

# Travel and tourism field : bangkok field trip



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Introduction Tourism is clearly understood as an eminent cause of umpteen changes involving various aspects, consisting of the destination's economy, politics and culture (Cohen, 2001; Crick, 1994). With these radical changes, local's hold different attitude towards tourism development and tourists themselves, both positively and negatively. Tourists behavioral, as one aspect leading to the influential of local's attitude towards tourism, were bought upon by their motivation to travel as well as their origin country and culture.

MacCannell (1989) suggests that tourism is a social phenomenon that can be viewed as a stage where human interactions transpire. As for this case study, preeminent focus will be on what motivate tourists to travel, their behavior and interaction towards the locals, as well as how locals response to these behaviors of the tourists and their perception towards them. This study was limited in one specific tourism attraction in Bangkok. Tourism industry is a major economic factor in Thailand.

With new shopping malls and hotels built in Bangkok over recent years, international visitors grew over 14 million vacationing in Thailand, ranking 18th most visited country in the world (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010). Brief interviews and observation will be focus onto the locals and tourists regard their behavior and interaction in Bangkok. Case study in Bangkok A different sense of space induced upon arrival at the airport, with heightened attention on the objectives of the study trip, eyes were wide open and attempting to spot on materials relevant for the research.

During the trip, most of the traveling was done via walking and communication barrier was an obstacle to be tackled during interaction with the locals. In attempt to accomplish the study trip theme, three interviews were conducted with other tourists and eight conducted with the locals, those of known common languages. Interesting responses were given from the locals with different job roles. Culture shock arise while observing their socio cultural environment, specifically on the public response towards the young boy with both arm amputated under the blazing sun begging for money and how locals could dine under severe unhygienic conditions.

Observation and experimental test proven local's attitude towards tourists can easily be manipulated with tipping and money. Many tourists with similarity nationality were spotted in the street of Phetchaburi shopping malls and streets. In aspect of tourism glaze, it was dishearten to watch other tourists with the same nationality to behavior in an unethical manner. Events as such were several wastage of food by the tourists due to the cheap pricing or fondness to try out Thai Cuisines rather than filling up and absurd bargaining by tourists in shopping malls. Literature review

Researches and theories of others were studied to apprehend tourism motivation of traveling. Personality and motivation are interrelated, where personality could be divided into psychocentric, as non-adventuresome, and allocentric groups, as adventuresome (Plog, 1974). Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979) both emphasize the importance of " Push" and " Pull" factors shaping tourist motivations. Iso-Ahola (1982) suggests tourism motivation consist of extrinsic component, desire to escape the everyday

environment, and intrinsic component, desire to acquire psychological rewards through travel in a different environment.

Kozak's (2002) study examines the differences in tourist motivation between nationalities, as well as the destinations. His study discovered four dimensions of travel motivations includes cultural, pleasure or fantasy based, relaxation based and physical motives. Ambro (2005) suggests that when tourists interact in a certain destination for a long duration of time, a kind of place dependency will be developed and may even become part of their identity which develop their avidity to visit the place again With aspect to tourism behavior, Ritter (1987) suggests that different tourist behavior is influenced by different nationality.

However, Dann (1993) criticized the use of nationality as a sole discriminating variable for illustrating the dissimilarity found in the tourist's behavior. Additional variable such as age and gender differences plays a part on different motives and behaviors. Older tourists tend to travel based on relaxation and cultural exploration, whereas younger tourists tend to seek for physical activities and engage in sports when visiting a destination (Cristina. t al, 2008). Conversely Andreu et al (2005) identified that age of a tourist holds no significant influence on travel motivations. As for the gender differences regards to traveling, Andreu et al (2005) suggest that female tourist preferred a stronger escape based and relaxation motives while male tourist preferred more recreation and activity. Following reviews will be the fundamental studies on the local's perception toward tourism.

Mass tourism generates dramatic changes in both physical and cultural environment, impacting on the values and traditional way of life in the local community. These changes force local to be actively involved in the tourism industry of the destination (Getz 1994). Ap et al (1998) claimed that a well-establish relationship between the locals and tourists was prerequisite for a tourist destination to achieve long - term development, yet the attitudes of the local hold highly irregular meanings towards the growth of the destination (Relph, 1976).

Milman et al (1988) studied the positive attitudes towards tourists, with employment opportunities, income from taxes and increased quality of life as a positive impact of tourism. Mansfeld (1992) focused the perceptions of the local and examined the negative impacts of tourism. He suggested that locals with higher incomes from tourism hold more positive attitudes towards tourism. Furthermore, Duvall (2002) pinpointed the negative impacts of tourism, which were the high taxes and prices in the destination, no vacation for the locals and long working hours to earn money.

Additionally, Jafari (2001) discovered six platforms of tourism, two platforms namely the " Advocacy" and " Cautionary" platforms emphasized the positive and negative impacts of tourism, which was supported by the previous studies. Liu et al (1987) analyzed local's perceptions of the negative impacts of tourism as a function dependent on the ratio between the number of tourists and locals. He claims that with higher ratio of tourists per locals will eventually lead to stronger criticism of tourism and a subsequent increase in opposition to tourism development.

Contradicting to his analysis, Angel et al (2007) evaluated that the higher density of tourism in a destination, the more favorable people are to tourism development and less worried about the negative impact. Results and Analysis With limitations and insufficiency of time, three interviews were conducted with other tourist within the street of Phetchaburi, mainly Singaporean and Australian aging from 21 to 33. The general question posted to them was “ What made you choose to travel to this place? The results from these candidates hold different opinions according to their nationality. From the two interviews conducted, both with the same nationality as Singaporean, a couple aging 24 and 25, and a group of three youngsters aging 22 to 25 respectively, similar results shown that their motives to travel was to escape from everyday routine life, to relax and most importantly, shopping. The first interview conducted with the couple also stated that it was their fourth time traveling to Bangkok because they love the place.

These groups were classified as psychocentric (Plog, 1974), and were motivated as “ Push” factors in relevance from Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979) studies. Motivated from the extrinsic component (Iso-Ahola, 1982), they seek to escape from everyday life and decided to travel to Bangkok as an option. As for the first interview candidates, the results demonstrated Ambro (2005) study whereas they had treated Bangkok as their “ second home”. On the contrary, results taken from the Australian couple hold different perceptives compared to the first two results.

The Australian couple aging 31 and 33, both carrying bulky haversack, mentioned that they were on an adventure to sight Bangkok Grand Palace

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and Temples. Phetchaburi only served a pit-stop for them and had no interests in shopping, their desire to see and obtain new knowledge from different countries culture and history. In accordant with the motivation concepts, this Australian couple was classified as allocentrics (Plog, 1974), and were motivated as “ Pull” factors in relevance from Dann (1977) and Crompton (1979) studies.

Contrasting from the first and second candidates, they were motivated from the intrinsic component (Iso-Ahola, 1982), seeking for new knowledge and experience from traveling where they were unable to achieve back in their country. In respect to the interviews conducted with other tourists, the two different nationalities, Singaporean and Australian, supported Kozak (2002) and Ritter (1987) studies as different nationality reflected different motives and behavior in tourism.

Due to the small group sample in this study case, it was prejudiced to confirm the argument between Cristina et al (2008) and Andreu et al (2005), however observations during the trip were partially agreeable with Dann (1993), age and gender plays a role in different motives and behaviors beside nationality. Such observations were spotted in Platinum Mall, where most shoppers were young tourists, mostly females, bargaining on items in shops vendor. From the results of the eight interviews conducted by the locals, six expressed positively while two explained why tourism affected negatively towards the community.

Corresponding to (Relph, 1976), these result signifies that not all locals hold the same perception and attitude towards tourism. Questions such as “ What

do you think tourism is Bangkok, Why” were posted to the candidates and results were recorded as follows. These six locals who expressed positively towards tourism stated tourism allowed them to make a living and increased their quality of life (Jafari, 2001; Milman et al, 1988). Out of these six locals, one which was the owners of traditional Thai massage centre indicated that locals with higher incomes from tourism hold more positive attitudes towards tourism (Mansfeld, 1992).

Two locals, mainly the therapist and the shop vendor expressed negatively. According to the therapist, she stated that their pay was very little with long working hours during peak seasons, very tiring and limited job option as most job availability in the destination caters to the tourists industry (Duvall, 2002). As for the shop vendor, she mentioned tourists bargaining of goods and items created a negative impact towards the businesses in the shopping mall, and would rather to locals as their customer because they do not bargain as much (Jafari, 2001).

From the interview with the Restaurant Waiter, the results reflected relevance findings with Angel et al (2007), explained that it's a everyday norm to see tourists waste their food hence would not mind them doing so. In comparison with 3 of the interviews, conducted by the Shop Vendor, Manicure Practitioner and “ Tuk Tuk” Rider, interesting results collected which demonstrated the inconsistency of local's perception towards tourism (Relph, 1976). Both Manicure Practitioner and “ Tuk Tuk” Rider preferred tourist customer as they could earn more from them.



Notwithstanding in the Shop Vendor's view as she preferred local customers. No such findings corresponds to Liu et al. (1987) study which local's perceptions of the negative impacts of tourism as a function dependent on the ratio between the number of tourists and locals. Studying both results from other tourists and the locals, as well with observation throughout the trip, various connections were discovered between the tourist and the locals in this case study.

Starting off, evidences had pointed out different nationality plays a crucial role onto individual's motive in traveling, leading to various behaviors. Local's perceptions towards tourism vary with the tourist's behavior, which in-turn not only generates "nationality stereotyping", but also "acceptance" towards their behavior. One distinct reason of such "acceptance" was tourism money.

With this "acceptance" developed with the locals, enhanced service satisfaction was provided towards tourists rather than towards the locals themselves, which resulted high satisfaction level from tourist and eventuate high expenditure of them. There forth some locals attempted to take advantage whereas they tried to hike up prices of services and goods, holding the belief that most tourists would not be mindful of expenditure cost. Frustration occurred for every failed attempt, such examples could be observed from the Shop Vendor and the Taxi Driver.

Possibility of such failure roots back to the tourist's nationality. This relationship not only associates the interactions between tourists and the locals, however evolved through the acceptance of tourist's behaviors and

the level of local's intention to earn tourism money. Model 1: Overview of the relationship between the Tourists and Locals Model 2: Acceptance and Service level interrelation with Expectancy on earning from tourists Model 1 shows the overview of the relationships between tourists and locals found in this case study as mentioned previously.

Model 2 displays a simplified graph, due to the lack of quantitative data collected indicate the higher level of acceptance and service level, the higher expectancy and intention to earn tourism money. Conclusion The theoretical concepts extracted from literature reviews constitute discussion pointers on tourism motivation and behavior, as well as local perception and attitude towards tourism. In conclusion of this study case, the results highlighted the dependence of tourism's motivation and behavior on nationality.

Thus, the results also evidence inconsistency of local's perception towards tourism. Evaluation of the analysis suggested a relationship between the tourist and the locals from the case study. The relationship indicates the acceptance of tourist's behavior as an influential component with the level of quality services provided, hence leading to the intention and expectancy on tourism money. The findings of this study display significant meanings and explanation on the inconsistency of local's perception towards tourism as well as their behavior towards ourism. Due to the location and sample quantity limitations from the study case, questions such as " does gender contribute to different tourism motivation and behavior" and " diversification of the relationship suggested from this case study between the tourists and locals in different destination" were yet to be answered. (2213 words)

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