



Thailand as a Tourist Destination for Nightlife: Comparison of Asian and Western Tourists' Attitudes

Kallayanee Kamolvisit

Hospitality and Tourism Management, Graduate School of Business, Assumption University, Bangkok, 10240 Thailand

Article info

Article history:

Received : 2 June 2019

Revised : 22 July 2019

Accepted : 6 August 2019

Keywords:

Nightlife Destination, Push and Pull Factors, Tourist' Attitudes, Tourist Decision Making

Abstract

This study aimed to examine attitudes towards nightlife in Thailand between Western and Asian tourists. Thus, the objectives were defines as:

1. To investigate the push and pull factors for tourists to visit Thailand for the nightlife and to understand how these likely differ between Western and Asian tourists.

2. To explore the influence of tourists' attitudes from destination image perception to Thailand as a destination for nightlife on tourists' overall satisfaction, intention to return, and intention to recommend Thailand to others

The study used Mixed Method Approach; Qualitative and Quantitative approaches to survey and to interview the factors influencing tourists who experience Thailand nightlife. Select the sampling group from the 300 tourists by Accidental Sampling. Then, divide into Western and Asian as the research population. The area of the study was specifically selected to be the nightlife in Bangkok. The results demonstrate that the tourists attain a high-level satisfaction with the experiences of nightlife in Thailand. All push and pull factors were considered to be important in motivating and attracting them to visit nightlife in Thailand. This study confirms that the importance of destination decision process is on Information Search / Evaluation and Decision Platform, which allowed all related parties to exploit the marketing campaign planning. It is suggested that the Thai government and all related parties launch marketing communication and promotion to all countries in the same way.

Introduction

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world, and is very important to the Thai economy. The most recent figures indicate Thailand recorded 38.27 million foreign visitors in 2018, with revenue

overwhelming expectations and expected to reach 41 million in 2019 (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2017). Also, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2017) reveals that the tourist industry earned 2.01 trillion Baths in 2018, an increase of 10 percent from 2017. The Tourism Authority of Thailand's estimation on foreign and

domestic tourists showed tourism revenue for all of 2019 may reach 2.20 trillion Baths. In 2018, approximate 10.4 percent of Thailand's GDP is recorded to be contributed by tourism industry (WTTC, 2019). The industry's direct contribution is expected to rise to 11.7 percent of Thailand's GDP by 2025 (WTTC, 2019).

Most visitors come from other ASEAN countries, East Asia (primarily China) and Europe (The Association of Thai Travel Agents, 2019). In 2014, ASEAN visitors accounted for about 74 percent with a contribution to GDP, the country economy will be in good shape and the nation is moving forward which implies that there is a development in the standard of living of the people in the country. Consequently, people have higher income which leads to higher spending on a variety of goods and services. Stated differently, it involves the wealth of its citizens. An attempt to increase GDP through the tourism industry, thus, is believed to help not only the country economy, but it also helps increase people's prosperity in the country at the same time. In order to attract tourists to the country, with an intention of improving the country GDP, it is necessary for the country to have good selling points. It could be wonderful landscape, excellent services, or interesting activities, for example. In Thailand, most of tourists visit the country with few common purposes including beautiful beaches, affordable expenses, great services, delicious food, and a variety of activities including exceptional nightlife experience.

"Thailand's nightlife is legendary" This statement is claimed to be accurate, especially for red-light districts. (Bangkok.com, 2019) Thailand is one of the most exciting places on earth for entertainment and nightlife, with many exceptional nightlife venues. Many tourists decide to visit Thailand for a party at night or nightlife experience. Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket and many famous islands, such as Koh Phangan, are those famous places that one party travellers from all over the world go back. However, the party life is not the only activity that Thailand presents to both domestic and foreign travels. Thailand also offers night market, night food street experience, night mall, night shows, night zoo, night theatre, night dive, cruise, or even watching fireflies on board a longtail boat, for instance. One of the most recognized nightlife activities over the last few years is night markets. It is one of the easiest and most entertaining ways of getting up familiar and personal with Thai local life. From its popularity, the night market in Thailand has been spread out in many areas in Bangkok and other provinces with more varieties of

products and foods available. It has been said that "after dark shopping opportunities mean incredible bargains in the moonlight". The famous night markets among tourists in Bangkok include Asiatique, Chatuchak Friday night market, Khaosan, Patpong night market, and Silom road walking the street, for example

Nightlife has been widely used to be an important tool to improve economy growth by expanding nightlife entertainment. In order to gain benefits from the nightlife tourism industry, it is important for the country and related parties to have an effective branding. The reason to visit particular destination for nightlife varies among individuals and the culture difference has been claimed to be one important factor. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to relate Push and Pull factors to the satisfaction, intention to revisit, and intention to recommend which affecting decision to visit Thailand as a tourist's destination for nightlife, as well as theory of planned behavior have been applied in this study as they have been considered to encourage tourists travel to Thailand.

Objectives

The main research aim is to investigate Western and Asian tourists' attitudes to Thailand as a destination for nightlife.

The objectives of the present study were as follows:

1. To investigate the push and pull factors for tourists to visit Thailand for the nightlife and to understand how these likely differ between Western and Asian tourists.
2. To explore the influence of tourists' attitudes from destination image perception to Thailand as a destination for nightlife on tourists' overall satisfaction, intention to return, and intention to recommend Thailand to others

Conceptual Framework

As this study focused to find out the effectiveness of push and pull factors on Thailand nightlife destination, the literature review on push and pull factors had to be clarified together with the tourist' behavior on decision making process as described in the following sections.

1. Push and pull factors

Push factors are internal motivators that encourage individuals to engage in tourism (Heitmann, 2011; Hsu & Huang, 2008) These internal motivators commonly allow the tourist to meet specific needs, such

as physical, emotional, cultural, interpersonal, intellectual, or status and prestige needs (Heitmann, 2011). For example, an individual may be curious about a destination (intellectual needs), want to visit friends and family (emotional and interpersonal needs), or want to brag about their holiday (status and prestige). Heitmann (2011) notes that push factors encourage tourists to go places, but do not specify locations.

Pull factors are characteristics of the location itself, which appeal to tourists with specific internal motivations and needs (Heitmann, 2011; Hsu & Huang, 2008) Pull factors typically relate to climate, safety, tourism offerings (such as tourist attractions) and culture. An attractive nightlife is considered as one of the pull factors for a country. Pull factors in effect specify to tourists what the location can offer them and what needs it can meet. Tourists may decide on locations following some research or rely on their existing knowledge of pull factors of a destination to determine which location they will visit (Heitmann, 2011). While some pull factors (like beaches and scenery) are common, others (such as specific cultural attractions) are relatively rare (Page, 2014). Similarly, some pull factors are more sought after than others, or may appeal to different types of tourists (Page, 2014).

2. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The theory of decision making used in this research is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The TPB was proposed by Ajzen (1991) to extend and improve the predictive capability. It is an attitude-behavioral model of human action, which proposes that various types of perceptions about a proposed action influence the individual’s intention to engage in an action (Ajzen, 1991).

Figure 1 illustrates push and pull factors that influence destination image perception directly. Whereas destination image perception always combines with culture and social norms which can generate tourist’ visiting intention. In part of culture, Correia, A., Kozak, M., & Ferradeira, J. (2011) mentions that cultural factors like,individualism, and long-term orientation affected attitudes and beliefs about Lisbon’s brand, price and quality as a tourism destination, as well as Bertoli,J. (2013) which found that the individuals from different countries may be targets of marketing campaigns that changes their destination image or increases knowledge. While social norms related to the environment and nature have been shown to influence tourist attitudes of Thailand as a tourism destination Chubchuwong, Beise-Zee, & Speece (2015), which Kim, Im & Kim (2015) mention that social norms related to religious practice influenced attitudes of neighboring countries, including Korea, Japan, and China, as a tourist location.

These two theories were core theory to this study which brought to research conceptual framework as follows:

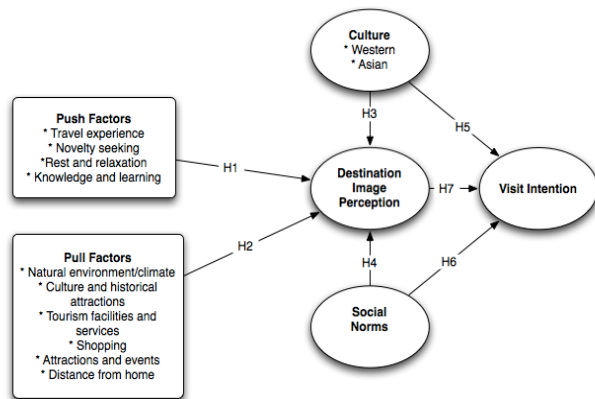


Figure 1 Theoretical framework of the study (Ajzen, 1991; 2005)

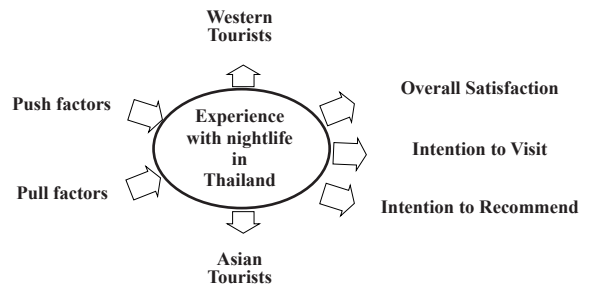


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework

From the research questions, the research conceptual framework is demonstrated in Figure 1 Push and pull factors influence tourists’ attitude and form destination image perception towards nightlife in Thailand which may be or may be not different between Western and Asian tourists. Consequently, the tourists’ attitude and destination image perception can lead to overall satisfaction, as well as intention to visit and to recommend a particular country to others. If the tourists’ attitude and destination image perception appear to be positive, satisfaction rate should be high and Thailand is considered to generate more income and expand more target group from the recommendation.

Research methodology

The study used mixed-method approach by combining qualitative and quantitative methods that were conducted with international tourists who have visited Thailand. The 300 questionnaire surveys were distributed and 20 interviews were conducted at nightlife areas in Bangkok, Thailand.

Table 1 Summary of Methodology

Variables	Research Instrument	Population	Data Collection Method	Analysis Method
Differences of push and pull factors influence tourists in the context of nightlife in Thailand.	Survey questionnaire and Interview questions	Survey questionnaires of 300 tourists Interview 10 Western and 10 Asian tourists	Accidental Sampling in Bangkok Nightlife area	T-Test Thematic Analysis
Differences of destination image perception in the context of nightlife in Thailand.	Survey questionnaire and Interview questions	Survey questionnaires of 300 tourists Interview 10 Western and 10 Asian tourists	Accidental Sampling in Bangkok Nightlife area	T-Test Thematic Analysis

The survey has been conducted at nightlife areas in Bangkok, Thailand. There are Silom, Asoke, Sukhumvit and Ekkamai area. Data collection period is during April to May 2018. There has been no limitation on nationality. However, there has been a screening question in order to filter travelers who are not tourists who travel to Thailand. The study has been performed at different pubs and clubs, during day and night times to reduce bias.

Determining an appropriate sample size for SEM techniques is a difficult problem, considering the issues of power and sampling bias (Wolf, Harrington, Clark & Miller 2013). In fact, as Wolf, Harrington, Clark & Miller 2013 (2013) reports, there is no single method for this determination. In addition, the whole population size of this group is uncertain as a number of tourists keep changing depending on many factors. However, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thailand recorded 32.59 million foreign visitors in 2016, with revenue defeating estimations and expected to exceed previous forecasts by increasing 10 percent or more in 2017 (the Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2017). A priori sample size calculation, assuming a small effects size (0.1), a moderate statistical power (0.8), and an assumption of 12 observed and five latent variables, yielded a sample size of n should be 463 participants (Soper, 2015). However, due to time constraint, the researcher intended to distribute two-third of the calculated sample size which is approximately 300 copies of the questionnaire to the

respondents.

In addition, for interview, as pointed out by Marshall (1996), an appropriate sample size for qualitative research is a number that appropriately answers the research questions. The population is as same as questionnaire survey which is international tourists who have visited Thailand. The researcher interviewed 20 respondents, 10 Western tourists and 10 Asian tourists, to obtain more detailed information. It is considered to be sensible in answering the research objectives. The research was conducted at nightlife areas in Bangkok, Thailand which are Silom, Asoke, Sukhumvit and Ekkamai areas during April and May 2018. The interviewees were initially asked if they have time to respond to the interview questions which last approximately 15-20 minutes. The interview was conducted in a café in an area of nightlife with tape recording. The interviews have been run by asking pre-designed interview questions.

Data analysis begins with descriptive analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) has been used to analyze quantitative data from questionnaire and construct a research conclusion. Descriptive analysis provides basic information about the respondent profile and general trends in responses. Statistics have been calculated as appropriate for item types. Descriptive statistics include mean and standard deviation for Likert scale variables, as well as frequency distributions (and appropriate graphics) for categorical variables.

Results

1. Quantitative

Table 2 Rating Push Factors for Thailand as Tourist Destination

	Push Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Travel experience	a. To learn something new and interesting about <u>nightlife</u>	3.62	1.146
	b. To visit a nightlife place in a foreign country that I have not visited before	3.31	1.116
	c. To fulfill my dream of experiencing nightlife in a foreign country	3.47	1.217
	d. To meet new people and socialize with local community from experience in nightlife in a foreign country	3.97	1.088
		3.59	0.956
2. Novelty seeking	a. To experience new and different lifestyles about <u>nightlife</u> in a foreign country	3.38	1.220
	b. To explore cultural resources in an area of <u>nightlife</u>	3.66	1.204
	c. To participate in new nightlife activities	3.80	1.104
		3.61	1.000
3. Rest and relaxation	a. To relax physically from nightlife in a foreign country	3.81	.973
	b. To relax spiritually from nightlife in a foreign country	3.73	.951
	c. To find thrills and excitement from nightlife in a foreign country	3.76	1.071
		3.77	0.887

Table 2 Continued

Rating Push Factors for Thailand as Tourist Destination		Mean	Std. Deviation
4. Knowledge and learning	a. To see how people of different cultures have for their nightlife	3.79	.972
	b. To increase knowledge about nightlife in a foreign destination	3.79	.960
	c. To exchange custom and traditions about nightlife	3.84	1.011
		3.81	0.855

Table 2 presents the ratings for each push factors for Thailand as a tourist destination. In comparison, the majority of the respondents agreed that all the push factors motivated them to visit Thailand, including travel experience (3.59), novelty seeking (3.61), rest and relaxation (3.77) and knowledge and learning (3.81).

Comprehensively, the respondents agreed that almost all the statements related to travel experience factors that motivated the respondents to visit Thailand, which were to learn something new and interesting about nightlife (3.62), to fulfill their dream of experiencing nightlife in a foreign country (3.47) and to meet new people and socialize with the local community as part of the nightlife experience in a foreign country (3.97). However, one exception is that the respondents were uncertain if they were motivated to visit Thailand just in order to visit a nightlife place in a foreign country that they had not visited before (3.31). For novelty seeking, nearly all the factors motivated the respondents to visit Thailand, including to explore the cultural resources in an area of nightlife (3.66) and to participate in new nightlife activities (3.80). Though, the respondents thought that they were not motivated to visit Thailand to experience new and different lifestyles related to the nightlife in a foreign country (3.38). In addition, the respondents agreed that all the rest and relaxation factors motivated them to visit Thailand, including to physically relax while experiencing nightlife in a foreign country (3.81), to spiritually relax while experiencing nightlife in a foreign country (3.73) and to find thrills and excitement in the nightlife in a foreign country (3.76). Last, of all, all the respondents agreed that the knowledge and learning factors motivated them to visit Thailand, including seeing how people of different cultures enjoy their nightlife (3.79), to increase their knowledge about nightlife in a foreign destination (3.79) and to exchanges custom and traditions through nightlife (3.84).

In terms of the standard deviation (SD), almost all the values were more than 1, which implied that the respondents had different opinions about the importance of the push factors. However, the exceptions were to physically relax while experiencing nightlife in a foreign

country, to spiritually relax while experiencing nightlife in a foreign country, to see how people of different cultures enjoy their nightlife and to increase knowledge about nightlife in a foreign destination, for which the standard deviations were less than 1; This can imply that the respondents had similar opinions about those statements.

Table 3 Rating Pull Factors for Thailand as Tourist Destination

Pull Factors		Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Natural environment	a. Nice Weather/Climate during the night	3.23	1.147
	b. Interesting landscape for nightlife	3.77	1.008
	c. Unpolluted natural environment for nightlife experience	3.71	1.082
		3.57	0.756
2. Culture and historical attraction	a. Culture and Traditions about nightlife	3.61	1.209
	b. Arts about nightlife	3.55	1.060
	c. Charming traditional nightlife place i. e. traditional Thai-style pub	3.49	1.184
		3.55	0.984
3. Tourism facilities and services	a. Safe Destination for nightlife	3.63	1.166
	b. Affordable Tourist Destination for nightlife	3.67	1.157
	c. Value of Money for nightlife	3.91	1.108
		3.73	0.983
4. Attractions and events	a. Special Festivals and Events for nightlife	3.72	0.993
	b. Special Shows/Movies/Plays/Concert	3.69	0.904
	c. Special Nightlife place i. e. Branded club	3.34	1.047
		3.58	0.797

Table 3 gives the rating for each pull factor for Thailand as a tourist destination. In comparison, the majority of the respondents agreed that all the pull factors attracted them to visit Thailand, including the natural environment (3.57), culture and historical attractions (3.55), tourism facilities and services (3.73), and attractions and events (3.58), and were thus important factors. The highest important pull factor was tourism facilities and services.

Comprehensively, the respondents agreed that almost all the statements related to natural environment factors attracted them to visit Thailand, including interesting landscape for nightlife (3.77) and unpolluted natural environment for nightlife experience (3.71). However, one exception is that the respondents were uncertain if the nice weather/climate during the night attracted them to visit Thailand for nightlife activity (3.23). For culture and historic attractions, all the factors attracted the respondents to visit Thailand, including culture and traditions in nightlife (3.61), arts in nightlife (3.55), and charming traditional nightlife places, such as traditional Thai-style pubs (3.49). Besides, the respondents agreed that all the tourism facilities and services factors attracted them to visit Thailand for nightlife, including it being a safe destination for nightlife (3.63), an affordable

tourist destination for nightlife (3.67), and value for money for nightlife (3.91). Last, of all, almost all the attractions and events factors were agreed by the respondents as having influenced them to visit Thailand for the nightlife, including special festivals and events for nightlife (3.72) and special shows/movies/plays/concerts (3.69). One exception was the special nightlife places, such as branded clubs (3.34), which the respondents were uncertain if they played a part in attracting them to visit Thailand for the nightlife.

In terms of the standard deviation (SD), most values were more than 1, which implied that the respondents had a different opinion about the importance of the push factors. However, the exceptions were special festivals and events for nightlife and special shows/movies/plays/concerts, for which the standard deviations were less than 1; This can imply that the respondents had similar opinions of those factors.

Table 4 Independent T-Test – Importance of Push and Pull Factors

Independent T-Test – Importance of Push and Pull Factors	Sig. (2-tailed)
1. Travel experience	0.974
2. Novelty seeking	0.004
3. Rest and relaxation	0.006
4. Knowledge and learning	0.313
Push Factors	0.064
1. Natural environment	0.000
2. Culture and historical attraction	0.000
3. Tourism facilities and services	0.328
4. Attraction and events	0.387
Pull Factors	0.000

Tables 4 present the scores for the Independent T-Tests of the importance of the push and pull factors. For a push factor, the Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.064 which is more than 0.05, it can imply that there is no significant difference in the push factor's ability to motivate Asian and Western tourists in the context of nightlife in Thailand. In detail, Asian and Western tourists were motivated by their travel experience and knowledge and learning factors in the same way, for which the Sig. (2-tailed) values were more than 0.05. However, an exception was those with Sig. (2-tailed) values less than 0.05, which include novelty-seeking and rest and relaxation factors. It can be said that Asian and Western tourists were motivated by novelty-seeking and rest and relaxation factors differently. On the other hand, for a pull factor, the Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, it can imply that there is significant difference in the pull factor's ability to motivate Asian and Western tourists in the

context of nightlife in Thailand. In detail, Asian and Western tourists were motivated by their natural environment and culture and historical attraction factors differently, for which the Sig. (2-tailed) values were less than 0.05. However, an exception was those with Sig. (2-tailed) values more than 0.05, which include tourism facilities and services and attraction and events factors. It can be said that Asian and Western tourists were motivated by tourism facilities and services and attraction and events factors in the same way.

Therefore, for the third hypothesis, it can be imply that Asian and Western tourists were motivated by their travel experience, knowledge and learning, tourism facilities and services, and attraction and events factors in the same way, whereas they were motivated by their novelty-seeking, rest and relaxation natural environment, and culture and historical attraction factors differently

In addition, further analysis of the importance of push factors has been developed to understand the difference or similarity between Western and Asian tourists. Table 4 shows the importance of push factors by nationality. As there is no significant difference in the push factor's ability to motivate Asian and Western tourists in the context of nightlife in Thailand, the mean value between 3.41 and 4.20 of all push factors for both Western and Asian tourists are in the important level. However, small divergences were found from novelty seeking, as well as rest and relaxation, which is in line with Sig. (2-tailed) less than 0.05. Both were considered to be more important among Asian than Western tourists.

Table 5 Importance of Push Factors by Nationality

	Western		Asian	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
a. To learn something new and interesting about nightlife	3.70	1.195	3.95	1.214
b. To visit a nightlife place in a foreign country that I have not visited before	3.66	1.103	3.56	1.072
c. To fulfill my dream of experiencing nightlife in a foreign country	3.36	0.961	3.39	1.383
d. To meet new people and socialize with local community from experience in nightlife in a foreign country	3.90	1.098	3.72	1.326
Travel experience	3.65	0.987	3.66	1.112
a. To experience new and different lifestyles about nightlife in a foreign country	3.56	0.993	3.76	1.160
b. To explore cultural resources in an area of nightlife	3.52	1.202	3.92	1.157
c. To participate in new nightlife activities	3.44	1.287	3.79	1.042
Novelty seeking	3.50	0.935	3.82	0.928
a. To relax physically from nightlife in a foreign country	3.59	1.290	3.80	1.221
b. To relax spiritually from nightlife in a foreign country	3.47	1.266	3.87	1.208
c. To find thrills and excitement from nightlife in a foreign country	3.73	1.188	4.10	0.882
Rest and relaxation	3.60	1.112	3.92	0.887
a. To see how people of different cultures have for their nightlife	3.69	1.340	3.64	0.959

Table 5 Contitute

	Western		Asian	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
b. To increase knowledge about nightlife in a foreign destination	3.71	1.217	3.99	1.156
c. To exchange custom and traditions about nightlife	3.71	1.120	3.85	1.365
Knowledge and leaning	3.70	1.125	3.83	1.024

For the importance of pull factors has been developed to understand the difference or similarity between Western and Asian tourists. Table 5 shows the importance of pull factors by nationality. As there is a significant difference in the pull factor's ability to attract Asian and Western tourists in the context of the nightlife in Thailand, the mean value between 3.41 and 4.20 of all push factors for both Western and Asian tourists are in the important level. Differences were found from the natural environment, as well as a cultural and historical attraction, which are in line with Sig. (2-tailed) less than 0.05. Both were considered to be more important among Asian than Western tourists. However, no practical difference was found in tourism facilities and services, as well as attractions and events among Western and Asian tourists.

Table 6 Importance of Pull Factors by Nationality

	Western		Asian	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
a. Nice Weather/Climate during the night	3.27	1.110	3.72	0.945
b. Interesting landscape for nightlife	3.51	1.221	3.81	0.862
c. Unpolluted natural environment for nightlife experience	3.51	1.012	3.99	0.954
Natural environment	3.43	0.712	3.84	0.741
a. Culture and Traditions about nightlife	3.45	1.167	4.04	0.804
b. Arts about nightlife	3.42	1.106	3.82	0.769
c. Charming traditional nightlife place i.e. traditional Thai-style pub	3.50	1.275	3.99	0.719
Culture and historical attraction	3.46	1.049	3.95	0.619
a. Safe Destination for nightlife	4.04	1.212	3.93	1.046
b. Affordable Tourist Destination for nightlife	3.90	0.995	4.12	0.795
c. Value of Money for nightlife	3.79	1.153	3.93	0.847
Tourism facilities and services	3.91	0.877	4.00	0.701
a. Special Festivals and Events for nightlife	3.77	1.122	3.73	0.984
b. Special Shows/Movies/Plays/Concert	3.72	0.981	3.67	0.784
c. Special Nightlife place i.e. Branded club	3.31	1.011	3.64	0.748
Attractions and events	3.60	0.840	3.68	0.761

Besides, further analysis of pull factors rating for Thailand as a tourist destination by nationality has been developed to understand the difference or similarity between Western and Asian tourists. Rating pull factors for Thailand as tourist destination by nationality table shows pull factors rating for Thailand as a tourist destination by nationality. As there was a significant difference in the influences of the pull factors to attract Asian and

Western tourists to visit Thailand in the context of the nightlife in Thailand, significant differences were found from all pull factors, except tourism facilities and services, which is in line with Sig. (2-tailed) less than 0.05.

The second research question aimed to investigate if the tourists' destination image perception to Thailand as a destination for nightlife influence on tourists' overall satisfaction, intention to return, and intention to recommend Thailand to others. Those factors represent the tourists' attitude as it is developed from image perception, emotional reaction showing the preference for tourist destination, or the intention of a tourist to visit.

Table 7 Independent T-Test – Destination Image Perception

Independent T-Test - Destination Image Perception	Sig. (2-tailed)
1. Thailand has good nightlife	0.838
2. Thailand has a variety of nightlife for foreigners to be chosen	0.255
3. Thailand has bars, clubs and discotheques	0.499
4. Thailand has friendly local people for nightlife experience	0.007
5. Thailand has rich diversity of local food for nightlife experience	0.021
6. English is widely spoken among local people for nightlife experience	0.003
7. Thailand has is good value for money destination for nightlife	0.000
8. Thailand is safe for nightlife tourists	0.069
9. Thailand has good transportation system for tourists who want to explore nightlife	0.929
10. I have wonderful image of Thailand as a tourist's destination for nightlife	0.183
11. I feel I am very loyal to Thailand as a destination choice for nightlife.	0.012
Overall Results	0.061

Table 7 presents the results of the independent T-tests of the destination image of Thailand as perceived by tourists who visit Thailand as a nightlife destination. In the t-test for Equality of Means test results, the Levene statistics are $F = 0.000$ (see appendix G), and the corresponding level of significance is large ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance has not been violated, and the Equal variances assumed t-test statistic can be used for testing the null hypothesis of equality of means. From the result, at the 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference, if the Sig. (2-tailed) is less than α or 0.05, it can imply that there is significant difference in the tourists' destination image perception between Asian and Western tourists in the context of the nightlife in Thailand. Overall, the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.061, which is more than α or 0.05, implying that there was no significant difference in the destination image perception between Asian and Western tourists in the context of the nightlife in Thailand.

Asian and Western tourists perceptions were similar in that they believed that Thailand had a sound transportation system for tourists who want to explore

the nightlife (0.929), good nightlife (0.838), bars, clubs, and discotheques (0.499), a variety of nightlife for foreigners choose from (0.255) and consequently they had a wonderful image of Thailand as a tourist's destination for nightlife (0.183) and believed that Thailand is safe for nightlife tourists (0.084). All the Sig. (2-tailed) values were more than 0.05. However, there were some with Sig. (2-tailed) values less than 0.05, where Asian and Western tourists perceived some factors related to Thailand's nightlife differently, specifically: Thailand has rich diversity of local food for nightlife experience (0.021), they feel they are very loyal to Thailand as a destination choice for nightlife (0.012), Thailand has friendly local people that are part of the nightlife experience (0.007), English is widely spoken among local people for making the nightlife experience easier (0.003), Thailand is an excellent value-for-money destination for nightlife (0.000).

Table 8 Image perception of Thailand as a destination for nightlife

Attributes	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Thailand has good nightlife	3.88	1.072
2. Thailand has a variety of nightlife for foreigners to be chosen	3.85	1.131
3. Thailand has bars, clubs and discotheques	4.08	1.083
4. Thailand has friendly local people for nightlife experience	4.03	1.192
5. Thailand has rich diversity of local food for nightlife experience	4.03	1.192
6. English is widely spoken among local people for nightlife experience	3.61	1.255
7. Thailand is good value for money destination for nightlife	4.16	1.139
8. Thailand is safe for nightlife tourists	3.77	1.000
9. Thailand has good transportation system for tourists who want to explore nightlife	3.58	1.226
10. I have wonderful image of Thailand as a tourist's destination for nightlife	3.75	1.247
11. I feel I am very loyal to Thailand as a destination choice for nightlife.	3.59	1.332
Overall results	3.85	0.917

Table 8 gives the results for the destination image of Thailand as perceived by foreign tourists who visit Thailand as a destination for nightlife. Overall, the respondents perceived Thailand positively as a good destination for nightlife. The respondents agreed to a great degree that Thailand is a good value-for-money destination for nightlife (4.16) as Thailand has bars, clubs and discotheques (4.08), friendly local people that are part of the nightlife experience (4.03), and a rich diversity of local food as part of the nightlife experience (4.03). In addition, the respondents also agreed that Thailand has good nightlife (3.88), that Thailand has a variety of nightlife for foreigners to choose (3.85), that Thailand is safe for nightlife tourists (3.77), that they have a wonderful image of Thailand as a tourist destination for nightlife (3.75), and that English is

widely spoken among local people to enhance the nightlife experience (3.61). For the lowest mean value score, the respondents agreed that they felt very loyal to Thailand as a destination choice for nightlife (3.59) and that Thailand has good transportation systems for tourists who want to explore nightlife (3.58); this is a positive sign for the tourism industry in Thailand, especially for the nightlife sector.

Table 9 Image Perception of Thailand as a Destination for Nightlife by Nationality

	Western		Asian	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Thailand has good nightlife	3.87	1.201	3.89	0.857
2. Thailand has a variety of nightlife for foreigners to be chosen	3.79	1.246	3.93	0.939
3. Thailand has bars, clubs and discotheques	4.12	1.174	4.03	0.940
4. Thailand has friendly local people for nightlife experience	3.88	1.241	4.25	1.083
5. Thailand has rich diversity of local food for nightlife experience	3.90	1.234	4.22	1.105
6. English is widely spoken among local people for nightlife experience	3.44	1.352	3.86	1.058
7. Thailand is good value for money destination for nightlife	3.95	1.322	4.45	0.715
8. Thailand is safe for nightlife tourists	3.85	1.103	3.65	0.820
9. Thailand has good transportation system for tourists who want to explore nightlife	3.58	1.264	3.57	1.174
10. I have wonderful image of Thailand as a tourist's destination for nightlife	3.67	1.246	3.86	1.244
11. I feel I am very loyal to Thailand as a destination choice for nightlife.	3.43	1.326	3.82	1.312
Destination image perception	3.77	1.041	3.96	0.688

Besides, further analysis of image perception of Thailand as a destination for nightlife by nationality has been developed to understand the difference or similarity between Western and Asian tourists. Table 8 shows image perception of Thailand as a destination for nightlife by nationality. As there was no significant difference in the destination image perception between Asian and Western tourists in the context of the nightlife in Thailand, almost all factors are considered in the agreement on the level. However, significant differences were found from all pull factors, except tourism facilities and services, which is in line with Sig. (2-tailed) less than 0.05.

2. Qualitative Data

The interview survey was conducted to investigate tourist perception and their experiences towards nightlife in Thailand. The researcher also made use of interview results to amend and improve a questionnaire to suitably answer the research questions. Some questions have been revised to take in all aspects found related to nightlife in Thailand in tourist point of view. The summary from 10 Western tourists and 10 Asian tourists on tourist perspective based on the interview question guideline is summarized as follows:

The interviewees generally visited Thailand more than once. There was one interviewee who visited Thailand more than 20 times. The average visit was 2-3 times. More than half of interviewees traveled alone to Thailand, especially the Western tourists, while Asian tourists seemed to visit as couples. All interviewees traveled to Thailand by themselves. They booked ticket and hotel from website and planned itinerary by their own. The average length of stay was around 2 weeks. The length of stay in Thailand ranged from 3 days to 1 month. The interviewees would like to revisit Thailand in the near future. They mentioned that *"I really like this country so I will come back"* and *"Maybe I should start a family here because it feels like a second home already."* The interviewees have many aspects that they like, such as food and beautiful places and Thailand has become their favorite place in the world. The tourists said *"They're all very cheap and the food is amazing."* and *"Thailand is very good. I love it."* By separating into Western and Asian tourists, they seem to have similar opinion on an intention to revisit Thailand in the near future.

The greater part of the interviewees would like to recommend Thailand as a destination to others. The interviewees mentioned many aspects that they like to recommend to others including low-prices, tasty food, and friendly people. By separating into Western and Asian tourists, they seem to have similar opinion on an intention to recommend Thailand as a destination to other tourists

Discussion

Nightlife is considered to provide numerous benefits to a country, especially for a tourist-popular country like Thailand. It is a common strategy for improving economic growth by expanding nightlife entertainment. Nightlife brings people together to meet each other, to create identities, and to have fun in an intercultural, interracial and cross-gender friendly environment. Individuals have different reasons to choose the nightlife entertainment pattern and it even varies among people who come from different countries. For making sure a country can gain the maximum benefits from the nightlife tourism industry, branding is important. Push and pull factors have been proved to be success factors for motivating and attracting tourists to visit a destination. The internal motivators, or push factors, generally allow the tourist to meet some physical, emotional, cultural, interpersonal, intellectual, or prestige

needs, while pull factors are characteristics of the destination, which attract tourists with meeting their specific internal motivations and needs.

Here, qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied to a survey sample of international tourists who were visiting Thailand. The survey involved handing out 300 questionnaires and conducting 20 in-depth interviews with such tourists in nightlife areas in Bangkok, Thailand. The research results demonstrated that tourists were satisfied with the nightlife in Thailand with a high level of satisfaction. The majority were likely to revisit the country and to recommend Thailand to others. All the push and pull factors were considered to be important to the tourists in motivating and attracting them to enjoy the nightlife in Thailand. Also, all the push and pull factors were considered to highly motivate and attract them to experience the nightlife in Thailand. For the destination image of Thailand as perceived by foreign tourists who were visiting Thailand as a destination for nightlife, the tourists perceived Thailand in a positive way as a nightlife destination. They thought Thailand represented good value for money as the destination for nightlife, as well as it has a large variety of nightlife activities, friendly local people, and a rich diversity of local food as parts of the nightlife experience.

Comparing Western and Asian tourists, there was no significant difference in how the push and pull factors affected their motivations and in terms of their destination image perception between Asian and Western tourists in the context of the nightlife in Thailand; this can imply that the nightlife in Thailand offers a similar experience regardless of the nationality of visitors coming from different parts of the world. However, an exception was the pull factors, whereby Asian and Western tourists seemed to have different opinions on the pull factors importance and ratings of the nightlife in Thailand.

Recommendations

1. The research benefits the development of tourism industry in Thailand, Thailand government and also related parties in the tourism industry are able to apply the results by increasing an understanding on current situation of tourism industry, particularly on nightlife tourist destination, and proposing the suitable marketing strategy to attract more tourists to the country.

2. The research result is considered to provide contribution to the literature in an area of tourism

industry, particularly on nightlife tourism industry, in Thailand. The research on this particular area has been hardly found; even though, nightlife tourism industry tends to benefit Thailand, one of the most famous nightlife activities in the world, by generating more incomes from tourists. The research increases the empirical evidence on an assessment of the tourists' attitude toward Thailand as the nightlife tourist destination. Therefore, the results not only present the attitudes toward the current position of Thailand as the nightlife tourist destination, but also useful for the future study of tourism trend and direction for Night attraction in Thailand.

References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50 (2), 179-211.
- Ajzen, I. (2005). *Attitudes, personality and behavior*. New York: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill.
- Anderson, D., Sweeney, D., Williams, T., Camm, J., & Cochran, J. (2014). *Statistics for business and economics* (12th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western
- Bangkok.com (2019). Bangkok Night Markets Where to Shop at Night in Bangkok.
- Bertoli, J. (2013). *International marketing and the country of origin effect: The global impact of 'made in Italy'*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Chubchuwong, M., Beise-Zee, R., & Speece, M. W. (2015). The effect of nature-based tourism destination attachment and property ownership on environmental-friendliness visitors: A study in Thailand. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(6), 656-679.
- Correia, A., Kozak, M., & Ferradeira, J. (2011). Impact of culture on tourist decision-making styles. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13, 433-446.
- Farrer, J. (2008). Play and power in Chinese nightlife spaces. *China: An International Journal*, 6(01), 1-17.
- Heitmann, S. (2011). Tourist behaviour and tourism motivation. In P. Robinson, S. Heitmann, & P. Dieke (Eds.), *Research themes for tourism* (pp. 31-44). Cambridge, MA: CABI.
- Hsu, C. H., & Huang, S. S. (2008). Travel motivation: A critical review of the concept's development. In *Tourism management: Analysis, behaviour and strategy* (p.18). Oxford, UK: CABI.
- Kim, S. S., Im, H. H., & Kim, B. E. (2015). Muslim travelers in Asia: The destination preferences and brand perceptions of Malaysian tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(1), 3-21
- Soper, D. (2015). *A-priori sample size calculator for structural equation models*. Retrieved June 2, 2019, from Statistics Calculators: <http://www.danielsoper.com/statcalc3/calc.aspx?id=89>
- The Association of Thai Travel Agents, (2019). Statistics International Tourists Arriving in Thailand as of 30 April 2019. Retrieved June 2, 2019, from The Association of Thai Travel Agents: <http://www.atta.or.th/?p=4019>
- Tourism Authority of Thailand. (2017). *TAT Review Magazine 2017*. Thailand as a preferred destination. Bangkok.
- Wolf, E. J., Harrington, K. M., Clark, S. L., & Miller, M. W. (2013). Sample size requirements for structural equation models: An evaluation of power, bias and solution propriety. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 73(6), 913-934.
- WTTC. (2019). *Travel & tourism economic impact 2018 thailand* - WTTC. Retrieved June 2, 2019, from World Travel and Tourism Council: <https://www.wttc.org/-/.../economic.../countries-2018/thailand2018.pdf>