling ritual that has Theravada monks’ singing the storytelling of Vessantara Jataka and the material gifts giving rituals as offerings to the sacred being. I created a theatre play to be an additional part of the ritual. The location of my research is situated in the modern and traditional communities in the northeast provinces of Thailand where the ritual has been encouraged by the governmental sectors to organize as a traditional event. I brought in theatre production with performers to offer an entertainment and the sacred experience for themselves and the spectators of the sung sermon. The performers and the spectators from outside the communities travelled for gaining the spiritual experience in the sacred spaces of the host organizers. Siripan Deesilatham (Deesilatham, 2017) claimed that the travel of meditation retreats in Thailand improved the eudaimonic well-being of the meditation tourists, influenced by ‘positive emotion and motivation for transcendence’; it is the ‘wellness tourism’ that is flourishing and the expectations of the travellers for well-ness in various groups are needed to be verified. I would explore the well-ness experience of the spectators and the audience in Mahachat sung sermon that the monks and the performers were able to offer based on the concept that is formulated by Helen Nicholson (Nicholson, 2005) that the play is a gift giving that theatre makers and the community members co-created. I would like to propose the result that implied from my study that theatre play in Mahachat sung sermon has a potential to be a gift of well-ness for travellers, based on the awareness of ethics that could support the co-created spiritual experience.
ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY STUDENTS TOWARDS CAREER CHOICE AS A TOUR GUIDE

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TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION: FUTURE RESEARCH

**Keywords:** Attitude towards career; perception of students; tour guide; career choice.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

For many decades, Thai economy highly relies on tourism industry to support its economic growth (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2018). With the fast growing industry of tourism and hospitality, with more than 30 million international tourists, coming to the kingdom in 2017. To ensure the continuous improvement of the industry, it is important to have the qualified staff to support the tourism development. One of the important facilitators for tourism development is professional tour guides. However, in the past several years, a significant number of tourism and hospitality students at the college level chose the career in hotels and other hospitality sectors than in the field of tourism.

The current study on the topic of tour guide career in Thailand is highly important because in different contexts or countries the attitude and perceptions regarding each career may be different as Airey & Frontistis (1997) pointed out that there are differences in college students in UK and Greece when it comes to choosing career as a tour guide. Their study noted that the students in the UK found better support systems of the tour guide career than those students in Greece. In addition, the attitude and perception of being employed as a professional tour guides, including social status, had the impact on their career decision.

Basically, the foundation of the tourism development relies on the quality of the human resources to facilitate the flow of tourism activities from tourism planning, tourism interpretation, and other tourism activities. The focus of this study is to explore the attitude and perception of tour guides on the perspective of Thai students in the field of tourism and hospitality management. Despite the growth of tourism industry and hospitality industry in Thailand, the perspective of being a professional tour guides has seem to face the big challenge due to the fact that the income that social status and the limited career growth may be the problem for Thai students to pursue a career in this field.
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the attitude of the tourism and hospitality students in Thailand towards tour guide career

2. To identify factors related to the decision to choose the career as tour guide, including courses taught in their undergraduate programs and their understanding about the tour guide career.

3. To propose the conceptual framework explaining the attitude, perception, important factors for choosing the career in the area of tourism, especially as a tour guide.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

For benefits of the study, we expect that the results of the current study can be used as a guideline for the tour guide association, tourism and hospitality schools and other related stakeholders, including tourism authority of Thailand and Ministry of Tourism and Sports.

With the clearer understanding from the findings, the authors aim to provide the solutions to help attract the college students and new generations to participate more in the field of tour guiding because tourism industry will continue to have the great impact on the Thai economy in the future.

RECESSED METHODOLOGY

The current project will apply qualitative approach with semi-structured interview. The target population of the study is college students in the leading institutions in Thailand including Kasetsart University, Mahidol University, and Thammasat University. The sample size is expected around 20 to 30 samples. When the data collection is completed, the content analysis will be used to extract the important theme of the keywords and furthermore the important factors related to career choice in tour guiding will be identified.

REFERENCES


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This study aims to investigate the tourists’ perspective towards gastronomy tourism in Phuket. As food tourism is a growing tourist attraction and integral part of cultural experience hence food tourism plays an important role in promoting destination marketing. For most tourists around the world who come to travel, one-third of the total expenditure is for food and beverage (Telfer et al., 2002). While Ashley and Meyer (2006) claimed the main part of tourists’ spending is on meal and crafts. The trend in tourism has been changed due to the tourist’s behaviour changed. Tourists would like to become part of the local: seeing like local, eating like local. Culinary experience is becoming as a tourist destination. As a new trend with a high amount of interest, not only dining in but also learning about where the food comes from and how it is produced will increase their tourists’ experience and having a great memorable trip. Cuisine tourism definitely varies by area and reflects the certain culture. This study will focus on Phuket because it is announced by UNESCO for the city of gastronomy where is the first city in Asia. This research will also study the food’s history in order to collect local wisdom about traditional food, including the location, and customers especially the tourist’s perception in Phuket. This study will use the “Participatory Action Research (PAR)” and “Quantitative Research”.

Keywords: Local Wisdom, Gastronomy, Local Food, Phuket, Cuisine