

THE STUDY ON TRAVELLER EXPECTATION, SATISFACTION IN NAN PROVINCE TOURISM.

Krit Chaisaengduean

Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand,

E-Mail: krit.ch@ssru.ac.th

ABSTRACT

The travel and tourism sector has been a major contributor to the Nan province economy over the past seven years. Thai government has been created many projects for increasing of revenue of people in Nan province. This study examined the correlation between traveler expectation and satisfaction for visiting in Nan province. A questionnaire survey collected 250 responses between Dec 24, 2018 – Jan 4, 2019. We found that a significant correlation between traveller expectations and satisfaction on expects higher satisfaction in local transportation service, accessibility of tourist attractions, and shopping possibilities. Yet, the sampled group are found to be significantly satisfied with climate conditions and nightlife entertainment.

Keywords: Expectation Satisfaction NAN tourism

INTRODUCTION

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has stipulate the strategy “Explore and eclectic prominent point of each province, provincial groups and areas to create unique brand image as tourism selling point under the concept **“City...you shall not miss”** for development of goods, services and supporting factors in the National Tourism Plan 2012-2016 in order to promote tourism according to National Development Plan 12. A total of twelve underrated cities with unique and interesting stories have been selected from 5 regions in Thailand. Nan is one of the provinces select under the campaign “Whispering of love underneath the stars” whereas the ‘whispering of love’ comes from the ‘Pu Man Ya Man wall painting’ in the famous Phumin Temple which felicitously represents the image of Nan Province. Moreover, Nan Province is full of calm and abundant nature.

In 2018, the Tourism Authority of Thailand has been planning to promote the project **“12 Cities...you shall not miss Plus”** to stimulate tourism in secondary city such as Nan and other 23 provinces according to the strategy “to distribute tourism income to secondary cities and strengthen the local tourism economy”. This results in a total of 162 million Thai travellers, tallying the income to 1.03 Trillion baht or 8.5 percent increase with an average spending of 4,754 baht per person per trip.

In the future, external factors will definitely affect the growth in the number of travellers in Nan Province. For examples, travelling to Luang Prabang Province in Laos, using the Huay Gron border roads Amphur Chalermphrakiet, a safe and comfortable route, will take only 5 hours. Soon, the Luang Prabang Province will become an important stop for high-speed electric train connecting Vientiane, Capital City of Laos to Kunming in China.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the tourist expectations and satisfaction levels of services of various tourist attractions as well as policies and concepts of tourism marketing in order to lead to the development of tourist service development plans in Nan Province.

OBJECTIVE

1. To investigate tourist expectations in Nan Province.
2. To investigate the satisfaction level, problems and obstacles of travelling in Nan Province.

Benefits of the study

The present study will show the expectation and satisfaction level of tourists visiting Nan Province which will benefit the tourism related operators to reflect and improve their services to meet travelers' expectation and create future competitive advantages. Moreover, tourism management agencies can use the results to manage tourist attractions in Nan whereas related agencies can apply the results for land utilization, and Tourism Masterplan in order to manage the tourist capacity in Nan Province.

METHODOLOGY

Study scoping

- Content scoping

Tourism status in Nan Province, tourists' expectation level of tourism related services, tourist's satisfaction level of tourism related services and problems and obstacles that tourists have towards tourism related service in Nan Province.

- Population scoping

Primary data have been studied in two population groups: Firstly, the major information contributor group consisting of management level officers and tourism related government agencies in Nan Province. Secondly, 250 tourists visiting Nan using random sampling in Nan Nakorn Airport, Nan Province during 25 December 2018 - 4 January 2019.

Secondary data have been studied in domestic tourism situation reports and recent research study.

Material and method

Questionnaires were used in this study to collect information from tourists and analyzed using descriptive statistic GAP Analysis and relationship tested using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. Focus group were used to collect information from consisting of management level officers and tourism related government agencies.

Concept and Theory

- Expectancy Theory Concept

The expectancy model is prominent in explaining motivation, and it represents the psychological needs to pursue a goal state. The two conditions for this pursuit are: 1) it must be possible to anticipate the occurrence of the goal state so there must be an expectation; and 2) the goal state must have some intrinsic value or attractiveness (valence) and it serves as a motive [1]. The relationship between motivation and expectation is that motivation can be conceptualized as the product of expectancy and valence. Motivation can be influenced by manipulating cues of an individual's expectation concerning the consequences of his/her action and/or the incentive value of the consequences produced by the action [2]. A recent research study carried out by Korawan, Archabaramee, and Karnjana proved the correlation between expectation and motivation. Expectation originates from suggestions from peers. The expectation of accommodation consists of safety, cleanliness, wifi service provision, location and price worthiness. The highest expectation of food is local food tasting [3].

The prediction of tourist behavior and knowledge of tourist motivation are an important role in tourism marketing, in order to create demand and assist tourists in decision-

making. Thus by having adequate knowledge and understanding of tourist behavior, strategies and policies can be developed and implemented to increase the demand for tourism [4].

Quality of service refers to the level of difference between the customer's expectation and service delivery by service providers in which customers will compare the expectation before using service with the satisfaction after using the service. When the customer's expectation is higher than the satisfaction, the quality of service is poor. Contrastingly, when the expectation of customer is lower than satisfaction level after the service, quality of service is high [5].

- Satisfaction Theory Concept

Sirivan Serirat explains the customer satisfaction as: Customer Satisfaction is the feeling of customers that derived from the comparison of product knowledge and customer expectation. Customer's satisfaction level originates from the different between benefits received from services and personal expectation. The expectation level results from the previous experience and customer knowledge of products and services. If the performance of products is lower than expectation, the customer will not be satisfied whereas if the product performance is higher than expectation, the satisfaction level will be high [6].

The marketing personnel need to search and measure customer's satisfaction level with regards with the marketing concept. The measurement of customer satisfaction level can be carried out as follows:

- 1) Complaint and Suggestion System which businesses such as banks, hotels, hospitals, restaurant, departments stores, commonly used to find customer's opinion on products and services, together with problems and suggestions.

- 2) Customer Satisfaction Surveys is a marketing research tool which uses questionnaires to find customer's satisfaction which consists of the following techniques:

- (1) Rating Customer Satisfaction by scoring i.e. very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied, very satisfied.

- (2) Asking the customers directly whether the customer is satisfied with products and services or not. Why?

- (3) Problem Analysis by asking the customer to identify the problems of using the services as well as suggesting ideas to solve the problem.

- (4) Service Performance Rating by asking the customers to give a score to each features of services which allows the investigation of weaknesses and strengths of the service.

With regards to the above concept, the tourist's satisfaction is when tourists feel food, happy and pleased when their objectives are met. If it is consistent with their expectation or higher, they would be satisfied. On the contrary, when products or service performance is lower than expectation, the customers will not be satisfied in which the satisfaction rating will be more or less depends on the response as well.

Literature Review

- Tourists behavior in Nan Province

Sustainable tourism development consists of availability of facilities including parking systems and internal traffic, personnel with service mind, assigning area capacity by limiting number of tourists per trip per day in each route. As well as, local guides and experts who have vast knowledge in both natural and culture areas allowing the explanation of local tales and folk wisdoms. Together with clear policies and plans to in order to promote and management tourisms in the region both short term and long term.

Tourists satisfaction of cultural tourist attraction in Nan Province can be classified into three aspects: The potential for attracting interest in cultural tourism aspect, the capacity of cultural tourism aspect and the cultural tourism management aspect [7]. Factors affecting the decision of ecotourism in the aspect of tourists demands includes: spatial factors, social responsibility management, personnel, and price. The demand of tourist is a positive aspect

that is linked to tourist's satisfaction [8]. Factors that would promote agricultural tourism in Nan Province includes: management and marketing skills of business owners, and the availability of clear information. This is because tourists tend to search their own information on routes and interesting tourist attractions from different sources before making a decision. In addition, accessibility of routes leading to tourist attraction must be convenient and fast. [9].

The most important factor affecting the decision of re-visiting Nan Province is the beauty of natural attractions, the distance between home and Nan Province and type of accommodations. The reason for choosing city-located accommodations over national parks and resorts is cultural and ecotourism. Moreover, factors affecting the choice of accommodations in Nan Province are: atmosphere, environment and aesthetic aspect of accommodation, as well as the location and number of days spent travelling [10].

- The expansion of tourists in Nan Province

The above plans and projects (“**City...you shall not miss**” and **12 Cities...you shall not miss Plus**) have led to a major growth in the number of tourists and tourism income since the first year of the project as presents in Table 1

Table 1 Number of tourists travelling to Nan Province Year (2012-2018)

Year	Income from Tourism (million baht)	Income Growth Rate (%)	Number of Tourists (Person)			
			Thai	Foreigners	Total	Growth Rate (%)
2555	1,752.8		582,303	17,782	600,085	
2556	1,894.7	8.10	625,779	18,126	643,905	7.3
2557	2,030.2	7.15	669,255	18,471	687,726	6.8
2558	2,158.5	6.32	714,641	17,805	732,446	6.5
2559	2,277.3	5.50	747,369	18,081	765,450	4.5
2560	2,462.9	8.15	879,394	20,732	900,126	17.6
2561	2,666.1	8.25	917,727	21,513	939,240	4.3

Source: Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2019

RESULTS

Sampling population consists of 54.6 percent female, 43.1 percent male and 2.3 percent LGPT. Majority of tourisms belong to the GEN Y group (55.00%). Roughly one third of sampling population lives in Bangkok (33.5%). As for occupation, 42.69 percent are office workers, and approximately one third of the sampling group is self-employed. More than half of the population sample has visited Nan Province more than once (65.38%) and stayed in Nan around 2-3 night (63.5). Purpose of visits are balance between visiting friends (40.4%) and cultural and ecotourism (40.4%). The most popular choice of travelling is by own vehicles (53.08%) and rental van (30.308%).

Fifteen most acquainted tourist attractions are ranked of which six are religion tourist attractions: Wat Phu Min, Phra That Chae Haeng, Wat Sri Pan Ton, Wat Mingmueng, Wat Phra Thai Khao Noi, and Wat Phra That Chang Kham Voraviharn. There are 2 man-made attractions: Ban Thai Lue Coffee Shop and Plumeria Arch at National Museum. The natural attractions are forest in Bo Kluea District, Agriculture areas in Pua District, Don Phu Ka National Park and Khun Nan National Park (Table 2).

Table 2 Level of acquaint in destination

Tourist Attraction	Type	Location	Mean	Level of acquaint
Wat Phu Min	Religion	Mueng Kao Nan	4.10	Good
Phra That Chae Haeng	Religion	Mueng Kao Nan	4.04	Good
Love Whispering Wall painting	Art	Mueng Kao Nan	3.98	Good
Bo Kluea District	Natural	Bo Kluea	3.97	Good
Nan National Museum	Cultural	Mueng Kao Nan	3.92	Good
Wat Sri Pan Ton	Religion	Mueng Kao Nan	3.90	Good
Wat Mingmueng	Religion	Mueng Kao Nan	3.86	Good
Wat Phra Thai Khao Noi	Religion	Mueng Nan	3.85	Good
Pua District	Natural	Pua	3.82	Good
Ban Thai Lue Coffee Shop	Man-made	Pua	3.78	Good
Doi Samoe Dao, Sri Nan National Park	Natural	Na Noi	3.68	Good
Plumeria Arch, National Museum	Man-made	Mueng Kao Nan	3.68	Good
Doi Phu Ka National Park	Natural	Pua	3.53	Good
Wat Phra That Chang Kham Voraviharn	Religion	Mueng Kao Nan	3.48	Good
Khun Nan National Park	Natural	Bo Kluea	3.42	Good

Eighteen issues of expectation of the sampled population towards tourist attraction in Nan Province before travelling are investigated. Highest ten issues of tourist's expectations are: friendliness of local people, personal safety and security, accessibility of tourist attractions, climate conditions, local public transportation, cleanliness of tourist attractions, unspoiled nature, opportunity for rest, possibilities for shopping, and quality of accommodation (Table 3).

Eighteen issues of satisfaction of the sampled population towards tourist attraction in Nan Province before travelling are investigated. Highest ten issues of tourist's expectations are: climate conditions, personal safety and security, friendliness of local people, cleanliness of tourist attractions, diversity of cultural and historical attractions, accessibility of tourist attraction, natural resource conservation, quality of accommodation, local cuisine, local public transportation and opportunity for rest (Table 3).

The difference between expectation and satisfaction of population samples are analyzed using GAP Analysis and relationships are examined using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. The study shows that the sample group significant expects higher satisfaction in local transportation service, accessibility of tourist attractions, and shopping possibilities. Yet, the sampled group are found to be significantly satisfied with climate conditions and nightlife entertainment (Table 5).

Table 3 Level of expectation and satisfaction of Traveller

Service	Level of expectation	SD.	Level of satisfaction	SD.	GAP
Organization of the local transportation services.	4.51	.798	4.07	1.239	-0.44
Opportunity for rest.	4.42	.744	4.07	1.243	-0.36
The destination can be easily reached.	4.55	.617	4.23	1.236	-0.32
Friendliness of the local people.	4.62	.655	4.32	1.151	-0.30
Possibilities for shopping.	4.28	.783	4.00	1.141	-0.29
Overall cleanliness of the destination.	4.51	.573	4.27	1.114	-0.24
Unspoiled nature.	4.44	.725	4.22	1.190	-0.22
Personal safety and security.	4.55	.782	4.35	1.110	-0.20
Offer of cultural and other events.	4.18	.797	4.01	1.167	-0.17
Climate conditions.	4.52	.678	4.36	1.129	-0.15
Wellness offer.	3.90	1.221	3.79	1.245	-0.11
Thermal spa offer.	3.65	1.204	3.58	1.235	-0.07
The offer of local cuisine.	4.14	1.224	4.08	1.119	-0.06
The quality of the accommodation (hotel, motel, apartment...)	4.21	1.226	4.17	1.132	-0.05
Conference offer.	3.75	1.247	3.70	1.255	-0.05
Diversity of cultural/historical attractions.	4.19	1.160	4.23	1.102	0.04
Night life and entertainment.	3.42	1.375	3.48	1.528	0.05
Availability of sport facilities and recreational activities.	3.65	1.247	3.84	1.275	0.18

Table 4 Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test: Rank

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Organization of the local transportation services	Negative Ranks	84 ^a	62.35	5237.50
	Positive Ranks	43 ^b	67.22	2890.50
	Ties	120 ^c		
	Total	247		
The destination can be easily reached	Negative Ranks	47 ^d	48.83	2295.00
	Positive Ranks	39 ^e	37.08	1446.00
	Ties	162 ^f		
	Total	248		
Possibilities for shopping	Negative Ranks	71 ^g	59.06	4193.00
	Positive Ranks	47 ^h	60.17	2828.00
	Ties	130 ⁱ		
	Total	248		

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Climate conditions	Negative Ranks	16 ^j	26.50	424.00
	Positive Ranks	36 ^k	26.50	954.00
	Ties	196 ^l		
	Total	248		
Night life and entertainment	Negative Ranks	35 ^m	46.59	1630.50
	Positive Ranks	81 ⁿ	63.65	5155.50
	Ties	122 ^o		
	Total	238		

Table 5 Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test: Test Statistics

	Organization of the local transportation services	The destination can be easily reached	Possibilities for shopping	Climate conditions	Night life and entertainment
Z	-3.052 ^b	-1.970 ^b	-2.029 ^b	-2.774 ^c	-5.029 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.049	.042	.006	.000

b. Based on positive ranks.

c. Based on negative ranks.

The sampled population are acquainted with main tourist attractions located in Mueng Kao Nan districts such as Wat Phumin where the famous “Pu Man, Ya Man or Whispering of Love” Wall painting is sited. In addition, tourists also acknowledged Bo Kluea District where several national parks are situated, with high mountains and magnificent atmosphere and Pua District where rice fields are abundant with complex mountainous ranges.

Figure 1
Tourisms Destination in NAN Province



The pictures and information of these tourist attractions are presented through social media, word of mouth, and past experience which enables the sampled population to learn about the attractions and increase interests in visiting these attractions.

Considering both the expectation and satisfaction, the sample group want good service from tourism features in Nan Province. The sample group expects local transportation service, accessibility of tourist attractions and shopping possibilities more than satisfaction of the service. The sampled population is satisfied with the climate conditions and night life entertainment.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

This study proves traveler expectation is correlated with information, word of mouth, social media and past experience. This can explain how traveler makes decision when choosing a travelling destination. Marketing and planning of tourism organization should use social media to attract travelers and present the trip content and service delivery should be enhanced to increase tourist motivation. Motivation the entrepreneur delivery services while services significantly influence traveler satisfaction. The motivation of potential tourists could be increased by promoting the attractiveness of the tours fostering close relationships with country governments and businesses; and maintaining an effective evaluation system (Macy Wong, Ronnie Cheung, Calvin Wan ,2013). This result of study is according to study reliable employees, neat and clean employees, polite employees, competent employees and timely employees (Jariyachamsit Sakul. 2015).

This study does have its limitations. A limitation is its relatively small sample that is taken from a single period time (Dec, 24 2018-Jan, 4 2019), the findings of the study may not be generalized. The relatively traveler samples travel by plane. Additionally, future research may consider proving the linkages between expectation and satisfaction with other samples and periods.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for invaluable help throughout this research.

REFERENCES

- [1] Heckhausen, J., & Heckhausen, H. (2008). Motivation and Action.
- [2] Hsu, C.H.C., Cai, L.A., Li, M. (2010). Expectation, Motivation, and Attitude: A Tourist Behavioral Model. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), 282-296.
- [3] Social Research Institute Chiang Mai University. (2016). Expectations and satisfaction of Chinese tourists in Thailand after the movie The Lost in Thailand.
- [4] Wong, M., Cheung, R., & Wan, C. (2013). A Study on Traveler Expectation, Motivation and Attitude. *Contemporary Management Research*, 9(2), 169-186.
- [5] Krit Chaisaengduean, Somdech Rungsrissawat, & Bundit Puangnirund. (2014). *Marketing and Quality of Logistics Service Process Effect on Performance of Logistics Service Provider, Thailand*. (DBA). SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY, Bangkok.
- [6] Sirivan Serirat. (2000). *Principle of marketing*. Bangkok: Diamond in Business World.
- [7] Kit-udom Suecharoen. (2016). Approach for cultural tourism development of old town, site in Nan province. STAMFORD INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (THAILAND), Bangkok.

- [8] Jitra Punroob, Wannida Chinnaboot, Apinya Kanthiya, Rossukol Thanakwang, Pirasut karunraksa and Ekachai Duangjai. (2018). Marketing Development of Cultural Tourism in Nan Province. *Prae-wa Kalasin Journal of Kalasin University*. 5(3), 438-458.
- [9] Thatsaporn Srisook, Adisak Champathong, & Charatnone Tachom. (2018). GUIDE LINES FOR INTEGRATED AGRO-TOURISM MARKETING DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN WITH NAN LIFESTYLE. *Journal of Suvarnabhumi Institute of Technology (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 4(2), 313-330.
- [10] Surachai Chancharat, Pongsatorn Chaisawat, & Anothai Harasarn. (2016). The Demand of Tourists' Revisiting and Accommodation Selection in Nan Province's Tourism. *Silpakorn University Journal (SUJ)*, 36(1), 25-48.
- [11] Jariyachamsit Sakul. (2015). An Investigation of Safety in Tourism: An Experience of Young Tourists in Bangkok, Thailand, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 197, (2015), 1931–1935.