

## ABSTRACT

Because of increased environmental awareness, green hotels have to fulfill the customers who need environmentally friendly hotels. Previous studies in tourism and hotel research investigated the effect of either destination image or green image on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. In addition, most previous studies concentrated only on attitudinal loyalty in determining loyal customers. The purpose of this study is to investigate the simultaneous relationships between destination image, green image, and perceived service quality on both attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty toward green hotels and the south of Thailand.

An exploratory study from in-depth interviews with TAT officers, green hotel managers, and green hotel customers supported the previous literature in developing a conceptual framework and to test the hypothesized relationships in this study. The respondents are international tourists who stayed at six green hotels in the south of Thailand which received Green Leaf Certification in 2010 during the data collection period (June 20 to July 25, 2012). A total of 409 completed responses were used to perform an exploratory factor analysis to purify the items representing constructs followed by confirmatory factor analysis to test how well the measurement variables represent the constructs before analyzing the structural equation modeling.

The results illustrated that destination image such as natural characteristics and atmosphere and social ambience have significant relationships with customer satisfaction, which influences both attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty toward the south of Thailand. Moreover, green image and perceived service quality such as assurance, tangibles, and reliability have significant and positive relationships with both attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty toward green hotels through green satisfaction. Furthermore, both customer satisfaction and green satisfaction have significant impacts on customer loyalty in both green hotels and the south of Thailand.

The findings provide valuable contributions and recommendation to both academics and practitioners in the hotel and tourism industry. For academics, the combination of destination image and green image could extend knowledge from



previous models, and the composite of attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty can provide a better understanding of measuring customer loyalty than previous studies. For practitioners, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and green hotels should work together to enhance destination image, green image, and perceived service quality. Furthermore, the cooperation of all parties including international tourists is necessary to maintain the environment, and similar environmental policies should be extended to all regions in Thailand. In addition, the governmental policy of safety regulation is also strongly needed to convince international tourists revisiting green hotels and the south of Thailand.

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