Evaluation of Tourism Management in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, Thailand as a Secondary Tourism City

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Abstract

This research aimed to evaluate tourism management in Nakhon Si Thammarat province (NST) by considering the 15A's tourism elements. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 400 and 30 foreign quality tourists who were purposively selected. The research tools used were self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistics and Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) were used to analyze the data. The results revealed factors that show the weaknesses of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city within Quadrant A and C. Quadrant A includes infrastructures, local involvement in tourism, service quality and political stability which have been urgently improved. Quadrant C includes accessibility between places within NST, public transportation, historical and archaeological sites, man-made attractions, variety and difference of activities from main cities, suitable activities toward tourist requirements, various choices of accommodations, service providers, tourism interpretations, authenticity of art and traditional architecture, attractiveness to spend more money and potentiality to link with main cities are provincial weak points and need to be improved. Whereas, Quadrant B includes accessibility from the main city to NST, natural attractions, cultural attractions, restaurants/cuisine, quality of accommodations, value for money in accommodations, friendliness and hospitality of local people, local ways of life, overall atmosphere of the city, supporting service, quality of local life, overall safety and security and value for money and time show their strong point for the provincial tourism management that the province needs to constantly maintain them. Quadrant D includes a tourist information provision, this factor is not urgently required for improvement.
Keywords: Tourism, Tourism Management, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Secondary Tourism City

Introduction

The tourism and service industry has played a vital role in the world economy and is considered a major product in terms of international business among developed and developing countries (Tasci & Knuston, 2004; United Nations Environment Program, 2013). To be successful in this field, each tourist sector and organization need to take intense competition among world cities to magnetize investments, capital, and tourists on both the

international and global market into account (Bădiţă, 2013). Thus, the assessment of tourism management of tourist destinations is very important in order to foresee whether the factors or elements are beneficial for tourists' satisfaction, marketing, and provide good memories for new and subsequent visitors, whereas the unsatisfied factors can be developed for better services.

NST is an ancient province in southern Thailand, about 780 kilometers from Bangkok with the longest coastline of 225 kilometers (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2013). As of 2017, its population was 1,554,627. Apart from being one of the most ancient provinces and previously being part of the Kingdom of Ligor, it also possesses many buildings and ruins of historical significance. Its economy has been traditionally based on agricultural farming. In recent years, the tourism industry has been introduced. NST is rich and diverse with 598 registered tourist sites: 282 natural sites, 103 historical and religious sites, 88 cultural sites, 50 mountainous sites, 20 beach sites, 6 river sites and 49 art and religious sites (Office of the Secretary of Integrated Provincial Administration Committee of Nakhon Si Thammarat, 2018). Obviously, NST seems to be equipped with all kinds of options for tourists. However, there are only a small number of foreign tourists visiting the area and they have a low average spending per person. In 2017, the total number of foreign visitors visiting Thailand was 35,591,978 and only 82,619 of the total number visited NST (Ministry of Tourism & Sports, 2017). As tourism management can possibly affect tourist expectations and satisfaction entirely (Michalkó, Irimiás, & Timothy, 2015), it is necessary to evaluate tourism management in NST to investigate the strengths and weaknesses from the tourists' point of view, especially foreign quality tourists. This can help provide an insight of the tourism management issues to the provincial tourism related parties, including different sectors from the government, private, community and academics so they can have a better understanding of the issues in NST and what needs to be improved. The results from the research can be used for developing an appropriate tourism management plan to attract more foreign quality tourists to visit NST in the future.

Literature Review
The Components of Tourism
Attributes of tourist destination components are vital in attracting tourists and are necessary for marketing and campaigning. Kim (2014) stresses that the attributes of tourist destination components are key factors for travelers when comparing each tourist destination and making decisions on whether each destination will fulfill their needs or be worth visiting. Consequently, destination attributes are crucial in generating destination images, both before and after the trip. Beneficial attributes can offer great and memorable travel experiences leading to advantageous destination images to new and subsequent tourists and visitors. Accordingly, one should put different components that define a good tourist destination into consideration when improving the qualities of any tourist destination. Basically, Lew (1987) explains that tourist destination attributes refer to the components dissimilar to those of their homeland that convince travelers to decide to go to that particular spot. Many scholars have categorized tourism components in the form of A's such as the 3A's: Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility (Collier & Harraway, 1997), 4A's: Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, Ancillary service/ Ambience (Cooper & Boniface, 1994; Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 1993; George, 2001), 5A's: Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, Activities, Accommodations (Choibamroong, 2008; Dickman, 1996), 6A's: Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, Activities, Available packages, and Ancillary services (Buhalis, 2000), or Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, Accommodations, Ancillary service, Assemblage (Della Corte et al., 2010), or Attractions, Amenities, Accessibility, Ancillary service, Accommodation and Activities (Pelasol, 2012). The 10A's include: Attractiveness, Access, Activities, Awareness,

Availability, Appearance, Assurance, Appreciation, Actions, Accountability (Morrison, 2013). This study is imperative to suggest two more tourism components of acceptance and authenticity as the acceptance of local people, but the authenticity of the tourist destination must not be ignored because tourism has a direct influence on tourist destinations regarding the changing in society and community. The investigation of this study has taken the concept of a secondary tourism city into consideration by including other 3A's components: Adding value, Adding spending per head and Availability for destination links, which are essential to the role of secondary tourism cities. As the data collected in this study is from Free Independent Travelers (FIT), some tourism components are not applied (available packages and assemblage) as it is considered that the tourists do not have real experiences about such components. Similarly, the other four tourism components of awareness, action, accountability and availability are not applied as they are subjective or influenced by personal preferences which are different from one another and difficult to evaluate. Hence, this study utilizes 12A's of tourism elements together with the 3 additional elements as earlier mentioned. In conclusion, the author uses 15A's of tourism secondary city management to evaluate in the investigation of this study.

Tourism Management

By examining the concepts of tourism management (TM) in five electronic sources during 1990 - 2013, Chang and Katrichis (2016) discovered that the key to tourism service delivery process was tourism types. Different tourism types reflect a variety of tourism interests, motivations and needs of consumers. Tourism management is categorized into five aspects which are as follows: Organization's capabilities, Supply Chain Management (SCM), Quality, Human Resource Management (HRM), Information technology (IT) /information system (IS) and Visitors' behavior. In this case, 'quality' refers to an outline in quality maintenance of production process leading to value orientation among customers. This can result in the distinction of the organization (Samat, Ramayah, & Saad, 2006). In addition, IT/IS functions as the infrastructure responsible for communicating with tourists and enhancing competitive abilities (Chang & Katrichis, 2016). Tourism, transportation, hotel and catering representatives are SCM elements that need to work hand in hand. HRM relationship marketing plays a vital role in TM as it is directly linked to the resources and can act as an essential factor in tourism because these changes affect the tourists in terms of involvement, motivations, attitudes and loyalty, for example. This TM is in line with Suwanno, Tongsanoer, Suwanno and Phongchiewboon (2017), where involvement and mutual benefit sharing among related stakeholders, and the continuation of sustainable management approach to preserving potential ecological resources as well as traditional wisdom regarding fishery and local traditions are required. Whereas, Seisawatwanit (2013) sets suitable criteria for the agro-tourism business, in other words, strategic management, networking, knowledge management, innovation management and participation which are framed by the mentioned TM. Moreover, under the framework of TM, communication management is a factor facilitating TM elements concerning the operation and connection of each element for remarkable effectiveness; for instance, Cherdchookitkul, Jirawatmongkol, Pavapanunkul and Mahittichatkul (2016) revealed that the successful Paradigm Shift Model for Bangkok Metropolitan City Museum should significantly adapt the 5 sectors as follows: 1) production practicing sector, 2) consumer practicing sector, 3) management practicing sector, 4) marketing practicing sector and 5) communication practicing sector.

The assessment of IPA applied to tourism

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is a technique that analyzes attributes to measure consumer acceptance of a product in a market, adapted from Martini and James's theory (1977) as shown in figure 1.

High Importance

Quadrant A *Concentrate Here*	Quadrant B *Keep Up the Good Work*
Quadrant C C *Low Priority*	Quadrant D *Possible Overkill*

Low Performance | | High Performance
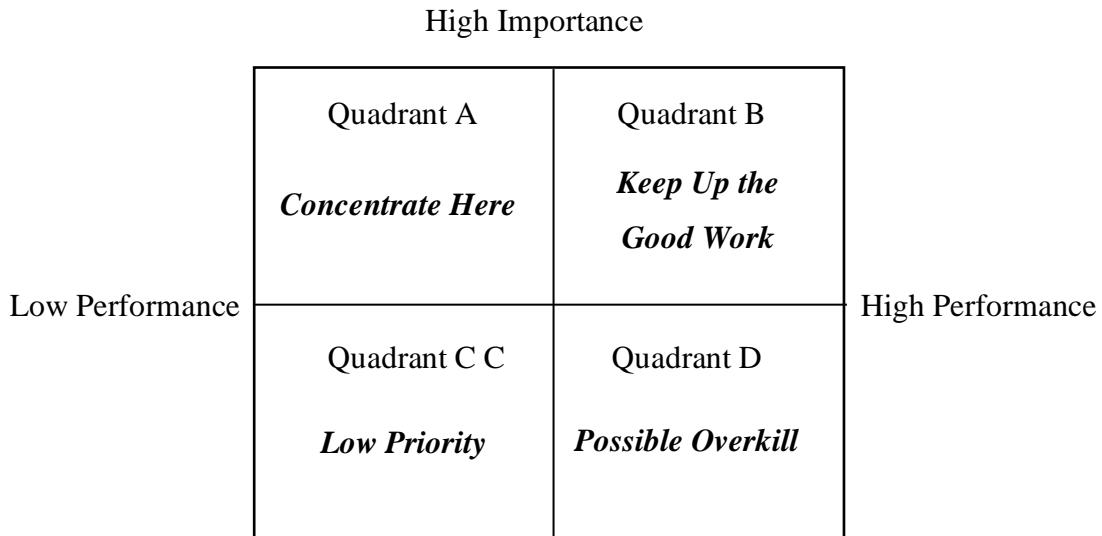
Figure 1: The original IPA framework
Source: Martini and James (1977)

IPA is selected for analyzing expectations and satisfaction in this study. It has been the fundamental research model for verifying attributes being conducted in research since late 1970 (Chu & Choi, 2000), and is extensively used in hospitality, the tourism field and education institutions (Caber, Albayrak & Matzler, 2012; Cvelbar & Dwyer, 2013; Pan, 2015; Lee & Lee, 2009). Furthermore, IPA is a popular technique implemented in tourism destination management (Boley, McGehee & Hammett, 2017). A Presentation of IPA in graph form can easily and understandably present the results (Azzopardi & Nash, 2013; Taplin, 2012), thus, it can be used in both strategic planning and decision making (Tyrrell & Okrant, 2004). The analysis displayed by the graph shows both positions of the horizontal and vertical lines, in which the vertical line indicates a level of importance and the horizontal line tells a level of satisfaction. The division of the level of expectation and satisfaction is set into 4 quadrants (see figure 1).

Upon completion in comparing the results of the level of importance and the level of satisfaction of each factor, the outcome can be explained into 4 following features depending on which quadrant it falls into (Martilla & James, 1977). Quadrant A (Concentrate Here): this is the feature that tourists pay attention to the topic, and is at a high level, but the efficiency level of performance is low, meaning it becomes a weak point that requires intensive and urgent attention, correction as well as improvement. Quadrant B (Keep up the Good Work): it is considered important and is scored by tourists at a high level, whereas the level of performance is also high which leads to strength. The service providers have to maintain this good point. Quadrant C (Low Priority): this section shows that tourists focusing on the topic is at a low level. They are also content with its operation at a low level that it becomes a weak point, and it does not require urgent improvement. Quadrant D (Possible Overkill): this section indicates that the level at which tourists pay attention to is quite low, however, their satisfaction towards its efficiency is at a high level so there is no urgency for topic improvement.

Regarding the study of Pornprasit and Rurkkhum (2019), the IPA was applied to evaluate community-based ecotourism (CBET) in Satun province in order to assess tourist awareness. The research results showed that tourist destinations with potential natural and cultural attractions related to Islamic communities would be utilized under CBET. However, several considerable improvements including management and participation should be applied.

Furthermore, in order to encourage environmental conservation and local community involvement in CBET management, the need to promote economic benefits of local stakeholders still exists.

Methodology

The mixed method research was used for this study and was conducted in 2016-2017. The population of both the quantitative and qualitative research were foreign quality tourists visiting NST. NST was unable to clearly identify and know the exact numbers of the tourists; hence, the population was infinite and non-probability sampling methods were employed to determine the sample size. For the quantitative research, the sample size was calculated by using Cochran's sample size formula (Cochran, 1953) and the sample size was 384; however, the researcher finally collected data from 400 foreign quality tourists in order to prevent any mistakes and get a better result. While the sample size of the qualitative research was determined at 30. The samples were purposively selected. The criteria of selection were (1) they have traveled to other countries at least once in the past 5 years, (2) their annual income should be between USD 20,000 - 60,000, and (3) they had to stay at least one night in NST (Nirattrakul, 2016). If their qualifications met the criteria, the tourists were asked whether they would be available to provide information. If not, they would not be disturbed.

A questionnaire was used for quantitative data collection. The questionnaire comprised of 3 parts which were 1) Respondents' demographic profile, 2) Level of Importance and Satisfaction of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city, and 3) Summary of the Evaluation. The close-ended questions were used along with 5-point Likert scales because such scales are commonly used in data collection of attitudes and opinions (Durbarry, 2018) with certain consideration of criteria. The scales are also easy to use while forcing the respondents to commit to a certain position (Brown, 2000). In addition, the variables were 15A's: Attraction, Amenities, Accommodation, Accessibility, Ancillary service, Activities, Appearance, Ambiance, Assurance, Acceptance, Appreciation, Authenticity, Adding value, Adding spending per head and Availability for destination link. A total of 32 sub-questions were conducted to be in line with each A. The Index of Congruence (IOC) was employed to test the validity of the questionnaire and the score of the IOC was 0.98, which was much higher than the minimum score of 0.5. This meant that the overall content of the designed questionnaire was valid enough to be used in the tryout process. Further, the questionnaire was also tested for its reliability and represented the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Level of Importance and Level of Satisfaction of NST tourism management at 0.9224 and 0.9378 respectively. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was higher than 0.8, which meant that the questionnaire was reliable. Moreover, a semi-structured interview was employed to collect qualitative data.

Furthermore, the questionnaires and interviews were distributed to foreign quality tourists in 4 NST areas popular with foreign tourists, e.g. Phramahathat Woramahawiharn Temple, Khiriwong Village, Krung Ching Waterfall and Khanom District during December 2016 - March 2017. Descriptive statistics, i.e. mean, standard deviation and IPA were used to analyze the quantitative data; whereas, the qualitative data was analyzed by using content analysis (Mayring, 2014).

Results

The results from the quantitative data were divided into three parts; part 1: Respondents' demographic profile, part 2: Level of importance and satisfaction of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city and part 3: Summary of the Evaluation of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city.

Part 1: The results showed that the samples were balanced in terms of sex with a slight predominance of female (53.5%). Most tourists were 31 - 40 years old (38.8%), came from Germany (39.5%), were married (67.0%), hold a Bachelor Degree (67.0%), worked as professionals (nurse, pharmacist, engineer, professor, architect, attorney, accountant, lawyer, diplomats, musician and journalist) (57.2%) and annual income between 40,001 - 60,000 U.S. Dollars per year (46.5%).

Part 2: The results of the level of importance (LOI) and level of satisfaction (LOS) on tourism management of NST as a secondary tourism city. The details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation of Importance of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city

Factors of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOI	Ranking	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOS	Ranking
1. Accessibility from main city to Nakhon Si Thammarat (NST)	3.96	0.83	high	2	3.85	0.71	high	1
2. Accessibility between places within NST	3.69	0.84	high	21	3.61	0.73	high	14
3. Public transportation (i.e. convenience, safety, cleanliness)	3.70	0.92	high	20	3.47	0.72	high	23
4. Natural attractions	3.96	0.91	high	2	3.81	0.84	high	3
5. Historical and archaeological sites	3.80	0.85	high	13	3.57	0.78	high	16
6. Man-made attractions (i.e. puppet museum)	3.50	0.98	high	23	3.54	0.71	high	18
7. Cultural attractions (i.e. local community)	3.90	0.83	high	7	3.71	0.80	high	9
8. Restaurants/cuisine (i.e. diversity, cleanliness, convenience)	3.94	0.84	high	3	3.65	0.73	high	11
9. Infrastructure (i.e. electricity, water supply, Wi-Fi)	3.91	0.80	high	6	3.56	0.87	high	17
10. Variety and difference of activities from main city (i.e. festivals, special events, shopping)	3.71	0.89	high	19	3.53	0.75	high	19
11. Suitable Activities toward tourist requirements	3.69	0.85	high	21	3.61	0.65	high	14

Factors of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOI	Ranking	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOS	Ranking
12. Various choices of accommodation	3.78	0.83	high	14	3.52	0.70	high	20
13. Quality of accommodations (i.e. facilities, cleanliness)	3.92	0.80	high	5	3.72	0.75	high	8
14. Value for money in accommodation	3.91	0.80	high	6	3.78	0.69	high	5
15. Friendliness and hospitality of local people	3.99	0.92	high	1	3.84	0.79	high	2
16. Local way of life	3.89	0.86	high	8	3.79	0.76	high	4
17. Overall atmosphere of the city	3.89	0.79	high	8	3.76	0.73	high	6
18. Supporting service (i.e. hospital, post, bank telecommunications)	3.91	0.86	high	6	3.75	0.67	high	7
19. Tourist information provision	3.81	0.78	high	12	3.65	0.66	high	11
20. Service provider (i.e. guide, driver, local tour operator)	3.68	0.85	high	22	3.47	0.73	high	23
21. Tourism interpretation (i.e. signage, people)	3.75	0.86	high	16	3.53	0.71	high	19
22. Social acceptance (i.e. no conflict of interest, benefit contribution)	3.76	0.80	high	15	3.41	0.68	high	24
23. Quality of local life	3.90	0.71	high	7	3.62	0.66	high	13
24. Local involvement in tourism	3.84	0.75	high	11	3.51	0.73	high	21
25. Overall safety and security	3.93	0.77	high	4	3.64	0.72	high	12
26. Service quality	3.94	0.75	high	3	3.56	0.78	high	17
27. Political Stability	3.91	0.80	high	6	3.41	0.75	high	24
28. Authenticity of art and traditional architecture	3.80	0.77	high	13	3.59	0.74	high	15
29. Authenticity of local ways of living	3.87	0.72	high	9	3.66	0.70	high	10

Factors of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOI	Ranking	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	LOS	Ranking
30. Attractiveness to spend more money	3.73	0.79	high	17	3.48	0.75	high	22
31. Value for money and time	3.86	0.76	high	10	3.65	0.72	high	11
32. Potentiality to link with main city	3.72	0.88	high	18	3.51	0.70	high	21
Overall	**3.82**	**0.53**	**High**		**3.62**	**0.34**	**High**	

Table 1 illustrates that most respondents' rate on the overall level of importance (LOI) and level of satisfaction (LOS) on tourism management of NST as a secondary tourism city at somewhat a high level.

The five factors are all at a high level: friendliness and hospitality of local people, accessibility from the main city to NST and natural attractions, restaurants/cuisine and service quality, overall safety and security, and quality of accommodations. Moreover, it also indicates that the overall foreign tourists' satisfaction of factors in NST tourism management at secondary level is rated high. The five factors are also at a high level: accessibility from the main city to NST, friendliness and hospitality of local people, natural attractions, local way of life, and value for money in accommodation.

Part 3: When analyzing the average scores of foreign quality tourists' importance and satisfaction in regard to NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city with Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA), the results are shown in figure 2.
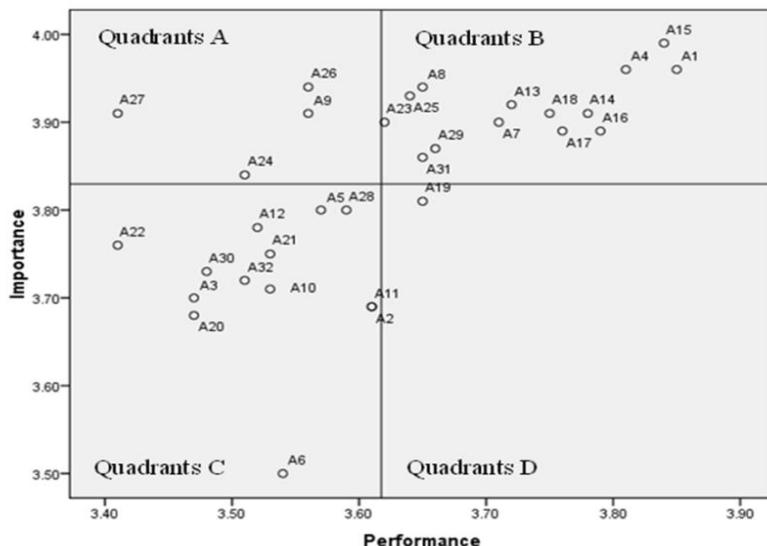
Figure 2: The importance and satisfaction of quality, foreign tourists toward NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city.

Quadrant A (Concentrate Here) including infrastructures (A9), local involvement in tourism (A24), service quality (A26), and political stability (A27) are considered important and

scored by tourists at high levels. However, the level of tourists' satisfaction with these factors is low. The data suggests that the factors become weak points for provincial tourism management and need to be emphasized. Quadrant B (Keep Up the Good Work) including accessibility from main city to NST (A1), natural attractions (A4), cultural attractions (A7), restaurants/cuisine (A8), quality of accommodations (A13), value for money in accommodations (A14), friendliness and hospitality of local people (A15), local ways of life (A16), overall atmosphere of the city (A17), supporting service (A18), quality of local life (A23), overall safety and security (A25) and value for money and time (A31) are considered important and scored by tourists at high levels, while the level of tourists' satisfaction with these factors is also high, the factors become a strong point for the provincial tourism management that the province needs to constantly maintain them. Quadrant C (Low Priority) including accessibility between places within NST (A2), public transportation (A3), historical and archaeological sites (A5), man-made attractions (A6), variety and difference of activities from main cities (A10), suitable activities toward tourist requirements (A11), various choices of accommodations (A12), service providers (A20), tourism interpretations (A21), authenticity of art and traditional architecture (A28), attractiveness to spend more money (A30), potential to link with main cities (A32) are ranked at low levels on both importance and satisfaction. These factors become provincial weak points and need to be improved. Quadrant D (Possible overkill) including tourist information provision (A19) is at a low level on its importance, yet the tourists' satisfaction is at a high level so this factor is not urgently required for improvement. Employing the above IPA method, it reveals factors that are the strengths and weaknesses of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city. It can be concluded that the factors within Quadrants A and Quadrants C are the provincial weaknesses that need to be upgraded, whereas those within Quadrant B show their strengths that must be maintained while Quadrant D does not urgently require improvement.

The data from the interview showed that NST tourism management should be developed, particularly, accessibility to tourist destinations. Due to its inconvenience of transportation, limited information service and English language barrier, tourists complained that they found it difficult to find public transportation from one destination to another or searching for information when encountering problems in those areas. One tourist criticized "…difficult to get to well-known places; no detailed information; difficult to find accommodation in mountainous places; can't go by reading maps." Another complaint "…I came to Khiriwong Village by Songtaew, one way 25 Baht. It's quite convenient but after that, the next day, I planned to visit Krung Ching Waterfall but it was difficult because there were no Songtaews that go directly there. I asked many people but found it hard to understand what they say." One also suggested, "…easy English language conversation must be taught to the local people and/or service staff…" In addition, the inconvenience of lack of infrastructure, such as Wi-Fi signals and telephone signals in some areas, and not enough toilets were found to be obstacles. One visitor commented, "…The main tourist attractions should have free Wi-Fi, telephone signals or at least public toilet."

On the other hand, many tourists indicated that the friendliness and hospitality of the local people are very impressive and remarked, "the villagers are extremely helpful, wonderful people, no cheating, kind, friendly, helpful local people." The overall tourism atmosphere of the city is rated as a great place to relax with traditional ways of life. Many spectacular mountain and sea views are very attractive. One visitor concluded that "NST is a very nice place to visit. There are many nice people…the town is not too crowded. It is a quiet and peaceful place to visit; no problems; no salesmen coming selling things on the beach."

Discussion and Conclusion

Due to the overall results, most respondents rate the important factors of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city at a rather high level. The five factors of the high level are friendliness and hospitality of local people, accessibility from the main city to NST and natural attractions, restaurants/cuisine and service quality, overall safety and security and quality of accommodations. These findings correspond to the study of Ngwira and Kankhuni (2018), who examine five tourist destinations: Hong Kong, India, the Netherlands, Singapore, and South Africa, and find that tourism products or attractions are some of the reasons why tourists visit destinations.

In terms of service quality of the destinations, this finding is consistent with the results of Pandza Bajs (2011) who states that tourists are attracted to the quality of services of tourism destination such as food and beverages, accommodation, entertainment, tourism infrastructure, hospitality, nature of the local people, and the emotional experience at the destinations. In addition, Lohmann and Beer (2013) underline the significance of amenities such as accommodations which are also consistent with Chan and Baum (2007) who remarked that accommodation is the key factor in Malaysia along with the public utility system, and service towards tourists by mentioning the Tsunami in Indonesia and Thailand in 2004. After the disaster, most amenities along the western coast were badly destroyed. As a result, fewer tourists visited those tourist destinations affected by the incident. However, after the amenities were restored, tourism in those areas was back to normal once again.

In addition, the result on accessibility are also complying with the nature of the high potential travelers, which specifies that mainstream-oriented group spends money on reasonably priced products (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2013) and outdoorsy elite group prefers outdoor activities but not too extreme and its members do not need to always stay in luxurious hotels. Whereas the exurban explorers group prefers activities that enhance learning and learning different local cultures as its members prefer to visit museums, galleries, historical sites, local festivals and performing arts while interacting with local people who are interested in outdoor activities (Environics Analytics, 2010).

Emphasizing on the overall level of satisfaction factors of NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city, most respondents rated at a somewhat high level; accessibility from the main city to NST, friendliness and hospitality of local people, natural attractions, local way of life and value for money accommodation. In addition, the results of importance and satisfaction factors rated by respondents on NST tourism management as a secondary tourism city also reveal the following: 1) Quadrant A including infrastructures, local involvement in tourism, service quality, and political stability is considered important and is scored by tourists at a high level. However, the level of tourists' satisfaction of these factors is low, so the factors become a weak point for the provincial tourism management and need to be emphasized. The result of this study is inconsistent with the one of Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017) who conducted the topic; Guideline to Enhance Performance Efficiency on Tourism Destination in Khanom Community, NST Province. Their study was aimed to (1) compare the level of importance and level of performance efficiency of Khanom community tourism destination and (2) propose performance guidelines for a tourist destination in Khanom Community, Nakhon Si Thammarat. The result in Quadrant A disclosed that travel, safety and security are at a high level, but tourists are less aware of the performance issues. Tourism management needs to focus and find ways to improve such issues urgently, 2) Quadrant B including accessibility from main city to Nakhon Si Thammarat, natural attractions, cultural attractions, restaurants/cuisine, quality of accommodation, value for money accommodation, friendliness and hospitality of local people, local way of life, overall atmosphere of the city, supporting service, quality of local life, overall safety and security

and value for money and time, is considered important and scored by tourists at a high level. The level of tourists' satisfaction with these factors is also high. These factors become a strong point for the provincial tourism management and the province needs to constantly maintain them. The result of this study is in line with the one of Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017), as their result revealed that tourists focus on accessibility and service issues and they recognize the performance of such issues as well. It is considered to represent the strengths of the tourism community to maintain the quality of the high level, 3) Quadrant C including accessibility between places within NST, public transportation, historical and archaeological sites, man-made attractions, variety and difference of activities from main cities, suitable activities toward tourist requirements, various choices of accommodation, service providers, tourism interpretations, authenticity of art and traditional architecture, attractiveness to spend more money and potential to link with main cities is at a low level on both importance and satisfaction. These factors become provincial weak points and need to be improved. Again, the result of this study is in line with the one of Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017) on an attraction issue, but inconsistent with the result on an accommodation issue, and 4) Quadrant D including tourist information provision is at a low level on its importance, yet the tourists' satisfaction is at a high level so this factor is not urgently required for improvement. The result of this study is inconsistent with the one of Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017). Their result revealed that tourists focus on activities at a low level; but, the awareness of the performance of the issue is at a high level, which indicates that the success of the development at the Khanom Tourist Attraction should be maintained. Such discussions are possible because of the differences in the sample characteristics of this study and the study of Kokkhangplu and Kaewnuch (2017) that it shows the tourists' focus on different issues.

Furthermore, the findings also show that the age of the samples are between 31-40 years old, have high education and good occupations, have a good annual income, concerned and value the infrastructures, local involvement in tourism, service quality and political stability as well as accessibility between places within NST, public transportation, historical and archaeological sites, man-made attractions, variety and difference of activities from main cities, suitable activities toward tourist requirements, various choices of accommodation, service providers, tourism interpretations, authenticity of art and traditional architecture, attractiveness to spend more money and potential to link with main cities the most.

Regarding the above discussion, the overall picture of the tourism situation in NST demonstrates that NST has tourism potential and a variety of attractions that meet the needs and satisfy foreign quality tourists. Tourism stakeholders should improve various elements in the supply side such as infrastructure, tourism service, and service quality etc. Additionally, the findings from the study are beneficial for all provincial tourism related parties of the secondary tourism cities including different sectors from the government, private, community and academia to have a better understanding about quality, foreign tourists' behaviors and the problems of tourism management in NST from the view of the tourists and what needs to be urgently improved in order to encourage more tourists to visit NST in the future.

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