The Demographic and The Marketing Mix Factors Affected Decision Making Process of International Tourists to stay in a Hostel, Case Study : Khaosan Road, Bangkok District

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to analyze the demographic factors of international tourists and the marketing mix factors that affected their decision to choose to stay in a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District and to help the operators to use the findings to implement a plan to solve related business problems. In response to demands of customers, based on questionnaires, most of the international tourists in the Khaosan Road, Bangkok District were Thai, female students with a Bachelor's Degree. So it was decided upon to use all seven marketing mix factors. Statistics used in data analysis was Descriptive Statistics included Frequency, Percentage, Standard Deviation (S.D) and Mean. In addition, the marketing mix factors were shown to be important in the decision making process of international tourist in choosing a hostel. The results showed that the marketing mix factors that affected their decision to choose to stay in a hostel by sorting from greater effects to smaller ones: People, Process, Price, Place, Product, Physical Environment and Promotion. Marketing Mix Factor of People had an average score 4.30 which was the most important factor in using the service to satisfy the customers.

Keywords: International tourists, Hostel, The marketing mix factors

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Introduction

Background and Signification

The tourism industry is one of the largest industries and one of the main businesses that generates a high income for the country. The expansion of the Tourism Industry is increasing rapidly every year. It affects the overall economy as much as the transportation industry, automotive industry and food and beverage industries including the employment and labor markets. Thailand has been interested in tourism for more than 40 years. As a result, the development of tourism in Thailand is very progressive. Tourism is an industry that consists of several types of businesses such as camping, restaurants, transportation and travel agencies. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2008) The main product that tourists purchase directly is the production of goods and services. It is therefore beneficial to the country to create many professions as part of an economic cycle. In addition, Social Tourism is recreational and can relieve tension while providing knowledge and understanding of different cultures.The Tourism Industry is a source of income in foreign currency and helps to stabilize the balance of payments. Moreover, tourism plays a role in stimulating the utilization of the country's resources. The Tourism Industry is important to society the economy, culture and the natural environment. (Chantouch Wantanom, 2009)

Bangkok is the capital of Thailand. It is the center of prosperity in the fields of economy, education, culture, and transportation including international contacts. The main reason why international tourists choose Bangkok is because it has many tourist attractions such as a variety of historical sites, unique lifestyles and many types of entertainment that can be enjoyed. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011) In addition, some of the reasons for Thailand’s charm are the friendliness of the Thai people, good culture and the way people honor each other. It is important to make tourists feel comfortable and safe while they are traveling in Thailand. The statistics that show the number of tourists who use the services of accommodations businesses as well as the income generated from those services in the last 5 months of 2016 are shown in Table 1.1 (Department of Tourism, 2016).

Table 1.1 The number of tourists and income generated from those tourists in 2016

Month	Occupancy rate	Number of tourists (persons)	Income from tourists (Million Baht)
July	76.79	5,108,497	72,746.31
August	76.85	5,292,109	74,650.72
September	72.3	5,630,007	73,146.14
October	74.11	4,663,919	61,655.3
November	80.46	4,915,452	67,095.89

Source: Department of Tourism, 2016.

The hostel business is related to the Tourism Industry. Nowadays, there are over 2,000 hostels in Thailand, or 12 percent of all accommodations for tourists, with a rapid growth rate. In 2016, the hostel business grew by 10 percent. It does not require high investment and has no definite limitations. Moreover, the hostel operator has the freedom to design the hostel as needed with distinctive and unique selling points to attract tourists. (Burim Othaganont, 2016) Each year, there is a ranking of tourist attractions in Thailand that most international tourists would want to travel to. "KhaoSan Road" is one of the top tourist attractions in Bangkok and is world-famous. "One who does not go to the best, should not travel to Thailand". (Natchapim Ratanasinnok, 2014) According to the statistics, an average of 20,000 international tourists travel to Khaosan Road per day. The average occupancy rate is 80 percent of the total number of rooms, including Khaosan Road, Phra Athit Road, Rambuttri Road and Banglumpoo, about 8000 in all; the average income is 30 million baht per day or 10 billion baht per year. This year it is expected to grow by about 10 percent, (Sa-nga Rueangwattanakul, 2016) mostly backpacker travelers who want to save money and share experiences with fellow travelers go there.

Backpacker travelers stay in more than 75 hostels. One of the main factors is the places of interest located in the area. It is a medium for exchanging experiences and stimulating interaction among backpacker travelers who stay in the same hostels. (Komsit Sangmanee and Thammanoon Wisitsak, 2015)

Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the demographic and the marketing mix factors that affect the decisions of international tourists to choose a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District. The purpose was to study the decision making process of international tourists who stay in hostels. The results of this research can be used as a development guideline for hostel business operators.

Name of the hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District

The Pillow Hostel Khaosan, 3Howw Hostel Khaosan, Nappark Hostel @ Khaosan, Sawasdee Khaosan Inn, Marco Polo Hostel, Here Hostel, Nitan Hostel Khaosan, Suneta Hostel Khaosan, Khaosan Lovers Hostel, Khaosan Immjai, Hostel Brunch Makers, Baan Nampetch Hostel, Baan Nampetch Hostel, Sabye Club Hostel, Siri Poshtel Bangkok, Full Hostel, Samsen 360 Hostel, The Oasis Hostel, Back Home Backpackers, Some Rest Hostel, Sleep Tight Hostel, R1 Hostel, Oh Bangkok Hostel, Warm White Hostel, The Street Hostel, Bewel Hostel, Hi Friends Hostel, Canale Hostel, The Alley Hostel & Bistro, Hits Hostel, Love hostel, Counting Sheep Hostel, Charoendee Boutique Hostel, Euro Asia Hostel, Miss Zhao Hostel, Wayla Hostel, Steve Boutique Hostel, Lamphu Tree House Boutique Hotel and Landscape Hostel.

Objectives of Research:

1. To study the demographic factors of international tourists that affected their decision to choose to stay in a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District.

2. To study the marketing mix factors that affected their decision to choose to stay in a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District.

Scope of the Research

1. Population Scope consisted of

1.1 International tourists at Khaosan Road, Bangkok District, 400 persons

2. Content Scope focused on the study of three topics

2.1 Tourists' Behavior

2.2 The 7P's

2.3 The concept of the decision making process of the travelers

Literature Review

Marketing Mix

The service industry is different from the general consumer goods industry. Tangible products and intangible products are products and services that are offered to customers or the market. The marketing strategy used in the service business needs to provide a marketing mix that is different from the general market. Especially, when hospitality is the heart of the business.

The marketing tools are called the 7Ps, which are product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical environment (Kotler, 1997:98).

1. Product

Product is the tangible aspects, service element, and branding.

2. Price

Price is discounting, value-for-money, and price level.

3. Place

The meaning of place is the role of intermediaries including image, information, and distribution channels.

4. Promotions

Promotions are one of the most important tools for communication. The purpose is to inform or induce attitudes and behaviors.

5. People

People required in the selection, training and motivation of satisfing the customer.

6. Physical Environment

Physical environment is a physical representation and presentation to the customers, including the physical aspects and service model to add value for customers.

7. Process

Process includes activities related to the methodology and practices in the service.

Related Research

Surangkana Jamornsawat (2014) studied the objectives of this research were to analyze the relationship of the demographic characteristics of tourists, tourist behaviors, and marketing mix related to decision making of accommodations; and, in order to benefit the operator, to use the findings to develop a plan and deploy solutions in business. In response to customer demands, based on questionnaires, most foreign tourists in Krabi province were European, male, first-time tourists, who preferred a hostel, with a room rate lower than 500 Baht, and included all seven marketing mix factors. In reference to the Chi-square assumption test, the only difference found was in the service process, and there was no relationship with the accommodation selection of tourists who accepted the main assumption.

Phaisan Thongkham (2008) studied the behavior and the need of tourists on accommodations. Case study in Ao Nang area Krabi province: The sample consisted of 147 foreign tourists and 253 Thai people. The results of the questionnaire were collected and revealed the following: 1) Product and service factors found that the respondents paid

attention to the importance of the cleanliness and orderliness of the accommodation. 2) The price factor found that the respondents paid attention to having a credit card payment. 3) Place / distribution factors found that respondents paid attention to having internet reservations because Thai and foreign tourists make a large number of internet searches. 4) The marketing promotion factors found that the respondents paid attention to the provision of rooms with free breakfast. 5) Personnel / staffing factors found that respondents paid attention to the human relations of the service of accommodations. 6) Physical factors found that respondents paid attention to the cleanliness of the hotel. A beachfront hotel is what most tourists wanted, including authentic Thai buildings and the surrounding environment. 7) Process factors found that the respondents paid attention to the quality of service. Thai tourists gave priority to price. Second was the quality of the room.

Terms of Definitions

1. Hostel: Cheap accommodations or hotels in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District. It is usually a dorm room with a double bed and a shared bathroom.The purpose is to focus on a small society of guests.

2. International tourists: Thai people and foreigners

3. The marketing mix factors (7Ps)

-Product: an item that is produced to satisfy the needs of a certain group of people.

-Price: the amount that a customer pays for a product or service.

-Place: placement or distribution.

-Promotion: a component of marketing.

-People: the staff and salespeople who work for a business.

-Process: the processes involved in delivering products and services to the customer.

-Physical environment: everything your customers see when interacting with your business.

Expected Benefits

1. The results of this study can be used as a guideline for hostel operators and businesspeople related to hostels in Khaosan Road Bangkok District, to develop and improve the hostel business consistent with the marketing mix factors.

2. The results of this study can help those interested in studying the factors that affect the decision of people to choose to stay in a hostel in Khaosan Road Bangkok District. It can be used as a guideline for relevant research and ~~is~~ can be useful for additional studies.

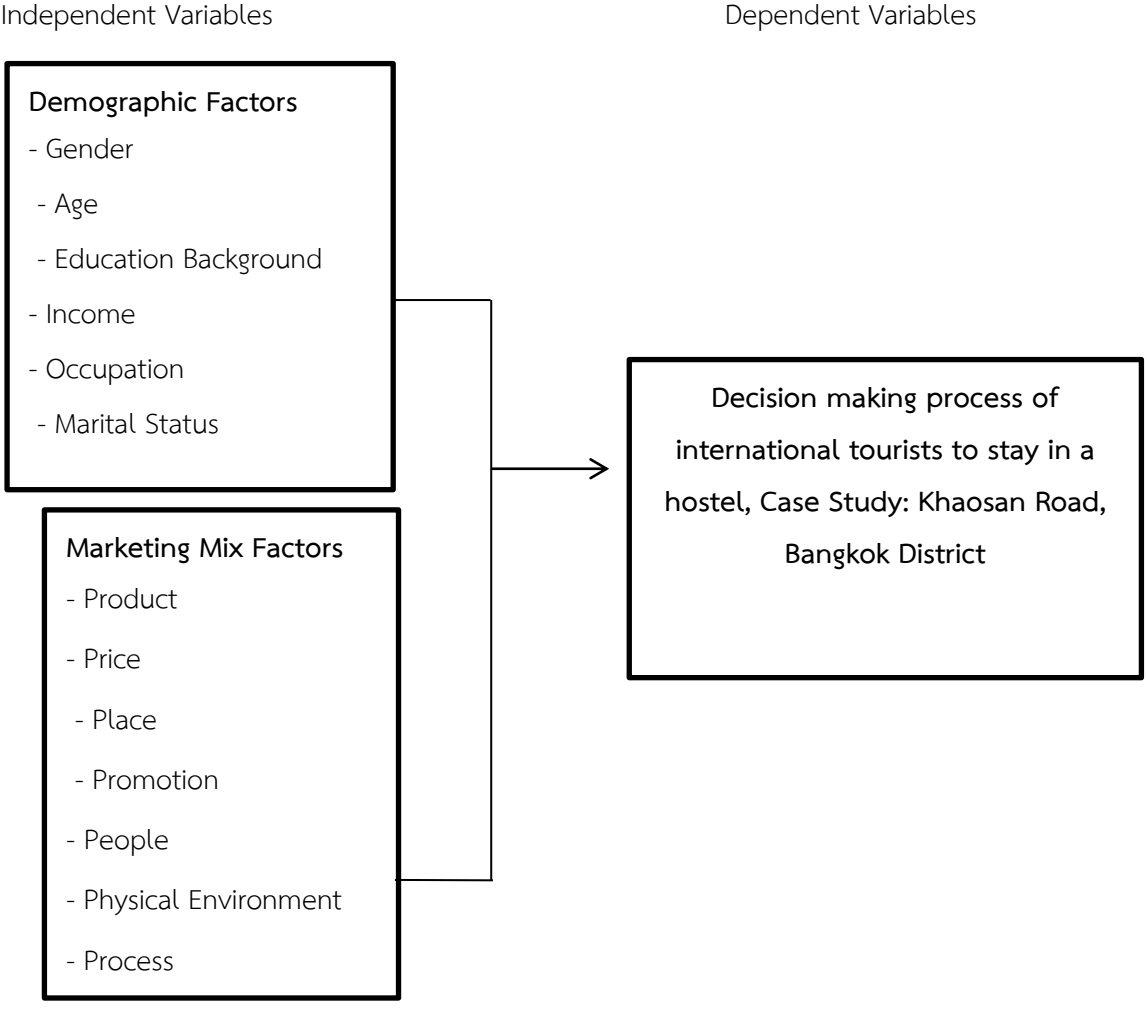
3. The results of this study can reveal new information about behavior factors of hostel users and the marketing mix factors which can assist management of a hostel business in Khaosan Road Bangkok District.

Research Methodology

Population and sample

International tourists in the Bangkok District totaled 42,452,892 persons. (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016) Convenience Sampling was calculated from Taro Yamane's standard error (Taro Yamane, 1973) at a confidence level of 95 percent and the error of the sample was no more than 5 percent. In this research, the population and samples were 400 international tourists in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District.

Research Framework



Research Instrument

This Research Instrument included 400 questionnaires for international tourists. The questionnaire was divided into three sections.

Part 1 - Demographic data of tourists

Part 2 - Data about tourists' behavior

Part 3 - Questions about the importance of the marketing mix factors

Data Analysis

The collected data was processed. Descriptive Statistics included Frequency, Percentage, Standard Deviation (S.D) and Mean.

Findings

1. Descriptive Analysis

1.1 Demographic factors of tourists

Data about demographic characteristics of tourists were analyzed by frequency distribution and percentage. The results are summarized as follows.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution and Percentage of Respondents

Demographics of tourists		**Amount**	**Percent**
Gender	Male	169	42.3
	Female	231	57.8
Age	Below 20 years	15	3.8
	21 – 30 years	227	56.8
	31 – 40 years	73	18.3
	41 – 50 years	67	16.8
	50 years or above	18	4.5
	Total	400	100.0
Native habitat	Asia	400	100.0
	Europe	133	33.3
	America	66	16.5
	Africa	2	5
	Total	400	100.0

Table 1 Frequency Distribution and Percentage of Respondents (Cont.)

Demographics of tourists		Amount	Percent
Nationality	African	2	5
	American	38	9.5
	Australian	14	3.5
	Brazilian	1	3
	British	12	3.0
	Canadian	26	6.5
	Chilean	2	5
	Chinese	45	11.3
	Dutch	11	2.8
Nationality	Finnish	12	3.0
	French	48	12.0
	German	13	3.3
	Israeli	3	.8
	Italian	5	1.3
	Japanese	43	10.8
	Korean	9	2.3
	Malaysian	13	3.3
	Norwegian	2	.5
	Pakistani	3	.8
	Filipino	12	3.0
	Polish	9	2.3
	Russia	2	.5
	Spanish	2	.5
	Swedish	3	.8
	Taiwanese	7	1.8
	Thai	63	15.8
	Total	400	100.0

Table 1 Frequency Distribution and Percentage of Respondents (Cont.)

Education Level	Lower than Bachelor's Degree	37	9.3
	Bachelor's Degree	289	72.3
	Higher than Bachelor's Degree	72	18.0
	Other	2	.5
	Total	400	100.0
Occupation	Student	142	35.5
	Government Officer/ State Enterprise Officer	36	9.0
	Employee	72	18.0
	Merchant /Self-employed Business	106	26.5
	Agriculturist	2	.5
Occupation	Housekeeper/ Retired	35	8.8
	Other	7	1.8
	Total	400	100.0
Income	Below 20,000 Baht	62	15.5
	20,001 – 50,000 Baht	160	40.0
	50,001 – 80,000 Baht	91	22.8
	80,001 – 100,000 Baht	16	4.0
	Above 100,001 Baht	38	9.5
	Total	367	91.8
	Did not specify amount.	33	8.3
	Total	400	100.0

This research was a study about the factors of hostel service behavior. Demographic factors, marketing mix factors affected decision making process of international tourists with the service of hostels in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District. Most of the respondents were female, 231 persons or 57.8% and male 169 persons or 42.3%, Aged 21-30 years old were 227 persons or 56.8%. Most of the respondents were Thai, 63 persons or 15.8%. Second was French 48 persons or 12.0% and next was Chinese, 45 persons or 11.3%

Most of the respondents had a Bachelor's Degree, 289 persons or 72.3%, were students, 142 persons or 35.5%, and had a monthly income 20,001 - 50,000 baht, 160 persons or 40.0%. Second for education level was higher than Bachelor's Degree with 72 persons or 18.0%, for occupation was Merchant /Self-employed Business with 106 persons or 26.5%, for the monthly income was between 50,001 - 80,000 baht, with 91 persons or 22.8%.

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation of Marketing Mix Factors

Marketing Mix Factors	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Level
1.Product	4.16	3.76	High
2.Price	4.18	0.73	High
3.Place	4.17	0.71	High
4.Promotion	3.94	0.78	High
5.People	4.30	1.00	High
6. Physical Environment	4.16	0.74	High
7.Process	4.24	0.68	High

For the opinions of the respondents on factors that affect the decision making process of international tourists to stay in a hostel, Case Study: Khaosan Road, Bangkok District, each factor had the average scores as follows:

Marketing Mix Factor of Product, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Product that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.16. It was found that the cleanliness of the room was the factor that most customers wanted, the highest score was 4.31. Next, were the reputation of the hostel and the beautiful decorations of the room. The average scores were 4.24, 4.17, respectively.

Marketing Mix Factor of Price, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Price that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.18. It was found that the room pricing and service was the highest score at 4.31. Second, the room was suitable for the price. The average score was 4.23. In addition, the suitability of the duration of tourists' stay compared with the price of other rooms had an average score of 4.16.

Marketing Mix Factor of Place, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Place that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.17. It was found that traveling to the accommodation was convenient was the first and most important factor in the choice of accommodations for tourists, the highest score was 4.37. Second was the location of the accommodation was close to tourist attractions / business areas / communities, the average score was 4.28.

Marketing Mix Factor of Promotion, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Promotion that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 3.94. It was found that for Promotion, marketing promotion was what most customers were interested in, the highest score was 4.09. Second, special prices for regular customers was the marketing promotion that customers paid attention to, the average score was 4.00.

Marketing Mix Factor of People, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of people that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.30. It was found that having staff that were happy, polite and friendly was the most important factor for the service to satisfy the customers, the highest score was 4.39. Second was the ability of self-control of the staff, the average score was 4.36. Additionally, the staff having knowledge and skill in service had an average score of 4.26. The ability to communicate in foreign languages, such as English, was also an important factor in communicating for service, the average score was 4.25.

Marketing Mix Factor of Physical Environment, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Physical Environment that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.16. It was found that having a security system such as CCTV, and fire prevention system had the highest score of 4.38. Second, was adequate facilities such as Wifi, the average score was 4.20.

Marketing Mix Factor of Process, the opinion level of customers about the Marketing Mix Factor of Process that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District was the high level. The average score was 4.24. It was found that the service of the staff and meeting the demands of customers had scores of 4.42 and 4.30, respectively.

Discussion

From the marketing mix factors that affected the satisfaction of international tourists in choosing a hostel in Khaosan Road, Bangkok District by sorting from greater effects to smaller ones: People, Process, Price, Place, Product, Physical Environment and Promotion. The marketing mix factors influenced the decision of international tourists to choose a hostel was the high level. It shows that the marketing mix affected the decision to choose a different hostel.Marketing Mix Factor of Product, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to the cleanliness of the room including convenient facilities because the hostel was a combination of tourists who may not know each other. The cleanliness of hostel was important to make tourists feel at ease. The facilities were very important and affected the decision to use the services of international tourists. This corresponds to Phaisan Thongkham (2008) studied Behavior and Need to Choose Accommodation of Tourists, Case study in Ao Nang area, Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Product, the respondents given priority to cleanliness and orderliness of the room.

Marketing Mix Factor of Price, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to clear pricing of rooms and services. The lack of understanding in the local language may cause tourists to be concerned about the costs incurred. This corresponds to Surangkana Jamornsawat (2014) studied The Relationship between Demographic Characteristics of Tourists,Tourist Behaviors, and Marketing Mix Related to Decision Making on Accommodation in Muang District Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Price, tourists paid attention to the price of food and beverage was clear.

Marketing Mix Factor of Place, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to traveling to the accommodation was convenient for tourists and the location of the accommodation was close to tourist attractions, business areas and communities, This corresponds to Surangkana Jamornsawat(2014) studied The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Tourists, Tourist Behaviors, and Marketing Mix Related to Decision Making on Accommodation in Muang District Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Place, tourists paid attention to having a website of the hotel which tourists found information about the hostel business including accommodation near various attractions.

Marketing Mix Factor of Promotion, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to the promotion of the festival and marketing promotion was what most customers were interested in. This corresponds to Surangkana Jamornsawat (2014) studied The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Tourists, Tourist Behaviors, and Marketing Mix Related to Decision Making on Accommodation in Muang District Krabi

Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Promotion, tourists paid attention to Internet advertising including there are also discount cards, brochures, posters and public relations.

Marketing Mix Factor of People, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to having staff that were happy, polite and friendly was the most important for the service to satisfy the customers because the staff of the hostel business was the first person to serve tourists. This corresponds to Phaisan Thongkham (2008) studied Behavior and Need to Choose Accommodation of Tourists, Case study in Ao Nang area, Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of People, the respondents given importance to good human relations and good service.

Marketing Mix Factor of Physical Environment, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to having a security system such as CCTV, and fire prevention system including facilities such as Wifi. It was essential that tourists paid attention. This corresponds to Surangkana Jamornsawat (2014) studied The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Tourists, Tourist Behaviors, and Marketing Mix Related to Decision Making on Accommodation in Muang District Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Physical Environment, tourists paid attention to the cleanliness of the surrounding hotel. The location was easy to observe and security 24 hours a day.

Marketing Mix Factor of Process, the opinion level of tourist was the high level. Tourists paid attention to the service of the staff had accurate to meet the needs of tourists. It made tourists impress. This corresponds to Surangkana Jamornsawat (2014) studied The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Tourists, Tourist Behaviors, and Marketing Mix Related to Decision Making on Accommodation in Muang District Krabi Province found Marketing Mix Factor of Process, tourists paid attention to fast service and quality service including the staff followed the service procedures correctly.

Recommendations

Recommendations for using the research results.

1. The establishment of a guideline for accommodations and operators should improve their accommodation and service rates. It should be defined clearly and standardized.

2. The establishment of a guideline for accommodations and operators should improve service for tourists in all aspects such as having manners and paying attention to tourists, conscientiousness of service includes the ability to communicate in foreign languages.

3. The establishment of a guideline for accommodations and operators should develop marketing strategies and develop service models to make an outstanding difference and to meet the demands of consumers.

4. The establishment of a guideline for accommodations and operators should have measures to ensure the safety of the life and property of tourists at the accommodation to prevent danger and loss of property of tourists.

Recommendations for future research

1. The researcher should add tools for in-depth interviews to obtain clearer and more specific information.

2. The researcher should do further study on the satisfaction of tourists in the scope of business or accommodations which improves service and enhances appeal to attract tourists.

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