

Factors Influencing Tourist Decision-Making Towards Traveling to Luang Prabang ปัจจัยที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจมาเที่ยวหลวงพระบางของนักท่องเที่ยว

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วิลเลียม พี วอลล์

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Abstract

The objectives of these study were 1) to analyze behavior factors (Psychology factors and Cultural and Social Factors) influencing tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang; and 2) to analyze marketing mix factors influencing tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Research Methodology: The sample consisted of 415 respondents. The sampling was quota sampling method to collect the sampling from 5 tourist attractions in Luang Prabang. The data was analyzed by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were analyzed by and Multiple Regression Analysis.

Research findings:1) Cultural and social factor has influencing with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang, and 2) Marketing mix factors has influencing with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Keywords: Behavior Factor, Psychology Factor, Culture and Social Factor, Marketing-Mix Factor, Decision-Making and Luang Prabang

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์สำหรับงานวิจัยนี้เพื่อศึกษาปัจจัยด้านจิตวิทยา และปัจจัยด้านวัฒนธรรม-สังคมที่มีผลต่อการตัดสินใจมาเที่ยวหลวงพระบาง และปัจจัยด้านที่ด้านส่วนประสมการตลาดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจมาเที่ยวหลวงพระบางของนักท่องเที่ยว

ตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยคือนักท่องเที่ยวชาวต่างชาติที่มาเที่ยวหลวงพระบาง จำนวน 415 คน โดยเก็บตัวอย่างโดยใช้ แบบสอบถามการสุ่มเก็บตัวอย่างจากสถานที่ท่องเที่ยวที่สำคัญในหลวงพระบางจำนวน 5 สถานที่ การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนา ได้แก่ ความถี่ร้อยละเฉลี่ย และส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และทดสอบสมมติฐานโดยใช้สถิติเชิงอนุมาน คือ การวิเคราะห์การถดถอยเชิงพหุ

ผลของการทดสอบสมมติฐานพบว่าปัจจัยปัจจัยด้านจิตวิทยา และปัจจัยด้านวัฒนธรรม-สังคมมีอิทธิพลต่อพฤติกรรมการซื้อบริโภค และปัจจัยด้านที่ด้านส่วนประสมการตลาดมีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจมาเที่ยวหลวงพระบางของนักท่องเที่ยว

คำสำคัญ: ปัจจัยที่ส่งผลต่อพฤติกรรม ปัจจัยด้านจิตวิทยาปัจจัยด้านวัฒนธรรมและสังคมปัจจัยส่วนประสมการตลาดการตัดสินใจมาท่องเที่ยว และหลวงพระบาง

Introduction

Luang Prabang came into being 1,200 years ago. It is also the ancient capital city of Lan Xang Kingdom (the former Kingdom of Lao PDR). The Mekong Tourism Investment Submit (MIST) recently reported that there are around 20,000 people living in the city. There are many existent and important tourist attractions centralized in this area which also has three major ethnic groups living there.

This ancient city also has numerous cultural activities and institutions, important architectural constructions. These places have made Luang Prabang become the most popular tourist attraction in the country and Luang Prabang has been registered as a World Heritage Site with UNESCO since 1995

Tourism Development Department had provided information regarding visitors which indicates the number of visitors in the three major provinces in Lao PDR as show below in Table 1

Table 1 Visitors by Province, 2011-2014

Province	2011	2012	2013	2014
Champasak	393,921	470,714	493,180	535,413
Luang Prabang	274,506	294,213	342,661	378,999
Vientiane Capital	1,154,501	1,290,031	1,445,345	1,630,516
Total	1,822,928	2,054,958	2,281,186	2,544,928

Source: Tourism Development Department [TDD], 2014

From the table1 found that the number of tourist in Luang Prabang has been increasing every year from the past three years since 2011, the study of this research will find out what are the main points that motivate tourist consideration making a trip to Luang Prabang? Other than that, the objective of this research is to focus on tourist factors and marketing factor (i.e. product, price, place, promotion, physical evidence, process and, people) that is what influences tourists tourist decisions to travel to the ancient town of Luang Prabang which is the world heritage site of Laos. Thus, the results of this research will be beneficial to other cultural heritage sites. Furthermore, the research result will be show what effects hotels, restaurants, airline services and the national government organization have on tourism to enable more revenue to come into the country which will lead to more development of the logistics and infrastructure.

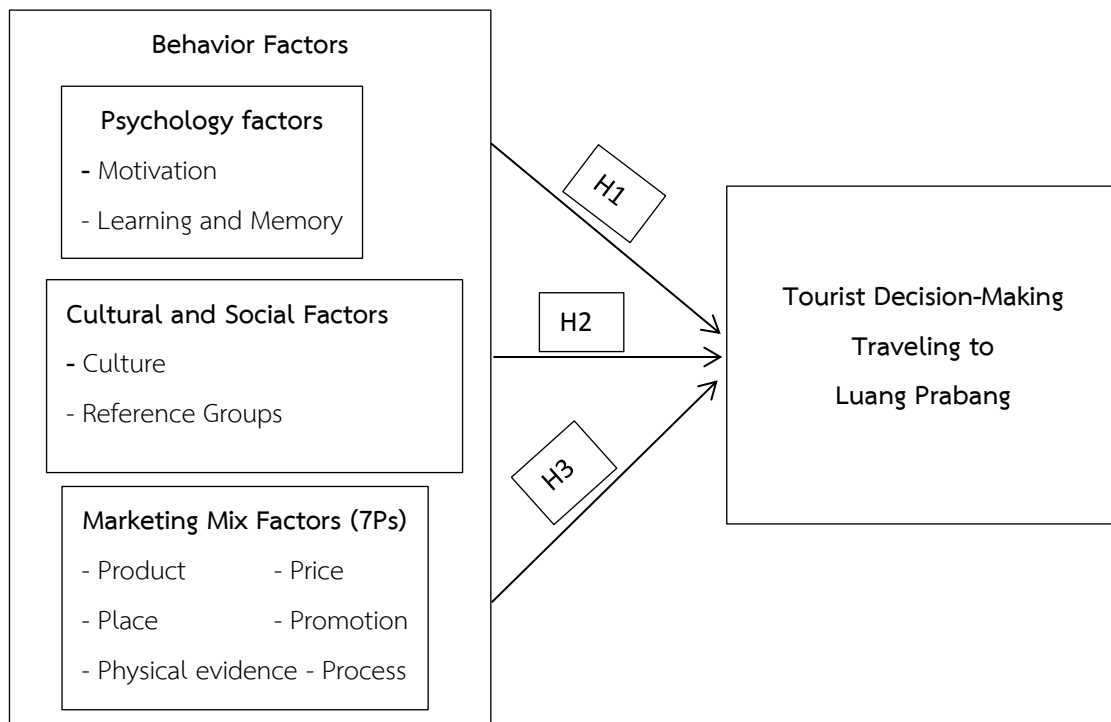
Research objectives

1. To analyze Psychology factors and Cultural and Social Factors influencing tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.
2. To analyze marketing mix factors influencing tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Scope of the Study

The extent of the calculated information is to recognize the depiction and the characteristics of the tourists who travel to Luang Prabang. Whilst also looking for the reasons for tourists behaviors in making that decision. The marketing mix really influences the tourist decision to travel to Luang Prabang and it's interesting to see how they come to make their choice.

Conceptual Framework



Definition of Terms

1. Luang Prabang: is a province in northern Laos at the heart of a mountainous region.
2. Psychology Factors: is a study of thoughts feelings and other processes of the brain that affect functions and behaviors of the human mind.
3. Cultural and Social Factors: are customs, lifestyles, values that characterize a society which is part of the reason why tourists are motivated to travel to Luang Prabang.
4. Marketing Mix Factors: To decide on the composition of variable 7 to decision-making Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Physical Evidence, Process, and People (Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler, 2001)
5. Decision Making: consideration is about people life style to realization a process to come to Luang Prabang.

Literature Review

1. Psychology factors refer to inner and inborn traits of the individual. Consumer behaviors are impacted by four prime psychological factors(Kotler. 2000, Hoyer and MacInnis, 2010 and Solomon, 2009).

2. Cultural and Social Factors refer to outside of the consumers behaviors which are impacted by ethnic and social/community groups. (Kotler, 2000).

- Social factors: are the reference group influences corporate behavior and purchasing decisions membership of groups (Peter & Olson, 2008). A reference was only simply a group that individual uses as a guide for action in a specific situation (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2013).

3. Marketing Mix Factors Kotler & Armstrong (2010) describes that a logical way to successfully reach their goals and generate profits which is primarily based on the high value of their relationships with their customers it will engage with. A successfully well used marketing strategy is called the 4ps which is the combine harvester of product, price, place, and promotion (Kotler, 1999).

4. Decision-Making refer to a consumer decision making style refers to a mental orientation describing how a consumer makes choices (Andrews, 1992). The five step decision-making process explained such as Problem Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision and Post-Purchase Behavior.

5. Related Research

Xayavong (2013) the study found that Thai tourists preferred proper tourists excursions that included seeing and doing things that they had never experienced before and also knowledge seeking factors were one of the most important reasons for coming on a tour to Luang Prabang. The historical archeological sites were another important reason/factor that motivated them to visit Luang Prabang because Thailand also have a world heritage site and their people fully appreciate the history of other countries.

Sirisack (2014) described to study the customer's decision making for the selection of what tourist destination. The study applied a descriptions and distinctions approach to collect data from two key informants. Foreign visitors traveling to new countries and government officials, The study found that the image of Luang Prabang resulting from its status as a world heritage city, was a place holding traditional culture, good hospitality and a safe place for traveling, these were all major motivations for foreign tourist to visit the town.

Praipisut (2014) described to study travel behavior and marketing mix towards Thai visitors visiting Asiatique. The sampling was 400 Thai visitors. Found that Internal Factor including motivation, learning and attitude effecting visitors' decision making in visiting Asiatique.

And found that External Factors including economic, political, social and technological effecting visitors' decision making in visiting Asiatique.

Research Methodology

This research is a quantitative analysis by using survey research method and will be collecting the data by using the questionnaire.

The population of this study was the visitor who was traveling in Laos. the data from the statistical report on Tourism in Laos, Tourism Development Department Tourism Research Division, Ministry of Information, Culture and tourism. In 2014, there were 4,158,719 visitors.

The sample was the tourist who was traveling to Luang Prabang with the age over 20 years. The sample size for this study is based on the method of Taro Yamane (1976) a known population size as discussed below:

$$n = N / 1 + N (e)^2$$

When; n = sample size

$$N = 4,158,719$$

$$e = \text{significant level (0.05)}$$

In applying Yamane's formula in calculating sample size as follows;

$$\begin{aligned} N &= 4,158,719 / 1 + 4,158,719 (0.05)^2 \\ &= 400 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the result of calculation is 400 Samples but to avoid the mistake of sample respondents, this could affect the credible of the research. Therefore, conducts in additional 4 percent or 15 samples were given a total of 415 samples.

The questionnaires have four parts as Questions of demographic factors, Questions of behavior factors, Questions of marketing mix and Questions of tourist decision making

The data analysis has 2 statistical as Descriptive Statistics as Frequency, Percentage to explain the data of respondent's demographic factors. Mean and S.D. to explain agreement level of respondent behavior factors, marketing mix factors and Tourist decision making. And Inferential Statistics as Multiple regression analysis to finding the relationship between behavior factors, marketing mix factors and decision making to traveling in Luang Prabang.

Results

1. The results of the Analysis of Respondent's Demographic

The results of the analysis of respondent demographic finding that the respondents were male of 171 respondents (42.80%), females of 229 respondents (57.30%). The respondents were 21 – 30 years old of respondents (19%), 31 – 40 years old of 169 respondents (42.3%), 41– 50 years old of 111 respondents (27.8%) and above 50 years old of 44 respondents (11%). The respondents graduated Certificate/Diploma of 24 respondents (6%), Bachelor Degree of 295 respondents (73.80), High School of 67 respondents (15.30), Certificate/Diploma of 107 respondents (26.8%), Bachelor Degree of 175 respondents (43.8%), Master Degree of 34 respondents (8.5%) and Ph.D. of 17 respondents (4.3%). The respondents were Student of 27 respondents (12%), Business Owner of 27 respondents (6.75%), Government Officer of 81 respondents (20.25%), State Enterprise Officer of 60 respondents (15%) and Private Company Employee of 148 respondents (46%). Less than \$1,000 of 204 respondents (51%), \$1,001-\$5,000 of 106 respondents (26.5%), \$5,001-\$10,000 – 45,000 of 61 respondents (15.25%), \$10,001-\$20,000 of 19 respondents (4.75%), More than \$20,000 of 10 respondents (2.5%). The respondents were Laos of 126 respondents (31.5%), Asia and Pacific of 151 respondents (37.75%), Europe of 74 respondents (18.5%), America of 36 respondents (9%) and Africa and Middle East Of 13% (3.3%).

2. Present the Data Analysis on the Agreement of Respondents toward the Behavior Factors When considering the psychology factors that the point revealed respondent's agreement toward deciding to Luang Prabang could be illustrated respectively as follows:

1) Motivation with a mean of 4.271 and standard deviation of .815, which respondents' agreement on the level of strongly agree.

2) Learning and memory with a mean of 4.193 and standard deviation of .874, which respondents' agreement on the level of agree.

When considering the cultural and social factors that the point revealed respondent's agreement toward deciding to Luang Prabang could be illustrated respectively as follows:

1) Culture with a mean of 4.212 and standard deviation of .863, which respondents' agreement on the level of strongly agree.

2) Reference group with a mean of 3.976 and standard deviation of .836, which respondents' agreement on the level of agree.

3. The data analysis on the sample's agreement level toward product, found that the agreement to product overall agree levels with a mean of 4.175 and standard deviation of .956. The sample's agreement level toward price, found that the agreement to product overall agree levels with a mean of 4.170 and standard deviation of 1.018. The sample's agreement level toward place, found that the agreement to product overall 3.998 agree levels with a mean of 3.998 and standard deviation of .997. The data analysis on the sample's agreement level toward promotion, found that the agreement to product overall agree levels with a mean of 4.192 and standard deviation of .842. The data analysis on the sample's agreement level toward physical evidence, found that the agreement to product overall strongly agree levels with a mean of 4.501 and standard deviation of .606. The data analysis on the sample's agreement level toward people, found that the agreement to product overall strongly agree levels with a mean of 4.480 and standard deviation of .654. and the sample's agreement level toward process, found that the agreement to product overall strongly agree levels with a mean of 4.476 and standard deviation of .670.

4. The data analysis on the sample's agreement level toward decision-making traveling, found that the agreement to product overall strongly agree levels with a mean of 4.439 and standard deviation of .650.

5. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1: Psychology factor has a relationship with the tourist decision- making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Table 2 Relationship between Psychology Factors and Decision-Making Traveling to Luang Prabang

Model	Decision-Making Traveling				
	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.423	.070		34.744	.000
1. Motivation	.280	.032	.498	8.789	.000**
2. Learning and Memory	.195	.031	.358	6.315	.000**

* Singnificant at the 0.05 level

** Singnificant at the 0.01 level

According to Table 2 describes the data analysis of multiple regression testing by entering method, The Psychology factor has a relationship on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang with statistically significant at the .01. There are predictors can predict on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang level is Motivation and Learning and Memory, which have positive regression, If predictor level is increased, the decision-making traveling level is will increase as well. The multiple regression equations show as follows.

$$\text{Decision-Making Traveling Level} = .498 \text{ Motivation} + .358 \text{ Learning and Memory}$$

Hypothesis 2: Cultural and social factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Table 3 Relationship between Cultural and Social Factors and Decision-Making Traveling to Luang Prabang

Model	Decision-Making Traveling				
	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.907	.075		25.520	.000
1. Culture	.394	.022	.618	18.253	.000**
2. Reference Group	.073	.008	.320	9.456	.000**

* Singnificant at the 0.05 level

** Singnificant at the 0.01 level

According to Table 4.3 describes the data analysis of multiple regression testing by entering method, The cultural and social Factor has a relationship on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang with statistically significant at the .01. There are predictors can predict on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang level is culture and reference group which have positive regression, If predictor level is increased, the decision-making traveling level is will increase as well. The multiple regression equations show as follows.

$$\text{Decision-Making Traveling Level} = .618 \text{ Culture} + .320 \text{ Reference Group}$$

Hypothesis 3: Marketing-mix factor has a relationship with the tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang.

Table 4 Relationship between Marketing-Mix Factors and Decision-Making Traveling to Luang Prabang

Model	Decision-Making Traveling				
	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.296	.121		10.723	.000
1. Product	.221	.033	.261	6.601	.000**
2. Price	-.012	.023	-.021	-.513	.608
3. Place	.027	.012	.049	2.149	.032*
4. Promotion	.346	.034	.558	10.174	.000**
5. Physical Evidence	.080	.034	.086	2.340	.020*
6. People	.037	.035	.036	1.061	.289
7. Process	.030	.030	.042	1.002	.317

* Singnificant at the 0.05 level

** Singnificant at the 0.01 level

According to Table 4 describes the data analysis of multiple regression testing by entering method, The Marketing-mix factor has a relationship on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang with statistically significant at the .05. The price, people, and process can't predict on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang. There are predictors can predict on decision-making traveling to Luang Prabang level is the product, place, promotion and physical evidence which have positive regression, If predictor level is increased, the decision-making traveling level is will increase as well. The multiple regression equations show as follows.

Decision-Making Traveling Level = .261 Product + .049 Place + .558 Promotion + .086 Physical Evidence

Conclusion

There has some part that the researcher would like to explain more even after testing the hypothesis already, the first part for behavior factors in part of psychology factors which found that psychology factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang. Behavior factors in part of the cultural and social factor which found that cultural and social factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang, Therefore, acceptance for H1 and H2 at confident level 99%. For the second

part for marketing mix factors which found that marketing mix factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang, therefore, acceptance for H3 at confident level 95%.

Discussion

Psychology factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang which agreement with the studies of Praipisut (2014) who studies The Travel behavior and marketing mix toward Thai visiting Asiatique Visitors. From the data analysis it was found that travel behavior in part of internally such as motivation, learning perception and attitude have relationship to visitor decision making visiting Asiatique, which agrees with the theory of Hoyer and MacInnis (2010) and Kanuk&Shiffman (2000) said that the persuasion is the driving force that motivates them to respond.

Cultural and social factor has a relationship with the tourist decision making towards traveling to Luang Prabang, which agrees with the studies of Sirisack (2014) described to examine the customer's decision making for the selection of what tourist destination. The study applied a descriptions and distinctions approach to collect data from two key informants. Foreign visitors were traveling to new countries and government officials. The study found that the image of Luang Prabang resulting from its status as a world heritage city, was a place holding traditional culture were all major towards feign tourist to visit the town, which agrees with the studies of Xayavong (2013) studied the attributes, the motivations and satisfaction level met of Thai visitors who visited Luang Prabang province. The most important factor towards them to visit Luang Prabang as the Thai tourists were culture and social factors that have a huge amount of the sites that belong to their country, glad fully it was also followed by friendliness, politeness, and hospitality of local people.

Marketing-mix factor has a relationship with the tourist decision-making towards traveling to Luang Prabang, which agree with the studies of Siriphone (2008) studied of Service marketing mix Affecting European Tourist towards Tourism Service in Luang Prabang province, Lao People's Democratic Republic. The primary objectives of this independent review were to determine how the services marketing mix were affecting the European tourist's decisions towards the tourism services in LuangPrabang province in Lao. And results revealed that the marketing mix Affecting European Tourist towards Tourism Service in LuangPrabang province.

Recommendations

Recommendation from this Study

1. Recommendation for organizations related to tourism in Luang Prabang both government and private should be a priority to propagate culture and society of Luang Prabang known more for tourist including dissemination through the media and famous people by propagating culture and society through the film which there are several places where the successful are doing this such as Santa Barbara, California, USA, from the movie of Sideways, Mumbai-India from the Lunch Box movie, Ubud, Bali- Indonesia from Eat Pray Love, etc. Other organizations related to tourism in Luang Prabang both government and private should develop its sights regarding the variety of hotels and restaurants, the reasonableness of prices for hotels and restaurants. If the position is a high price there should be a quality service and provide more quality of raw materials. Should develop transportation a diverse and much more comfortable and organizations should give priority to training staff knowledgeable, expertise in service more and more.

2. Recommendation for tourist consumer should prepare by studying the information available before making a trip regarding hotels, restaurants and various tourist attractions and prices of each restaurant and also transportation.

Recommendation for Future Research

1. Researchers should study other tourist cities in the country where the various the number of secretion of tourists compared to Luang Prabang to examine the factors that make tourists decide to visit the city to find which factors that do differ from Luang Prabang for future develop to enhance the tourist to visit more in Luang Prabang.

2. Researchers should collect quantitative data to compared with qualitative data to bring the depth comments of respondents to explain quantitative data

3. The researcher should consider the other variables that are affecting the decision to visit Luang Prabang included the quality of service factors, integrated marketing factors or another interesting factor to study.

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