

Abstract

The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of the Tsunami and the effect of restoration efforts on the attitude of foreign tourists, traveling to Tsunami affected areas, including their future travel behavior. In this study the Tsunami affected Thailand beaches of Phuket, Patong, Kamala, Kata and Karon. Tourists might not be comfortable vacationing in a region that was in the midst of recovering from a major disaster. Authorities at destination areas are also curious to know whether tourists have shortened their stay or have changed their plans and or itineraries due to the affects of the Tsunami.

The respondents of this study were foreign tourists who traveled to Phuket's Tsunami affected areas. In this research, the primary data was collected from respondents with the use of questionnaires to secure the desired information with representative samples of the individual. Convenient sampling methods were adopted during the study. The location for distributing the questionnaire was Phuket beaches that were struck by the Tsunami. The total number of respondents was 384.

The data obtained was analyzed by using frequency, percentages, means and Spearman Correlation Coefficient techniques. The major findings of the study indicated that the traveling behavior to the Tsunami affected areas were either independent or repeat travelers. Foreign tourists were inspired to visit Phuket, Thailand because of media coverage and tourism campaigns by tourism organizations.

The results of the study concerning the attitude of respondents who visited Phuket beaches struck by the Tsunami were that the affected areas were still a beautiful destination to visit and they wanted to help out the local Tourism Industry. As a result,

other factors concerning disease outbreaks, hygiene, spirit, safety, travel warnings, restoration, and recovery of travel business did not affect their decision to visit.

Regarding the attitude of respondents towards recovery and promotion plans in Phuket, most of respondents were not sure if these projects could motivate them to visit the affected areas. They seemed satisfied with the Royal Thai Government in terms of rehabilitation and restoration efforts which made them feel more confident and secure to visit affected areas again.

