Malaysian tourists visiting to thailand tourism essay



Tourism has been considered as an activity of global importance. It brings benefits to a country in term of social and economic. Recently, tourism appears to be an increasingly important industry in many border areas such as Danok in Southern Thailand. Cross border tourism is often proposed by governments as an incentive for economic growth. Therefore, many tourist destinations exist across boundaries. For example, there are a lot of attractive restaurants and entertainment provided in Danok, Southern Thailand. Border-crossing points that join adjacent countries commonly become hives of international economic activity (Kenneth, R. Lord, Sanjay Putrevu and H. G. Parsa, 2004). According to Andriesse (2008), he states that in year 1994, the Malaysian South-North highway reached the Thailand border, after which Thai authorities upgraded the road to Hat Yai. Bukit Kayu Hitam (north of Changlun) and Danok (south of Sadao) have become thriving business centers. According to Praman Tepsongkroh (2007), the nature of political boundaries and the relationships between neighboring countries usually create the types of tourist attractions that exist in border regions. Consumers living within a manageable drive of the border cross to the neighboring country for such diverse activities as shopping, entertainment, sightseeing, work-related travel, or merely the prospect of a different or lesstraveled route between two points.

Besides that, a new travel trend and patterns involving local border communities and other travelers and tourists using border passes emerged. These trends accelerated with economic and trade growth in border areas. For example, cross border tourism is popular among Malaysian tourists due to easy of crossing to the border of Thailand. Moreover, the application of a

border pass is cheap and easy but the border pass just available for Malaysians who born in Perlis, Kedah, Penang and Perak only. For those who want to apply for border pass, they just need to submit two passport size photos, one photocopy of identification card and RM 10. Then, they can get the border pass immediately.

As tourists are permitted to cross the border easy, the growth of tourism on both sides is greatly promoted, and touristic areas eventually abut the boundary on both sides. With growing cross border tourism, consumers can be segmented based on demographics characteristics that reflecting a particular emphasis on certain activities or shopping motivations driven from specific needs.

Figure 1: The Thai-Malaysian borderlands.

Problem statement

Profiling of Malaysian tourists visiting to border areas is not widely study among research. According to Mark P. Hampton (2009), cross-border tourism between neighboring states is relatively unexplored in the literature as cited by Timothy and Tosun in 2003. Besides that, according to Praman Tepsongkroh (2007), literature on tourism in the border areas between Thailand and Malaysia is scarce. Moreover, much attention of the academics has been paid on the historical aspects (Koch, 1977; Numnonda, 1967), whereas other works focused on the political conflicts in Southern Thailand (Dulyakasem, 1981; Haemindra, 1976, 1977; Surin Pitsuwan, 1982). Therefore, little is known about the determinant of Malaysian tourists' behavior that visiting to the borderland of Thailand.

tourists like travel to the border of Thailand.

The general impression is more Malaysian tourists flock to Thailand.

According to government sources on tourists who crossed the border in

2001, the number of Thai tourists visiting Malaysia was 660, 888 while the
number of Malaysian tourists visiting Thailand was 1, 239, 698 (Tepsongkroh,
Praman, 2007, pp. 8). This showed that the ratio of almost two Malaysians
crossed the border to Thailand than every one Thai tourist visiting to
Malaysia. Thus, it is important to find out the reasons of why Malaysian

It is significant to understand the tourism patterns of Malaysian tourists.

However, little systematic empirical research has been conducted to contribute to an understanding of the demographic characteristics, motivations and behavior of Malaysian tourists cross to Thailand border.

Therefore, there exists a gap in the empirical knowledge available about the decision making factors that influence Malaysian tourists cross the border to Thailand and there is a need to fill this gap of empirical knowledge.

Research objectives

To profile Malaysian tourists visiting to Thailand by their demographic and travel patterns.

To understand the motivations of Malaysian tourists visiting to Thailand.

To evaluate the level of satisfaction of tourists regarding the services and facilities provided at tourist destinations at the border sites between Thailand and Malaysia.

Research questions

What are the socio-demographic characteristics and travel patterns of Malaysian tourists?

What are the motivational factors that influence Malaysian tourists visit to Thailand?

What kind of facilities and services that satisfied Malaysian tourists to revisit Thailand?

Research hypothesis

H0: There is a relationship between Malaysian tourists' socio-demographic characteristics and their travel patterns.

H1: There is no relationship between Malaysian tourists' socio-demographic characteristics and their travel patterns.

H0: There is a relationship between motivational factors and Malaysian tourists visit to Thailand.

H1: There is no relationship between motivational factors and Malaysian tourists visit to Thailand.

H0: There is a relationship between Malaysian tourists' satisfaction and their decision to revisit Thailand.

H1: There is no relationship between Malaysian tourists' satisfaction and their decision to revisit Thailand.

Dependent Variable

Decision making

To decide whether to travel or not

Independent Variable

Socio-demographic characteristics

Motivation

Satisfaction

Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Variables used in this study

Definition of key terms

Cross border tourism – Cross border tourism can be modeled from the neoclassical economics theoretical demand framework based on an individual/consumer visiting neighboring countries with the purpose of directly consuming goods and services which are cheaper in that country and/or are unavailable in the country of origin (Witt & Witt, 1992).

Socio-demographic – Socio-demographic are the characteristics of a human population. Socio-demographic variables such as age, income, nationality and education have been considered as relatively usable, since they are easy to measure (Lawson, 1994) and they are identified as appropriate determinants of tourist behavior (Kastenholz, 2002; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gitelson & Kerstetter, 1990).

Profiling – In this study, profiling can be defined as the act of collecting useful information about the demographic characteristics of Malaysian tourists in order to give a description of their travel pattern (Oxord, 7th edition). In addition, profile of visitors is providing a better understanding to forecast of travel behavior (Suleiman, J. S and Mohamed, B., 2011).

Motivation – Motivation can be described as the driving force within individuals that impels them to action. This driving force is produced as a result of an unfulfilled need (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). The concept behind the motivation theory is that people are driven by internal motivates (called push factors) and attracted to destination attributes (called pull factors) when making their travel decisions (Dann, 1977).

Satisfaction – Satisfaction can be defined as "a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment" (Oliver, 1997) or as an overall evaluation of a purchase (Fornell, 1992). Besides that, Engel et al. (1995) stated that satisfaction was an outcome experience that at least met or exceeded expectations.

Decision making - Leads to the final choice of a travel destination which is influenced by a number of psychological (internal) and non-psychological (external) variables (Dellaert, Etterma & Lindh, 1998).

Delimitation

Small sample size due to lack of manpower

Although the population is large, this study only represents a small group of Malaysian tourists who visit to Thailand through immigration border checkpoint particularly in Bukit Kayu Hitam, Kedah only. Data collection cannot cover all the respondents due to lack of manpower to distribute questionnaires and collect data.

Cooperation from respondents seems to be difficult

In order to obtain accuracy data that cover many respondents different in terms of demographic, the survey should be conducted on weekend because most of the Malaysian tourists will visit to Thailand during weekend.

However, the congestion problem always occurs at the immigration border checkpoint in Bukit Kayu Hitam especially during weekend. Therefore, the cooperation from respondents seems to be difficult. The respondents are not willing to answer the questionnaire because they want to rush back home after waiting a long queue at the immigration border checkpoint. Besides that, some of the respondents are not willing to response because they are not well-versed in using English.

Limited fund and time-consuming

The questionnaire survey in this study involves a high cost and long time.

The research need to go more than once times in order to cover as many different respondents and to collect accuracy data. However, the transportation fee for

the route from UUM to Bukit Kayu Hitam is quite expensive and there is limited fund provided for conducting this survey.

Significance of this study

This study is expected to contribute to an understanding of travel pattern of Malaysian tourists who travel to borderland of Thailand by examining their demographic characteristic, motivation and satisfaction. The results of the study help tourism marketers in Thailand better understand Malaysian tourists' travel pattern. Besides that, the results of this study are expected to present important marketing implications for Thailand in efforts to segment and target Malaysian travelers. For the policy maker of Thailand, they can improve their facilities and build appropriate facilities in border area in order to attract more Malaysian tourists and satisfy their needs. On the other hand, this study also can help tourism marketers in Malaysia to better understand the attraction and facilities available in Thailand that attract Malaysian tourists. Therefore, the marketers can develop new tourist attraction or better facilities in Malaysia in order to attract the Thai people come to visit Malaysia and decrease the flow of Malaysians to Thailand. In addition, this study also contributes the knowledge on cross border study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature in the context of this study. Related literature in this chapter is focused on cross border tourism in tourism studies, socio demographic characteristics, tourists' motivation and tourists' satisfaction.

Firstly, this chapter reviews the literature on cross border tourism. Secondly, this chapter discusses previous research on socio-demographic characteristic

and analyzing the relationship between socio-demographic characteristic and tourists' travel pattern. Thirdly, this chapter will review the literature on tourists' motivation and the relationship between tourists' motivation and choice of destination. Finally, this chapter reviews the literature on tourists' satisfaction and identifies the relationship among tourists' satisfaction and attributes of destinations.

Cross border tourism

According to Mark P. Hampton (2009), there is no agreed definition of crossborder tourism, but here, and following Timothy and Butler (1995), it is proposed that a day trip (whether leisure, business, VFR or grocery shopping) is a form of tourism if it crosses an international border. On the other hand, Praman Tepsongkroh (2007), cited from Witt & Witt (1992) stated that cross-border tourism can be modeled from the neo-classical economics theoretical demand framework based on individual tourist/consumer visiting neighboring countries with the purpose of directly consuming goods and services which are cheaper in that country and/or are unavailable in the country of origin. Border-crossing points that join adjacent countries commonly become hives of international economic activity (Kenneth, R. Lord, Sanjay Putrevu and H. G. Parsa, 2004). Consumers living within a manageable drive of the border cross to the neighboring country for such diverse activities as shopping, entertainment, sightseeing, work-related travel, or merely the prospect of a different or less- traveled route between two points.

In addition, it is suggested that any working definition of cross border tourism also requires an element of geographical proximity such as seen https://assignbuster.com/malaysian-tourists-visiting-to-thailand-tourism-essay/

between the US and Canada, or Singapore and Malaysia or Malaysia and Thailand (Hampton, M. P., 2009). In other words, cross border tourism requires a common border. Besides that, the ease of cross border linkages is significant. As tourists are permitted to cross the border easily, the growth of tourism on both sides is greatly promoted, and touristic areas eventually abut the boundary on both sides (Ahmad Puad, M. S. & Badaruddin, M. & Kong-Yew, W, 2005). Mark P. Hampton (2009) reported that France's success in attracting 76 million international arrivals in 2005 due to the ease of border crossing with neighboring EU countries. Moreover, Timothy (1995) said that the level of attractiveness of border areas for tourists depends on a number of factors including the natural, social, cultural environment near the border and the degree of freedom or difficulty in crossing it.

According to Praman Tepsongkroh (2007), cross border tourism provides interesting perspectives across disciplines. Matinez (1994) looked at the cross-border interaction in terms of pattern of human movement between adjacent countries. His assessment of the interaction fell into four part typology. Firstly, alienated borderlands are the ones where day-to-day communication and interaction are almost entirely absent. Secondly, coexistent borderlands are those where the frontier is slightly open to minimal levels of interaction. Thirdly, interdependent borderlands are characterized by willingness between adjacent countries to establish crossfrontier networks and partnerships. Finally, integrated borderlands are found where all significant political and economic barriers have been abolished, resulting in free flow of goods and people (Matinez, 1994). Therefore, from Matinez's (1994) perspective, it can be said that boundaries are usually

viewed as barriers to interaction, both perceptually and in reality. In many cases, they may be regarded as lines of contact and cooperation between similar or dissimilar cultural, economic, and social systems.

Timothy (2001) defined some of the connections between boundaries and tourism, which are three-fold typology of spatial relationships between borders and tourists, as shown in the following situations:

- (a) The boundary line is distant from tourist areas
- (b) A tourist zone exists adjacent to the boundary on only one side
- (c) Tourist zones that extend across, or meet at, borders

According to Timothy (2001), in the first case, the frontier functions as a barrier or simple line of transit. Thus, the influence of the border depends largely on its degree of permeability. This is a common phenomenon for borders of many countries having a good relationship with the adjacent states. In the second case, in addition to being attracted to the tourist-oriented side, some people will be attracted to visit the other side as well, which presents opportunities for tourism development to spill over into the non-tourist side of the border. In the third instance, there may be communication and cooperation between the two sides so that the entire nature of cultural attraction system operates as one entity, or conversely, the border may act as a significant barrier altogether (Timothy, 2001).

Cross border tourism is influenced by governmental policy and socioeconomic factors such as trade treaties, sales tax rebates, inflation, exchange rates, shopping preferences and many other factors (Tepsongkroh, https://assignbuster.com/malaysian-tourists-visiting-to-thailand-tourismessay/ P., 2007). Border-related policies, differences in administrative structures on opposite sides, and the physical barrier creates by borders can affect many aspects of tourism, including travel motivations and decision making, infrastructure development, marketing and promotion and place image (Timothy, 2001). According to Praman Tepsongkroh (2007), such obstacles can hinder the flow of tourists and can help to shape the physical and socioeconomic development of tourism in the destination regions elsewhere, as well as at the Thai and Malaysian border.

Socio-demographic characteristics

According to Thirathanaphak, C.& Akethammasiri, K. and Chainimit, P. (2009), socioeconomic, demographic and behavioral indicators are commonly used in tourism research to profile tourists by age, gender, income, marital status, occupations, education or ethnic background. These indicators are easy to identify and use in marketing decisions (Yavuz, 1994). Moreover, according to Handler, I (2009), he said that Pearce, (2005); Kotler, (2006), Middleton & Clarke, (2007); Dickman, (1999) stated that one of the most common ways to divide tourists is by demographic factors, i. e. age, gender, education, occupation, expenditure or their geographic location. Furthermore, according to Suleiman, J. S & Mohamed, B. (2011), generally socio-demographic variables such as age, income, nationality and education have been considered as relatively usable, since they are easy to measure (Lawson, 1994) and they are identified as appropriate determinants of tourist behavior (Kastenholz, 2002; Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Gitelson & Kerstetter, 1990).

In addition, according to Beerli, A. & Martin, D. (2003), the individuals' personal characteristics, such as gender, age, occupation, education and social class, are internal inputs that influence the perceptions of places. When Walmsley and Jenkins (1993) studied the perceived image of different tourist resorts in Australia, they found that the image of some places differed depending on visitor's gender and age. Besides that, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) found that an individual's age and level of education influenced the perceived image of various tourist destinations.

According to Aswin Sangpikul, (2008), the literature review indicates that there may be a combination of socio-demographic variables that influence tourists' behaviors. However, the results of previous studies imply that different sample groups may have different socio-demographic factors influencing their travel-related behaviors (Sangpikul, A., 2008). Furthermore, according to Jang, S. C. & Yu, L. & Pearson, T. E. (2003), the socio-demographic profiles and trip-related characteristics of the visitors enable tourism marketers to understand who they are and how they behave on travel.

Relationship between socio-demographics characteristics and tourist travel pattern

Socio-demographic variables are the primary factors that influence people's travel-related behavior (Zimmer et al., Jang et al., Jang and Wu, 2006). These variables may include age, gender, education, income, economic status and health status. Zimmer et al. (1995) revealed that age, income and education emerged as the main variables that explain participation versus non-participation in travel activities. Their study indicated that income and https://assignbuster.com/malaysian-tourists-visiting-to-thailand-tourism-essay/

education influenced travelers when choosing nearby or farther-away destinations, with travelers who were better educated and who had more disposable income being more likely to travel farther from home. These results were echoed by Sirisukul (1998), who found that Thai people with a higher education and higher incomes were more likely to be motivated to participate in leisure activities than those who were less educated and earned less income.

Silberberg (1995) identified the cultural/heritage tourist as one who: earned more money and spent more money while on vacation; was more highly educated than the general public; was more likely to be female than male and tended to be in older age categories. Furthermore, Kerstetter, Confer and Graefe (2001) found that tourists with an interest in visiting heritage or cultural sites tend to stay longer, spend more per trip, are more highly educated and have a higher average annual income than the general tourists.

In addition, Brining (1995) found that women adopted safer approaches than men when it came to making risky consumer decisions. Barsky & Labagh (1997) also reported a lower risk propensity amongst women than men.

Besides that, Anderson (1993) stated that tourists' ages are closely associated with the meaning tourists attached to crafts and to the purpose crafts served for the owners. According to Littrell (1990) showed that young tourists often valued crafts that reminded them of exciting shopping encounters and active tourism experiences, while older tourists preferred

craft items that would bring them aesthetic pleasure through their contemplation at home.

Furthermore, a study of tourist night markets in Taiwan carried out by Hsieh and Chang (2004) found that female visitors tend to come with friends or families rather than alone or single visitors spending more time and money compared to married ones.

Tourists' motivation

According to French, et al. (2000), a focus on motivation provides a complex view of various factors to stimulate the travel demands for tourism and embraces both inner needs and wants. These needs and wants reflect perceptions, cultural conditioning and learning. Copper, Shepherd and Westlak (1996) presented Murphys model looking at psychological factors which influence demands (motivations, perceptions and expectations), and how these demanded criteria are linked by intermediaries in the market place (travel agencies and tour operators) with the supply of tourist facilities. Many different categories of motivations have an important influence on travel decision-making; they are as follows (Tepsongkroh, P., 2007):

Motivation as a purpose and reason for travel: vacations (holidays, visiting friends and relatives), business (French, et al., 2000)

Motivation as individuals needs and wants: Maslow's physiological needs, security needs, social needs and self-esteem needs (Hall, 1998).

Maslows Physiological Needs

Figure 2: Maslow's physiological needs

Motivation as satisfaction through tourist activities (French, et al., 2000).

Physical motivators are related to rest, sports, recreation and those directly connected with a person's health such as spas and baths. These motivators all have one feature in common, the reduction of tension through activities related to physical factors.

Cultural motivators are identified by the desires of the traveler to learn about other countries and their art, music, dances, traditions and religions.

Interpersonal motivators include a desire to meet new people, visit friends or relatives.

Status and prestige motivators are related to the desire for recognition, attention, power and appreciation, as well as the desire to enhance sexual attractiveness.

Motivations as pull and push factor; cultural experience, pleasure-seeking/fantasy, and relaxation (Kozak, 2002).

Motivation as the integrity of the original factors such as relaxation, social and intellectual aspects (Ryan, 1998).

Motivation as important to tourist information: feelings of pleasure, excitement, relaxation (push factors), and tourist attractions like sunshine, friendly people, and culture (pull factors) (Goossens, 2000).

According to Kau & Lim (2005), understanding tourists' vacation motives, i. e. why people travel, is an issue that has been researched extensively. By determining the motivations that influence people's travel habits and destination selection would enable one to predict their future travel patterns, thereby aid in developing more appropriate marketing strategies to attract them (McGuiggan et al., 1995). Besides that, according to Sangpikul, A (2007), a common and useful theory used to examine tourist motivations is the theory of push and pull motivation as stated by Dann, (1977); Crompton, (1979); Yuan and Mcdonald, (1990); Klenosky, (2002). Moreover, Skourtis, G. & Andreou, D. & Koniordos, M. & Assiouras, I. (2009) cited from Dann (1997), the push factors for a vacation are socio-psychological motives explaining the desire for travel, while the pull factors are motives aroused by the destination explaining the destination choice.

According to Kau, A. K. & Lim, P. S. (2005), vacation motives can be classified broadly into two main categories, 'push' and 'pull' factors as cited by Crompton, (1979); Dann, (1981). Push factors can be described as 'internally generated drives, causing the tourist to search for signs in objects, situations and events that contain the promise of reducing prevalent drives' (Gnoth, 1997). Pull factors, on the other hand, are those that 'emerge as a result of the attractiveness of a destination as it is perceived by those with propensity to travel' and include 'both tangible resources, such as beaches, recreation facilities and cultural attractions and travelers' perceptions and expectation and marketing image (Uysal and Jurowski, 1994). Push factors have been regarded as useful in explaining the desire for travel, while pull

motivations have been used to explain the choice of travel, destination (Crompton, 1979).

According to Sangikul, A. (2008), he said that push factors have been thought useful for explaining the desire to go on a vacation, while pull factors help explain the choice of destination as reported by Crompton, (1979). Therefore, Sangikul, A. (2008) said that understanding what motivate people's travel behavior and destination selection is crucial to predicting their travel decisions and future travel patterns as cited by Cha et al., (1995); Jang and Cai, (2002); Klenosky, (2002); Jang Wu, (2006). Additionally, knowledge about tourist motivation enables tourism marketers to better satisfy travelers' needs and provide better products and services corresponding to their needs (Crompton, 1979; Jang and Cai, 2002; Jang and Wu, 2006; Sangikul, 2008).

Relationship between tourists' motivation and choice of destinations

Pizam, Neuman and Reichel (1979) reveal relationships amongst certain motivations and choices related to the trip or destination. According to Prebensen (2006), motivation and the choice of holiday type or activities have been shown to be significantly related. Besides that, Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Lang and O'Leary (1995) stated that activities are seen as the critical link between tourist motivations and destination choice. Moreover, according to Lien (2010), activities affect tourists' choice of destination through travel motivations. Specifically, activities create a motivation of travelling to a destination and the motivation turns into purchase behavior known as choice of the destination.

John and Susan (1999) proposed that there are six motives, i. e. physical, emotional, personal, personal development, status and cultural motives. According to lien (2010), he said that the impact between motivation and activities can be explained in a different way. Specifically, with physical motivation, individuals prefer to travel destinations where have activities which can satisfy their needs of relaxation or suntans. Besides that, as for emotional motivation, people may participate in activities that can satisfy their needs for enjoyment of romance, fantasy and spiritual fulfillment.

Prebensen (2007) mentioned in the study that in the process of consuming or producing (Holt, 1995) a journey, tourists also experience novel situations, which might result in different choice patterns. Thus, motivations may lead to purchasing behavior, which is destination choosing behavior (Lien, 2010). Individuals who have different motivations may choose the same destinations and they participate similar or different types of activities to satisfy their needs.

Tourists' Satisfaction

Traditional literature within consumer behavior pinpoints that customer satisfaction is the result or the final step of a psychological process from need recognition to evaluation of experienced products (Peter and Olson, 1996). Besides that, according to Oliver (1997), satisfaction is defined as a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment. In addition, satisfaction also can be defined as an overall evaluation of a purchase (Fornell, 1992). Moreover, according to Raktida Siri (2009), Engel et al.

(1995) stated that satisfaction was an outcome experience that at least met or exceeded expectations.

According to Hui, J. (2002); Kozak & Rimmington, (2000), tourist satisfaction is important to successful destination marketing because it influences the choice of the destination, the consumption of products and services and the decision to return. Therefore, understanding tourist satisfaction is of utmost important for the tourism industry, especially because of its effect on their future economy (Petrick, 2003). Satisfied tourists tend to communicate their positive experience to others (word of mouth) and they tend to buy product repeatedly (Barsky, 1992; Beeho and Prentice, 1997; Hallowell, 1996; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Pizam, 1994; Ross, 1993).

Raktida Siri (2009), cited from Meng et al. (2006) concluded that there were nine theories on customer satisfaction: expectancy disconfirmation, assimilation or cognitive dissonance, contrast, assimilation contrast, equity, attribution, comparison level, generalized negatively and value perception. Furthermore, among these nine theories, expectation disconfirmation model was accepted the most. Oliver (1980), cited from Kandampully (200) introduced an Expectancy Disconfirmation Model, which was a process of comparison between an expectation and an experience. Satisfaction would occur if the experience met expectation.

According to Hui, J. (2002), he said that Chon and Olsen (1991) discovered a goodness of fit correlation between tourists' expectations about their destination and tourists' satisfaction. Then, after tourist has bought the travel service products, if the evaluation of their experience of the travel

product is better than their expectations, they will be satisfied with their travel experience.

Besides that, according to Prebensen (2004), by including tourist travel motives and choices of activities at the destination as well as perception of products into the concept of satisfaction, a better understanding of why people become satisfied in addition to how satisfied they are is possible to identify, which further includes a better understanding concerning why people intent to recommend and re-buy the trip.

Relationship between tourists' satisfaction and destination attributes

Huh (2002) stated that there is a need to investigate the relationship between destination attributes and tourists' satisfaction from the tourist's perspective in order to gain an in-depth understanding of tourists' attributes and behavior after they visit a tourist destination. According to Fornell (