

## ABSTRACT

The tourism industry has come to be one of the world's leading industries. Festival/event tourism is also among today's fastest growing tourism sectors. It is an important element of tourism for communities to showcase their diverse cultures, whereas tourists to seek travel experience. The purpose of this study was to study the perspective of tourists who attended the Phuket Vegetarian Festival and to analyze the tourists' travel motivation, activity participation, and behavior towards the festival.

A set of more than 300 questionnaires were planned to be distributed to the tourists who attended the Phuket Vegetarian Festival in 2008 during the month of October, and 268 usable questionnaires were collected. Descriptive statistics along with One-way ANOVA, Independent sample T-test were performed to analyze the motivation, activity participation, and behavior, while Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was also used to test the relationship that supports the Hypothesis.

The results showed that people aged between 10-39 have a greater desire to seek entertainment and new experiences through different event activities of the festival than those whose age are 40 and above. The results also revealed that male visitors preferred to experience the real cultural activities, however female visitors found shopping and spending time with friends and family are more important. Local residents of Phuket showed strong interest in worshipping and essential activities of the festival, and domestic and foreigners are spending more money on the tourist-related goods and services. Foreigners also lacked of interest in religious-related activities, as it may conflicts their own religions. In addition, tourists' motivation for attending the Phuket Vegetarian Festival has strong relationship to their participation of activities. Moreover, based on the findings, marketing strategies and recommendations are discussed.